CITY OF SOUTHPORT

Historic Preservation Commission
Indian Trail Meeting Hall, 113 W. Moore Street
March 5, 2025
4:00 P.M.

AGENDA

Please turn off all cell phones

The Historic Preservation Commission's regular monthly meeting will be held at 4:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. All members are asked to attend.

A. Call to Order
B. Invocation
C. Pledge of Allegiance
D. Approval of Agenda
E. Approval of Minutes
1. Approval of the February 5, 2025 Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

F. Public Comment
G. Old Business
1. Final Review of Draft Design Standards

H. New Business
1. Local Designation Report (Draft)

I. Other Business
1. Updates on Down-Zoning Law

J. Announcements
K. Adjourn

CITY OF SOUTHPORT
CITY OF SOUTHPORT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
February 5, 2025
4:00 PM

Members Present: Charles Drew, Rick Pukanus, Jim McKee, Josh Cline-McGee, Joanne Wesson, Alexis Graves, Bonnie Bray

Members Absent: Bonner Herring

Staff Present: Penny Tysinger, Historic Preservation Planner
Maureen Meehan, Planning Services Director
Tori Deviney, Deputy City Clerk

A. Chair Drew called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM.

B. Ms. Graves provided the invocation.

C. Chair Drew led the Pledge of Allegiance

D. Approval of Agenda
A request was made to move Item H1, Friends of Franklin, to the top of the agenda, ahead of public comment. **A motion was made by Ms. Wesson, which was seconded by Mr. Pukanus.** ***The motion passed unanimously with all ayes.***

E. Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes of the January 8, 2025 Meeting
   Mr. Pukanus made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. McGee. ***Motion passed unanimously with all ayes.***

F. Public Comment
Ms. Pat Kirkman, 119 Park Ave, addressed the Commission, expressing her support and encouragement. She acknowledged the Commission's perseverance despite obstacles, particularly in dealing with the state. She urged the Commission to improve public communication regarding their progress and efforts. Ms. Kirkman suggested that meeting minutes and updates be more readily available to the public and that the Commission should engage with the community more frequently. She concluded by encouraging the Commission to continue pushing forward in their efforts to preserve Southport's history. Chair Drew thanked

Ms. Kirkman for her comments and assured her that the Commission shared in her frustrations and would work toward better transparency.

G. Old Business

1. Commission Member Comments on Draft Design Standards

Ms. Tysinger reported that she had received written and verbal comments from various Commission members and that the consultant was reviewing the document for consistency, spelling, and grammar errors. The Commission discussed changes to the organization of the document, including moving the goals of the Historic Preservation Commission earlier in the introduction for better readability.

Ms. Bray expressed concerns about the placement of the section on protecting Southport's historic vistas, suggesting that it be moved from the introduction to the Southport history and architecture section for better context. Mr. McGee supported this revision and highlighted the need for more clarity in defining major versus minor alterations in the guidelines, particularly for patios and chimneys. He also noted that some language in the guidelines should be more directive, such as specifying that window air conditioning units should not be installed on front facades rather than merely advising against them.

Further discussions included clarifications on specific design elements such as service chimneys, historic foundations, and architectural guidelines for new constructions. Concerns were raised about language that appeared too flexible, with suggestions to use more definitive terms to prevent misinterpretations. The Commission also debated on the appropriateness of flat or arched roofs in commercial buildings and how historic masonry should be treated, particularly regarding painting.

The discussion on painting historic masonry expanded to address the preservation of pre-1926 bricks, which are typically lime-based and more porous than post-1926 Portland-based bricks. Mr. McKee provided insight into the detrimental effects of painting historic brick, noting that trapped moisture could cause bricks to deteriorate into clay over time. He referenced findings from St. Philips Church, where a sealant applied in 1975 caused significant damage by locking in moisture. The Commission agreed that unpainted historic foundations should not be painted unless the wall is damaged beyond repair. Additionally, the use of Portland cement on pre-1926 brick was discussed, emphasizing its potential to cause mortar joints to erode under high humidity and wind-blown sand conditions.

