

What is the Heritage Commission and what does it do?

The Heritage Commission was created in 1996 by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen in order to insure the proper recognition, use and protection of legacy resources within the City. This inheritance from the past generally consists of human made things which may range widely in kind and type and which may be both tangibly or intangibly expressed. These heritage resources are typically valued for their historic, cultural, aesthetic, or community significance and are appreciated for what they contribute to the built, intellectual or spiritual environment of the City.

In order to carry out its mission to act as a stewardship organization, the Heritage Commission has, among its specific powers and duties, been granted advisory authority to:

Conduct surveys and inventories of cultural and historic resources;

Conduct research and publish findings – including reports and other preparatory documents related to establishing new historic districts;

Assist the Planning Board, as requested, in preparing those sections of the Master Plan which address cultural and historic resources; and

Advise, upon request, local agencies and other local boards in their review of requests on matters affecting cultural and historic resources.

Also, one of the key tasks assigned to the Heritage Commission when it was created was to assume the duties and powers previously granted to the new defunct Historic District Commission (1981-1996). Chief among these duties is:

The power to review and approve all building permit applications involving outdoor work within the Amoskeag Corporation Housing Historic District, and the power to review and approve all proposals to demolish buildings and other structures in either the Amoskeag Corporation Housing or the Amoskeag Millyard Historic Districts.

The Commission also consults with the State Historic Preservation Officer and applicants in cases related to application of Section 106 rules (Federal Historic Preservation Act).