

Legislation Text

File #: 190663, **Version:** 0

Authorizing the City Council Committee on Finance to hold hearings to investigate the possibility of starting a fund to help decrease the cost burden on families living in historic districts who have additional expenses associated with maintaining their properties as required by the historic preservation guidelines.

WHEREAS, Philadelphia is a historic city in the United States, with properties that should be preserved for future generations. Through historic designation, the Philadelphia Historic Commission recognizes and protects historic properties; and

WHEREAS, The Historic Commission gathers information about Historic Districts, including: narratives that describe their significance, inventories of resources within their boundaries, maps, manuals for property owners, and miscellaneous documents, such as ordinances; and

WHEREAS, Owners of historic properties have certain obligations under the historic preservation ordinance. They must get approval from the Historical Commission before doing work on their properties, they must follow the terms of the commission's approvals, and they must keep their properties in good condition; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, property owners need the Commission's approval if they want to make changes to their properties that require a building permit or alter the exterior of the building or site features; and

WHEREAS, The cost burden of maintaining a property within historic guidelines is often greater than it would be otherwise. Many property owners have found themselves in the precarious position of being unable to afford the repairs and updates to their homes because of a historic designation. Some owners have had liens placed on their properties because they were unable to maintain the upkeep according the standards; and

WHEREAS, While Historic Commission does provide free advice for maintaining one's property according to the correct standards, there is currently no financial support for owners who may not be able to afford the maintenance required; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the City Council Committee on Finance is authorized to hold hearings to investigate the possibility of starting a fund to help decrease the cost burden on families living in historic districts who have additional expenses associated with maintaining their properties as required by the historic preservation guidelines.