

**CHAPTER 1224**  
**Harbour Town Historic District**

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**CROSS REFERENCES**

Planning Commission - see CHTR. Art. VI; ADM. Ch. 262  
 Ohio Historical Society - see Ohio R.C. 149.30 et seq.  
 Archeological landmarks - see Ohio R.C. 149.51 et seq.  
 Community improvement corporations - see Ohio R.C. Ch. 1724;  
     P. & Z. Ch. 1222  
 Port Authority - see ADM. Ch. 272  
 Harbormaster - see TRAF. Ch. 480  
 Signs in the Harbour Town District - see P. & Z. 1274.02, 1274.14  
 Wireless telecommunications towers and facilities in Harbour Town  
 Historic District - see P. & Z. 1275.03(a)(10)

**1224.01 DISTRICT CREATION.**

(a) There is hereby created in the City of Vermilion, a district to be known as the Harbour Town Historic District and bounded as follows: northerly by the shoreline of Lake Erie; westerly by the west line of the property abutting Jefferson Street on the west; southerly by the south line of the property abutting South Street on the south; and easterly by the east sideline of West River Road to Columbus Street and continuing north along the east shoreline of the Vermilion River.

(b) A new district is hereby created in the City of Vermilion, known as the Downtown Target Area which encompasses part of the Harbour Town Historic District and is described as follows: Liberty Avenue east of Decatur Street across the bridge to Red Clay on the River (former McGarvey Site), east side of Decatur Street south of Liberty Avenue to the Conrail Railroad Tracks, south on West River Road to the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Main Street north to Lake Erie and south to the Conrail Railroad Tracks, Huron Street west of Main Street to the Gilchrist House Bed and Breakfast, Grand Street south of Liberty Avenue to the Conrail Railroad Tracks, Toledo Street south of Liberty Avenue to the Conrail Railroad Tracks.  
(Ord. 01-64. Passed 12-17-01.)

**1224.02 PURPOSE.**

The purpose of this chapter is to promote the economic, educational, cultural and general welfare of the public through the perpetuation, protection, enhancement and preservation of the Harbour Town Historic District. Council hereby affirms that it is a public purpose to insure that the distinctive, historical and nautical character of this district shall not be injuriously affected, that the value to the community of those buildings and sites having architectural and historical worth shall not be impaired and that the Harbour Town Historic District be maintained and preserved for the education, pleasure and welfare of the residents of the City.  
(Ord. 93-67. Passed 11-15-93.)

**1224.03 DEFINITIONS.**

For the purpose of this chapter, the following terms and words are hereby defined: "Harbour Town Historic District", "Historic District" or "District" means the area of the City commonly referred to as Harbour Town, as specifically delineated in Section 1224.01 and shown on the official Zoning Map which is on file in the office of the Clerk of Council and which:

- (a) Has a special character or historical or aesthetic interest or value;
  - (b) Represents an era in the history of the City; and
  - (c) By reason of these factors, constitutes a distinct section of the City.
- (Ord. 93-67. Passed 11-15-93.)

**1224.04 DESIGN AND REVIEW BOARD; CREATION AND DUTIES.**

(a) There is hereby established a Historic Vermilion Design and Review Board and the Mayor is given the authority to appoint the members of the Board, as per the guidelines in the Harbour Town Study, and as more specifically set forth below:

- (1) There shall be a maximum of nine members of the Board.
  - (2) Members shall be appointed by the Mayor subject to confirmation by a majority of the members of Council.
  - (3) Members of the Board shall be selected from the following:
    - A. One member from the Chamber of Commerce or Downtown Merchants.
    - B. One member from the Friends of Harbour Town.
    - C. One member from the Historical Society or its counterpart.
    - D. Two members from the following design oriented disciplines:
      - 1. Architects.
      - 2. Landscape architects.
      - 3. Planners.
      - 4. Interior designers.
      - 5. Realtors.
      - 6. Contractors.
    - E. One member from the Garden Club or other women's club.
    - F. Three members from residents of the Historic District, not connected to any of the above groups.
    - G. One ex-officio members appointed by the Planning Commission.
  - (4) The term of the members shall be three years, except that of the initial membership, three members shall be appointed for one year; three members for two years; and three members for three years. Members shall serve without compensation and at the pleasure of the Mayor. Members shall elect their own Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary.
- (Ord. 96-29. Passed 7-15-96.)

