



**CITY OF SOUTHPORT
CITY OF SOUTHPORT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
April 2, 2025
6:00 PM**

Members Present: Charles Drew, Rick Pukenas, Jim McKee, Alexis Gore-Graves, Josh McGee
Bonner Herring, Bonnie Bray

Absent Members: Joanne Wesson, Tal West

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

- A. Chair Drew called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.
- B. Chair Drew gave the Invocation.
- C. Chair Drew led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- D. **Approval of Agenda**

Mr. McGee made a motion to approve the agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Pukenas.
All members were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Approval of Minutes

- 1. Approval of the February 19, 2025 Historic Preservation Commission Special Meeting Minutes
Mr. Pukenas made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2025, Historic Preservation Commission Special Meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Herring.
All members were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.
- 2. Approval of the March 5, 2025 Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Mr. Pukenas made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2025, Historic Preservation Commission Meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Herring.
All members were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

F. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

G. Old Business

1. Edit on Design Standards

Ms. Tysinger explained that Chapter 3 of the design standards had been reconfigured to better distinguish between residential and commercial considerations. Now, the chapter is organized into sections for residential additions, new residential construction, and their associated standards such as placement, height, and scale. A separate section addresses commercial additions and new commercial construction with similar standards.

Landscaping was moved under the “Site and Setting” category for site features and plans, and a call-out box was added to remind users of the required standards. She hoped these changes would allow the standards to flow more logically and assist Commission members during hearings by enabling easier reference.

Chair Drew asked if there were any questions, and Director Meehan followed by confirming that these revised standards would be presented to the Board of Aldermen at their upcoming meeting. Chair Drew will attend the Board meeting, and although no formal action will be taken at that meeting, it was important to present the standards so the Board and the public have time to review and provide input. The Board of Aldermen meeting will take place on Monday the 7th at 9:00 a.m. at the Community Building.

Director Meehan added that they plan to post on the City’s social media site to spread the word and encourage public review and support. She encouraged members to share the distributed links to broaden community awareness. Ms. Tysinger noted the revised standards will be added to the website the following day.

H. New Business

1. Amendment to District Map

Ms. Tysinger explained that Andrea Radford, the consultant, after reviewing the inventory report, recommended adjusting the boundary due to a high number of non-contributing structures in the Yacht Basin and the west side of Kingsley Drive. These areas were removed from the proposed boundary, which is marked by a yellow line on the provided map. She noted that the State would likely question the inclusion of these areas given their altered or demolished conditions.

Chair Drew asked for clarification regarding properties such as the former Shell Shop, now Edgewater, and Fishy Fishy. Director Meehan confirmed these were now non-contributing due to extensive modifications. She emphasized that while the Yacht Basin remains a historically significant place, removing it from the local district doesn’t diminish its value—it simply means the properties would not be bound to HPC standards.

Chair Drew raised a question about an area made into a parking lot within the Yacht Basin and the possibility of future development. Mr. McKee recalled that soil testing from the early 2000’s revealed highly unstable conditions requiring deep pilings, making substantial construction difficult. He and other members agreed it was worth considering whether any potentially buildable lots should remain within the district to ensure future development follows HPC standards.

Chair Drew reviewed changes to the original 1980 boundary, which included cutting out the Yacht Basin, parts of Brown Street, and the Taylor Field area. Director Meehan reiterated that the revised boundary followed existing property lines and did not exclude any relevant lots on South Caswell.

Mr. McKee suggested adjusting the line near the Yacht Basin to include specific lots like Potter's Seafood. Ms. Tysinger agreed and suggested rounding the line into the water and wrapping it back at West Moore Street. Director Meehan clarified this would include the south side of West Moore and the west side of Caswell down to Bay and Caswell. Director Meehan and Mr. Herring also discussed the potential inclusion of other lots along South Caswell and Kingsley Drive, which have largely lost historic integrity.

Ms. Tysinger confirmed that although Kingsley Park is mentioned in the report, it was established around 2000 and would not qualify as contributing. She recommended including the entire park (land and water) in the district. Chair Drew expressed support for including it anyway, noting that city-owned property is not immune from change by future boards.

Discussion turned to the west end of West West Street. Chair Drew raised concerns about several parcels being left out, including one he recalled being historically significant. Ms. Tysinger and Mr. Herring walked through the parcel information, ultimately determining that the property formerly owned by Emily McKeithen, 424 West West, was still included. Director Meehan pointed out some homes in the area had been extensively rehabilitated or newly constructed, such as those at 510 and 514 West West Street.

