

History & Background

Cabbagetown, Atlanta's oldest industrial settlement, was first developed in 1885 as a village to provide housing for workers at the Fulton Cotton Bag Mill. In 1979, the neighborhood was the first to be designated a Landmark District by the City of Atlanta. Since that time, all development in Cabbagetown has been regulated by the Atlanta Urban Design Commission (AUDC), the agency that oversees all historic areas in the city.

When they were first created, the Cabbagetown Landmark District regulations provided relatively little information for rehabilitation, renovation, or new construction in the community. In 2002, the Cabbagetown Neighborhood Improvement Association led the effort to update the regulations to better guide the development of the neighborhood for the future. After a lengthy process that included input from many neighborhood residents, architects, historic preservation specialists, attorneys, and lawmakers, the "new" regulations were signed into law in March 2003 by Mayor Shirley Franklin.

What's Governed in the Regulations?

The design of most exterior elements of structures and how structures are used are governed by Cabbagetown's landmark district regulations. This includes the overall exterior design of any structure, as well exterior siding, chimneys, windows, dormers, exterior doors & trim, foundations, garages/carports, setbacks, skylights, fencing, driveways, sidewalks, and curbing. In general, any new construction and renovations should closely resemble existing historic structures on the block face. Paint color is not covered in the regulations, nor are "like repairs" that match an existing historic item in size, material, placement, etc. Depending on the type of work being proposed, some applications can be reviewed by AUDC staff; other types of applications require a public hearing. **Please be aware that failure to secure proper approval from the AUDC for exterior changes to any structure in Cabbagetown is a violation of Atlanta's Land Development Code and subject to penalties.**

*For additional details,
see the full text of the Cabbagetown
Landmark District Regulations at
www.cabbagetown.org*

Balancing History with Modern Needs

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of revising the landmark district regulations was balancing the desire to preserve the history of the neighborhood with residents' need to live and work here in the 21st century. Some residents place top priority on preserving all things historic; others believe any regulations should make way for current technologies and standards of living. As neighbors we agreed that Cabbagetown's history was one of evolution -- the neighborhood has changed significantly over time to meet the needs of its residents -- but the basic architecture and land use patterns have remained constant.

We also agreed that some key elements contribute to the close-knit feeling of the neighborhood. For example, front porches foster interaction among neighbors, and are therefore required on all residences. Modest-sized housing also encourages people to gather communally; to encourage this in the future, new homes are limited in square footage to 50% of the lot size. Commercial structures and related service areas cannot cover more than 80% of the lot where they are located to help ensure a reasonable scale for commercial buildings. Also, satellite dishes are permitted, but they must be placed out of public view.

Squeezing Cars into Cabbagetown

Because it was developed prior to the advent of the automobile, the original design of Cabbagetown did not include space for cars. Our streets are narrow and sometimes twisty; parking can be extremely limited. The new landmark district regulations seek to balance the need for parking with our interest in fostering neighborhood development. The result: Existing structures are not required to provide off-street parking, but any new structure (both residential and commercial) or any change in the use of an existing structure requires off-street parking be provided by the property owner.

A Mix of Homes & Shops

Within its boundaries, Cabbagetown has always had a mix of residential and commercial structures. In the early days of the neighborhood, this mixture provided the goods and services needed by residents who did not have transportation. Today, living in a "walkable village" is among the most highly valued aspects of life for Cabbagetown residents.

Most of the current commercial structures in the neighborhood are located along Carroll Street and Memorial Drive, although a

few additional spots still exist on other streets. The new landmark district regulations seek to support the neighborhood's commercial development while also providing attractive and safe residential areas nearby.

To foster the development of goods and services that are likely to be used by Cabbagetown residents, moderate sized bakeries, laundries, restaurants, taverns, barber and beauty shops, other retail shops and galleries, offices, and studios are permitted within Cabbagetown's commercial areas. And to encourage pedestrian access, new sidewalks along Memorial Drive must be at least 15 feet wide to allow for street trees, street lighting, trash receptacles, etc., and still leave plenty of room for walking.