- (b) The Board shall be charged with the following functions:
  - (1) To exercise aesthetic judgment to maintain a desirable character in the Harbour Town Historic District;
  - (2) To study the problems and determine the needs of the City in furthering the purpose of restoring and preserving the area known as the Harbour Town Historic District;
  - (3) To conduct surveys of buildings for the purpose of determining those of local historic and/or architectural significance;
  - (4) To formulate recommendations concerning the preparation of maps, brochures and historical markers for selected historic and/or architectural sites and buildings;

- (5) To cooperate with and advise the Planning Commission, Council and other Municipal agencies, in matters involving historic sites and buildings, as to legislation necessary, if any, to preserve and develop the Harbour Town Historic District;
- (6) To advise owners of historic buildings on problems of preservation and restoration;
- (7) To review exterior building and site plans, including landscaping, orientation of buildings and use of materials, and to determine, in the opinion of the Board, whether the character of the improvement is in harmony with existing development in the Harbour Town District. All proposals for alterations to existing structures or construction of new buildings in the Historic District must come before the Design and Review Board for advice, prior to the Building Inspector issuing a permit. The Design and Review Board shall respond to each proposal within thirty days of first discussing said proposal, provided the Board receives all requested information.
  - A. Nothing shall be construed to prevent the construction, reconstruction, alteration or demolition of any exterior architectural feature which the Building Inspector shall determine is required by public safety because of dangerous or unsafe conditions.
  - B. Nothing shall be construed as authorizing the Board, in acting with respect to district uses, or in adopting regulations in relation thereto, to regulate or limit the height and bulk of buildings, to regulate and determine the area of yards, courts and other open spaces, to regulate density of population or to regulate and restrict the location of trades and industries or the location of buildings designed for specific uses or to create districts for any such purpose.
- (8) To provide for regular and special meetings to accomplish the purpose of paragraphs (b)(1) to (7) hereof.

(c) The Board shall be guided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Should the Board choose to modify the aforesaid Standards, such modifications shall be forwarded to the Planning Commission for study and recommendation to Council.  
(Ord. 93-67. Passed 11-15-93.)

(d) The Board shall have no regulatory powers for residential property in this district. It shall only act as a review and recommending advisory body. The Board shall have regulatory power in regard to commercial properties in the Harbour Town Historic District and the downtown target area. If the commercial application is not acceptable to the Historic Design and Review Board, the Board will work with the owner of the property to resolve the problem. Once any necessary Planning Commission review and approval is acquired and once consensus is reached by the Historic Design and Review Board, the Building Inspector shall then issue a permit. If the Design and Review Board cannot reach resolution and the permit is denied, the Board shall attempt to work out an alternative plan with the owner or his agent that is acceptable to all parties.

If the Board and owner are unable to work out an alternative plan or if the owner does not wish to take this action, the owner may take the written decision of denial from the Design and Review Board and make an appeal to Vermilion City Council.  
(Ord. 01-64. Passed 12-17-01.)

(e) The Board shall work in close harmony with the Planning Commission in the development of the Harbour Town District, and any and all regulations or changes recommended by the Board shall be submitted to the Planning Commission for study and recommendation to Council.

(Ord. 93-67. Passed 11-15-93.)

#### 1224.05 ADDITIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS.

The Historic Vermilion Design and Review Board shall have jurisdiction, as set forth in this chapter, over any legally recognized historic structure or historic district that exists inside the City limits. Should Council create additional historic districts, the membership of the Design and Review Board shall be so redefined as to include representatives from those districts.

(Ord. 93-67. Passed 11-15-93.)

#### 1224.06 REVITALIZATION PLAN UPDATE.

(a) There is hereby adopted by and for the Municipality the Revitalization Plan Update, being particularly known as the 2011 update thereof, as prepared by the Edge Group for downtown Vermilion. This is an update of the plan that was adopted by the City in 1972 and by City Council in 2001. (Ord. 2011-26. Passed 5-2-11.)

(b) The purpose of the Revitalization Plan Update, as adopted in subsection (a) hereof, is to build upon previously completed studies by bringing the concepts, thoughts and ideas together in a graphic master plan. Through plans, sketches, diagrams and supporting text, this Plan articulates a concept that will guide the City, private property owners, private developers, and concerned citizens toward future improvements in Harbour Town. Beyond the recommendations made for the physical environment in this document, are critical strategic recommendations regarding organizational structure, marketing, fund-raising, historic preservation, and heritage tourism. In addition to using this Plan as a decision-making tool, the imagery found within this document should also be used to inspire the community, rally support, and pursue funding from both public and private resources.

(c) At least one copy of the Revitalization Plan Update, as adopted in subsection (a) hereof, shall be on file with the Clerk of Council for inspection by the public. In addition, the Clerk of Council shall keep copies of such Code available for distribution to the public, at cost. (Ord. 01-37. Passed 8-6-01.)