Mr. McGee raised a question regarding the placement of the boundary line, noting that on Brown Street, the historic district boundary runs down the center of the street. He suggested the same approach be applied to South Caswell and West Moore Streets for consistency.

Director Meehan responded that in this case, the intention was most likely to ensure the right-of-way was included within the boundary. Therefore, instead of following individual property lines, the revised map would align the district boundary with the centerline of South Caswell and West Moore Streets. Chair Drew agreed, observing that the existing boundary line appeared to include the full right-of-way in that area.

Mr. McGee added that placing the line down the center of the street eliminates confusion about which properties fall within the district. He stated that drawing the boundary this way provides clarity—if a property is on the other side of the street, it's definitively either included or not, depending on the boundary's location.

Chair Drew asked if there was any more discussion on the topic and asked if anyone would like to entertain a motion.

Mr. McKee made a motion to amend the map as discussed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pukenas. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

2. Local Designation Report (Draft)

Ms. Tysinger introduced the draft Local Designation Report, which corresponds with the boundary amendment. The report outlines the significance of the proposed district and evaluates 357 principal structures within it, using five criteria to determine their contributing status: construction date, roofline integrity, exterior cladding, windows, and porches. A resource had to meet at least three of these five to be considered contributing. Color-coded text within the report indicates ongoing internal discussion and edits among the Commission members.

Ms. Tysinger emphasized that the local designation report does not affect the status of the National Register Historic District but noted that a future re-survey could result in the removal of some areas from the national designation due to loss of integrity. She encouraged Commission members to take the report home, read it thoroughly, and provide comments or identify significant errors.

Mr. McGee asked about the meaning of yellow text in the report, and Ms. Tysinger clarified that any colored text reflects comments and pending edits. Mr. McGee stated the report appeared thorough and well-done overall. Director Meehan reminded the Commission that this document must be submitted to the State for a 30-day review period before proceeding to the Planning Board for zoning overlay consideration.

Mr. McGee made a motion that, generally speaking, from an overview, it looks to be a good report, subject to further review by staff. The motion was seconded by Mr. Herring. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

I. Other Business

1. HPC Board Training Information

Chair Drew introduced a training opportunity for the Commission and asked Ms. Tysinger to provide the details.

Ms. Tysinger explained that the UNC School of Government will be offering a specialized workshop for Historic Preservation Commissions. The training will be conducted online on Wednesday, April 30, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. She noted that the training will cover several important topics, including the authority of local historic districts, the role of the commission, and the quasi-judicial process for deciding Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs). She emphasized the value of this session, stating that even as a staff member, she finds continuous training in quasi-judicial procedures beneficial, as it takes practice to feel comfortable navigating what can and cannot be considered during COA hearings.

Ms. Tysinger stated that the workshop could be held in a designated location so members could attend together in Southport. Mr. McGee and Chair Drew both stated they believed they could attend, with Chair Drew adding that his availability may change depending on travel plans. Mr. Herring said he was a "maybe." Ms. Graves was an okay and Ms. Bray was a yes. Chair Drew noted they would also need to check availability with Mr. West.

Ms. Tysinger proposed that the April 30 training could substitute for the Commission's regularly scheduled May meeting. If necessary, any business items could be addressed after the workshop, and the City could advertise the date change accordingly. There was general agreement among members to proceed with the plan.

J. Announcements

Chair Drew reminded members that the Board of Aldermen meeting would be held at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, April 7 at the Community Building, and encouraged any available members to attend.

Mr. McGee shared that Mr. West, the absent member, had reached out and wanted to eventually begin discussions with the Commission about district signage. While Mr. West was not in attendance, he asked that his interest in initiating that conversation be noted for future meetings.

Ms. Tysinger provided an update on legislative activity related to downzoning. She stated that House Bill 24, which would eliminate the current downzoning provision for local governments, remains in committee. A similar bill, Senate Bill 419, was filed on March 24 and is currently in the Rules Committee. She noted this was a positive development, as both the House and Senate are actively considering the issue. However, she added that Brunswick County is not currently among the communities that have filed local bills related to the matter.

K. Adjourn

Chair Drew asked for a motion to adjourn, which was made by Mr. McKee and seconded by Mr. Pukenas.

All members were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 PM.

X



Charles Drew

Chair

X



Tori Deviney

Deputy City Clerk