

## **Recommendation to Amend the Designation Ordinance for Liddell-McNinch House**

The ca. 1892 Liddell-McNinch House, 511 North Church Street, Charlotte, was designated as a local historic landmark in 1976. The designation includes only the house. The 0.395 acre lot is not included in designation. Designation of the land around the historic house would help to ensure the protection and preservation of the historic character of the house by giving the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) design review control over more of the property.

The current designation ordinance for the Liddell-McNinch House was drafted in 1976, and the language in the ordinance is vague in terms of what is included within the designation. The interior of the Liddell-McNinch House, as noted in the designation report, is remarkable in terms of its integrity and historic design, and has been meticulously maintained since that 1976 designation. The ordinance should expressly include the interior of the house within the designation.

Once an addendum to the existing designation report is produced addressing the issues described above, Staff recommends that the HLC recommend that Charlotte City Council amend the designation ordinance for the Liddell-McNinch House to include the 0.395 acres of land historically associated with the house, and to specify what portions of the interior of the house should be included in the designation.

State law allows for a property tax deferral of up to 50% for locally designated historic landmarks in North Carolina specifically for circumstances such as the Liddell-McNinch House:

*When the General Assembly enacted the statute for a Local Historic Landmark property tax deferral, it did so for a specific reason. Local landmarks are designated because of their outstanding individual significance to the community. These are the properties that if demolished or inappropriately altered would negatively affect the community as a whole. As such, retaining these properties over time in a manner that respects their physical integrity is paramount. In short, the tax deferral was established not as a reward or a prize, but to help offset the often higher cost of conducting appropriate restoration or repair work on a landmark...Therefore, the tax deferral has been seen statewide as being highly important in retaining these pivotal properties for future generations.<sup>1</sup>*

The historic tax deferral for the Liddle-McNinch House is currently 7%. Staff believes that the preservation of the Liddell-McNinch House would be better secured if the ordinance is amended as described above, so that the current and future owners of the property would be eligible for a 50% property tax deferral.

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<sup>1</sup> “Winston-Salem’s Local Historic Landmark Program Financial Impact Study,” 2011. <https://www.cityofws.org/DocumentCenter/View/3464/03-15-2013-Winston-Salem-Local-Historic-Landmark-Program-Financial-Impact-Study-PDF>. Accessed 10/28/2025.