



**CITY OF SOUTHPORT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
113 W MOORE ST SOUTHPORT, NC 28461
November 5, 2025
4:00 p.m.
Minutes**

Present Members: Vice Chair Bonnie Bray, Jim McKee, Katherine Hufham, Alexis Gore-Graves, Tal West, Josh Cline McGee

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

Absent: Chair Charles Drew, Bonner Herring, Joanne Wesson

A. Call to Order

Vice Chair Bray called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

B. Invocation

None

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Vice Chair Bray led members in the Pledge.

Vice Chair Bray introduced Deputy City Clerk Scott Baillargeon to members of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and residents present.

D. Approval of Agenda

Vice Chair Bray asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

A motion was made by Josh Cline McGee, seconded by Jim McKee, to accept the agenda.

The motion carries unanimously

Alexis Gore Graves arrived at 4:09 p.m.

E. Public Comment

Debbie Barnes 425 W. West St

Ms. Barnes thanked the Commission for their efforts to draft a concise Proposed Local Historic District Standard; and shared that she would be pleased if it were approved in its current form, but expressed concerns that previous Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) members were named when the current member roster completed the work timely and with accuracy; and to the lack of visibility in the Rules and Procedures regarding quorum, and that it should be stated clearly to avoid confusion; for substantive issues in the Historic District, she recommended including architects and residents from like industries, or those who reside within the proposed Historic District, to serve as alternates on the HPC; and suggested adding up to nine members on the HPC as they would be vested in the issues; other issues she inquired about were in regard to the historic vistas, the waterfront and Kensington Park.

Sherol Lappala 316 Brunswick St

Ms. Lappala shared a packet regarding residential and commercial tax values; she spoke to changes in tax values among existing structures and those that had either been demolished and rebuilt, or were slated for new construction; and spoke to the size and scope of new construction projects on older lots; and to the tax value increases on new structures in contrast to previous structures; to the demolishing of commercial structures in favor of new structures that complement the City's plan for the Historic District and shared that tax values will increase; and to concerns regarding the standard's language regarding exterior fixtures, windows, and doors and shared examples with the HPC that suggested further review and consideration.

E. Old Business

1. Discussion of Board of Aldermen Inquiries on Proposed Local Historic District Standards

Vice Chair Bray suggested that the Commission review each of the changes within the document, and highlight whether the language should be added or earmarked for deletion; she shared as a reminder that the HPC had already completed their duties regarding the Standards; and that it was now up to the Board of Aldermen to adopt the language outlined in the Standard as written; and emphasized that no additional changes can be made to the current document, noting that the goal for the meeting was to address suggested recommendations and present them to

the Board of Aldermen for consideration; and that the State was in possession of the Standard, and noted that all final changes or deletions to the document would be within the purview of the Board of Aldermen.

Planning Services Director Meehan spoke to the Certificate of Application (COA) process; and addressed the language concerning “light fixtures” and cautioned the Commission from deleting this language as it was included in NCGS 160D-947.

Vice Chair Bray shared that all terms and sentences highlighted in Green were earmarked for deletion, and those in Yellow were being considered in addition to the current language of the document; and that processes that were already in place, such as the City’s Tree Protection Process, would not be altered; but the deletion of “rear and non-visible yards” would be along with similar terms throughout the pages earmarked for review; and spoke to items that should be considered as Minor and Major COAs rather than how they were currently listed; and to the removal of maintenance vistas.

Mr. McGee inquired about the previous discussion of these matters among the HPC.

Vice Chair Bray stated they would make time to consider and discuss each suggested alteration to the language; she expressed concern regarding property owners’ rights and the impact of specific language to them; and spoke to the next items on the list:

- A softening or a deletion of harsh language regarding enforcement.
- changes to the language concerning “walkways and driveways” that were aimed toward being more malleable to achieve amicable results with the community.
- Softening the language through the remaining pages.
- She suggested breaking up the sentence regarding shutter being congruous to historic structures but shared that “louvres” and “blinds” as stated in Section 2.5.10 of the standard be rewritten for clarity.

Mr. McKee spoke to exterior brick facades and shared that brick of a certain age and make cannot be painted or pressure washed due to its porosity and noted that it would damage the brick including its structural integrity; and shared background regarding historical brick firing methods that are contrary to contemporary methods; and suggested outlining this information in the standard for clarity for all residents.

Vice Chair Bray thanked Mr. McKee for his comments and spoke to the next items for changes and deletions.

- Noting other additional harsh language to be removed to soften the impacts to property owners;

- and inquired feedback from the Commission regarding “light fixtures”, “landscaping”, and the removal of planted trees;
- and revisited the language concerning language already included in the NC General Statutes.

Planning Services Director Meehan spoke to the language of the Ordinance concerned with those items; and read the Ordinance in the NC Statute; and shared that “light fixtures” could not be exempted per the language of NCGS 160D-947.

Vice Chair Bray asked if there were any additional input from the Commission regarding these items.

Ms. Gore-Graves shared that she would provide her recommendations in an email at a later date; and inquired if the language would include “signs and other fixtures” in addition.