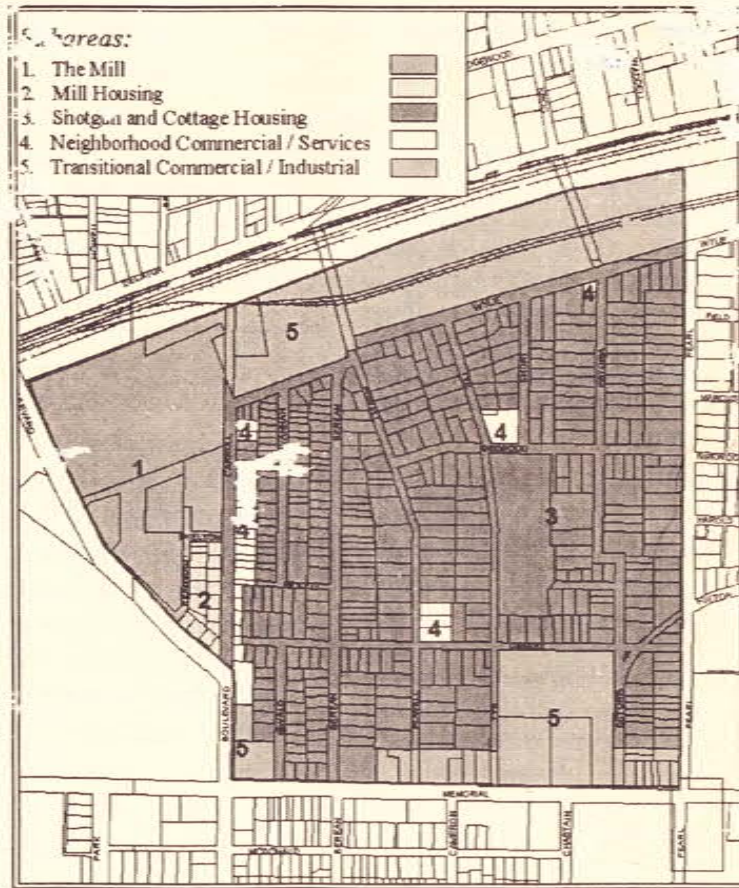
To ensure Cabbagetown's residential areas remain pleasant places to live, the regulations prohibit commercial uses that produce noise or dust or otherwise disrupt residential living. Commercial structures must also have landscape buffers and opaque fencing. And the height of new commercial buildings is limited to 28 feet if located within 50 feet of a residential boundary; Dumpsters must be at least 30 feet away. Also, any commercial exterior lighting must limit light spillage onto residential areas.

The changes to Cabbagetown's Landmark District regulations were a community-driven effort, designed to suit the needs of the neighborhood. Additional details are available from AUDC or CNIA -- see the reverse side for contact information.

A goal of the revised landmark regulations is to create guidelines that make sense for Cabbagetown historically, architecturally, and socially.

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see the full text of the Cabbagetown
Landmark District Regulations at
www.cabbagetown.org*

Cabbagetown Map



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For More Information

The Atlanta Urban Design Commission was established in 1975 to nominate and regulate buildings and districts with particular historic value within the City. Any time work on the exterior of a designated property is proposed, a Certificate of Appropriateness must be obtained from the Commission - as well as the normal building permit - to ensure any changes are in keeping with the historic character of the building or district. Failure to secure AUDC approval for exterior changes to any structure in Cabbagetown is a violation of Atlanta's Land Development Code and subject to penalties.

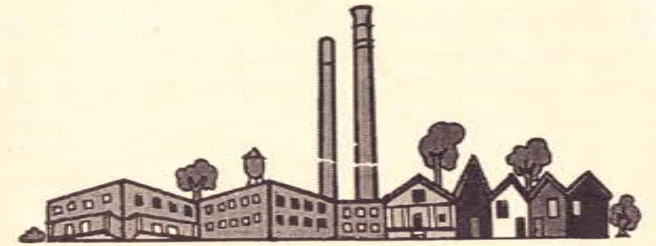
Contact Information:

Atlanta Urban Design Commission
55 Trinity Avenue, Suite 3400
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
(404) 330-6200
<http://www.ci.atlanta.ga.us/cityair/URBAN/Urban.htm>

The Cabbagetown Neighborhood Improvement Association was formed to help improve the quality of life for residents of Cabbagetown. For many years, CNIA has been an important partner in community redevelopment issues, and takes an active role in reviewing all development proposals for Cabbagetown. If they haven't done so on their own, the AUDC directs all applicants to contact CNIA to ensure community input in design reviews. Please see the CNIA's website for up-to-date information on Association activities and meeting schedules, committee contact lists, and information on how to become a CNIA member.

Contact Information:

Cabbagetown Neighborhood Improvement Association
P.O. Box 5243
Atlanta, Georgia 31107
mail@cabbagetown.org
www.cabbagetown.org



Past, Present, Future:

A Summary of Cabbagetown's Landmark District Regulations

*Background Information for
Property Owners, Builders,
Developers, Real Estate Professionals,
and Others Interested in
Renovating & Redeveloping
Atlanta's Cabbagetown Neighborhood*

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