

# TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Information for Town Council Meeting on: July 13, 2021

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To: Mayor and Town Council

From: Wayne Bergman, Director of PZB

Cc: Kirk Blouin, Town Manager  
James G. Murphy Asst. Director of PZB

Re: Revisions to Project Designation Manual & Matrix

Date: June 30, 2022

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Staff has considered updates to the current Architectural Commission (ARCOM) Project Designation Manual (the 'Matrix'), based on direction from the Town Council, and by extension the Project Designation Guide for ARCOM & Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) (Guide). The proposed updated versions present a continued effort to simplify language and formatting, to reduce redundancies, and to reconcile any inconsistencies between the current Manual and Guide – while making practical and necessary adjustments or providing simpler clarification to project classifications.

At the February 8, 2022 Town Council meeting, PZB staff was given direction to incorporate more efficiencies in the ARCOM process, explore improvement possibilities, and facilitate methods of adding more items to minor status and expand the consent agenda when appropriate.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2015, the Project Designation Manual was first adopted by Resolution by Town Council, pursuant to Resolution # 037-2015; later amended on August 12, 2020 and on May 12, 2021, which summarizes the classification of projects in order to assist applicants in determining the type of architectural review required for their project.

Prior to submitting these updated documents to the Town Council for approval, Staff worked internally and presented to both design review commission at their recent regularly scheduled meetings in June of 2022 in an effort to optimize these documents for everyone's use. Enclosed, please find a new version of the Matrix along with the most recently updated version (May 2021) of the Designation Manual and Guide.

Proposed policy updates and further clarifications to the current versions of these documents include the following major revisions:



- Reclassification of some existing 'Major' applications to 'Minor' applications (with notice). Reclassified projects are smaller in scope and less impactful than Major applications, and with proper vetting, become eligible for placement on Consent Agenda.
- Introduction of an ARCOM Chair review category for the first time; in a similar manner of review as the Landmarks Preservation Commission, whereas "...a minor exterior change ... may be waived. Such determination shall be made by the landmarks project coordinator, with the concurrence of the chair or such other member of the commission as may be designated by the commission..." [Sec 54-71]. Inasmuch, projects which are currently classified as 'Minor Projects with Notice' have mostly been categorically converted to a Chair review category. For items submitted for Commission Chair Review, the respective Chair will delegate the request to either Commission Review (ARCOM or LPC) or Staff Review depending on the architectural compatibility of the request and of its potential impacts. If the Chair determines that Commission Review is required, projects will proceed to the Architectural Commission as a Minor Project, or to the Landmarks Preservation Commission as a Certificate of Appropriates (COA) or Historically Significant Building (HSB).
- Minor Projects without Notice have mostly been categorically converted to a Neighbor Consent category. The Consent Form, or written waivers of objection to the application from property owners ADJACENT/ABUTTING the subject property are required and must be submitted as a part of the application. Failure to obtain any required signature will nullify the Staff Level review application and the applicant would need to apply for a Commission Hearing in that event as a minor project.
- Staff Level Review covers most of the other items previously categorized as 'Minor Projects without Notice'. In kind replacement (same design, same materials, same color) of architectural and site features – for the purposes of maintenance – requires review through staff approval for Landmarks or Historically Significant Buildings; it does not require review for all other properties. All applications submitted for Staff Review will be subject to internal design review and will require full compliance with the Town of Palm Beach Zoning Code of Ordinances. Any project which may substantially impact neighboring properties or that require zoning exceptions may require design review by a Commission, subject to determination by the Director of Planning and Zoning.

The individual specific elements of review, ie. driveway, garage door, etc, have been omitted in light of broader comprehensive groupings. These descriptions are provided as examples only, and are not intended to be all-inclusive. The Director of the Planning, Zoning and Building Department, or his or her designee, may determine that the particular characteristics of a proposed project may warrant notice and/or further review by the Commission.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The primary goal within this update process is to make the Matrix more currently relevant and user-friendly for all involved in the design review process. This will continue to be the goal through periodic reassessment as needed. Staff recommends that Town Council approve the revised [ARCOM] Project Designation Manual as presented.