Chair Drew suggested the review of the document section by section, with each member assigned a specific portion for detailed review. The following sections were assigned to individual Commission members for review:

- **Introduction (pages 6-22)** – Chair Drew
- **Southport History and Architecture** – Mr. McKee
- **Site and Setting (Section 1.0)** – Ms. Graves
- **Exterior Changes to Buildings (Section 2.0)** – Mr. Pukanus
- **New Construction and Additions (Section 3.0)** – Mr. McGee
- **Relocation and Demolition (Section 4.0)** – Ms. Tysinger
- **Disaster Preparedness and Prevention (Section 5.0)** – Ms. Bray
- **Appendix and Glossary** – Ms. Wesson

A special meeting was scheduled for February 19 to finalize the document before the March meeting with the possibility of the consultant being able to join by Zoom.

Mr. McGee presented information regarding North Carolina General Statute 160D-940, which allows local governments to establish historic districts and landmarks. He emphasized that, despite legislative challenges, the statute provides a legal framework supporting historic preservation efforts. He pointed out that the language in the statute clearly outlines the authority of local Commissions in safeguarding the cultural and architectural heritage of their respective cities and felt this could potentially be a way to override House Bill 382 if the new document doesn't say that it supersedes a previous document.

H. New Business

1. Friends of Franklin - Memorial Plaque for Franklin Square Park

   Alderman Davis introduced Ms. Jeanne Potter, a representative of Friends of Franklin, who presented the proposed memorial plaque for Franklin Square Park. Ms. Potter provided a detailed historical account of the park's origins, explaining that the land was originally donated by North Carolina Governor Benjamin Smith in 1798 and developed into a park in 1935 as a WPA project to provide employment during the Great Depression. She emphasized the park's historical significance and the group's efforts to preserve its condition. The proposed plaque would recognize the park's history and the contributions of those who helped create and maintain it.

   Ms. Potter requested the Commission's endorsement to present the plaque proposal to the Board of Aldermen. Mr. McKee inquired about the original plantings, particularly the camellias, and suggested that their historical significance should be highlighted in the presentation. The Commission agreed that the park's historical designation and the effort to restore and maintain it were vital. **A motion was made by Mr. McKee and seconded by Mr. Pukanus** to grant the Commission's endorsement for the plaque. **The motion passed unanimously with all ayes.**

   Chair Drew thanked Ms. Potter for her presentation and shared a personal memory about banana shrubs, which were significant to his family. He recognized the Friends of Franklin for their advocacy in maintaining the park and ensuring its historical preservation. Ms. Potter noted that the group's efforts had led to the City investing in tree preservation and hiring a parks management expert to provide recommendations for improvements. The Commission discussed the importance of treating the park as a historic structure, emphasizing careful maintenance and protection measures.

2. Local Designation Report (Draft)

   Ms. Tysinger provided an update regarding the local designation report draft, stating that it had not yet been received. She assured the Commission that she had provided all necessary updates and was hopeful that the delay would not derail progress. She emphasized that they would continue pushing forward to keep the process on track.

I. Other Business

1. Updates on Down-Zoning Law

   Ms. Tysinger provided an update regarding House Bill 24, which was introduced at the end of January to restore downzoning authority to local governments. She explained that the Bill would retroactively reinstate local governments' ability to initiate zoning changes, which had been repealed. If passed, the Bill would take effect immediately and apply retroactively to December 11th of the previous year. She noted that the Bill was currently in Judiciary Committee Three and would need to pass through several additional committees before being scheduled for a vote. Although no dates had been set, she stated that the Bill was progressing through the legislative process in a step-by-step manner and remained optimistic that it would advance successfully.

   Ms. Tysinger updated the Commission on an ongoing infrastructure project, the City's weather tower, and noted that the project was progressing through the SHPO review process.

J. Announcements

None

K. Adjourn

Mr. Pukanus made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. McKee. **The motion passed unanimously with all ayes.**

Adjourned at 5:07 PM