Mr. McGee suggested adding the NC Statute concerning “light fixtures” in its entirety to avoid confusion.

Planning Services Director Meehan stated that Statute does include “light fixtures” but disregards the inclusion of “landscaping”.

Vice Chair Bray added that the removal of dead trees was also exempted from the language.

Mr. McGee shared that the Commission should not concern itself with the removal of dead trees.

Vice Chair Bray suggested preserving the language outlined on pg. 16 the way it was written; and moved to pg. 21 for consideration.

Mr. McGee expressed concern with removing the language cited on pg. 21, 10. ii.

- 10.ii. “Vistas of the Historic District should be maintained. These include seascapes, landscapes, and streetscapes.”; and suggested that “maintain when possible” be added to the sentence as written; and emphasized that he felt that it was still strongly worded; and noted that the language should not be removed but considered adding to “when possible”.

Vice Chair Bray suggested adding “when possible” to the sentence on pg. 45, Section 1.1.7 for Board of Aldermen consideration; and noted altering the language on pg. 45, Section 1.1.7 “Contemporary edging or border materials, such as exposed landscape timbers, railroad ties, pre-cast concrete, plastic, or other substitute material borders are not appropriate in areas seen from public

view”; and shared that she thought the Commission had previously removed this language.

Planning Services Director Meehan shared clarification that it was removed further down in the document but had been preserved here for speaking to around plant beds; and emphasized that it had been removed from the parking areas, concerning “walkways and driveways”, but noted that the Commission was not reviewing landscaping at this time.

Viced Chair Bray spoke to the redundancy of language concerning “edging and timbers” or “border materials”; and inquired of the Commission to voice objections to the language of “if possible”.

Planning Services Director Meehan shared that “edging and timbers” or “border materials” would not be included in the parking sections and shared that landscapes were not part of this review.

Historic Preservation Planner Tysinger spoke to “walkways and driveways” and shared that if the language were to be removed might cause confusion; and noted the importance of context when considering each matter; and spoke to the context of Section 1.6.2, “Built in features such as pavilions, gazebos, screened rooms, or other types of roofed structures such as sheds are not appropriate,” in regard to “gazebos and docks”; and emphasized the need to use consistent language throughout; and shared that should the language be removed might suggest it would be admissible.

Mr. McGee suggested removing “docks” from the language.

Planning Services Director Meehan suggested adding “when applicable” to retain “docks” in the standard.

Aldermen Carrol inquired about constructing two-story structures, such as gazebos on docks, per the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA); and suggested leaving the language for the Board of Aldermen to consider.

Historic Preservation Planner Tysinger stated that CAMA provided guidelines for structures; and shared that it was intended to be more guidelines than regulations.

Mr. West expressed concerns about adding the language that addresses two-story gazebos on docks; and shared that it was not in the purview of the Commission to interfere with residents regarding their private structures.

Vice Chair Bray stated that the scope was to address all possible cases to ensure guidance was in place should the matter arise.

Ms. Hufham inquired about how many existing lots presently have piers.

Mr. West added that the role of the Commission was to ensure residents of private property remain within their building envelope.

Mr. McGee suggested rewriting the language to ensure that it is recognized that CAMA holds the final say on the matter.

Planning Services Director Meehan shared that the language was already provided in the document.

Historic Preservation Planner Tysinger spoke to inconsistencies in language when certain terms are removed; and emphasized the benefits of their inclusion should the matter ever arise.

Vice Chair Bray asked the Commission for feedback concerning the addition or deletion of the language and the harm it may pose.

Mr. McKee suggested incorporating in the language “may not be appropriate” to Section 1.6.2, “Built in features such as pavilions, gazebos, screened rooms, or other types of roofed structures such as sheds are not appropriate,” to allow for interpretation.

Vice Chair Bray suggested switching 1.6.4, “When possible, repair docks, piers, and boardwalks and their details and features, using accepted preservation methods”, with 1.6.2, “Built in features such as pavilions, gazebos, screened rooms, or other types of roofed structures such as sheds are not appropriate,” for clarity of language.

Mr. McGee emphasized that they would likely receive resistance from the Board of Aldermen regarding these changes; and shared that the Commission needs to ensure clarity and consistency throughout the document.

Vice Chair Bray called attention to pg. 58 Sections 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 for consideration; she addressed the changes added to the language of each section of “when possible”, added to Section 2.1.2, and “exactly when possible” to Section 2.1.3.; and concerning page 59:

- Section 2.1.10, “Avoid constructing additional stories resulting in an altered appearance that is incongruous with the Historic District”, noted that it would be an overreach to say “incongruous” with Residential and Commercial neighboring properties; and emphasized the different looks throughout the neighborhoods.

Mr. McGee shared that the language was inconsistent with neighboring partners; and inquired about feasibility of enforcing.

Planning Services Director Meehan spoke to the language provided and shared examples concerning Standards and COAs; and addressed the term “objectively” as it was used in the Statute to show there was room for interpretation and consideration.

The Commission found nothing to address on pages 61,62, and 63.

Vice Chair Bray inquired about tinted glass considerations on pg. 63, Section 2.4.5 “Tinted glass is not appropriate in the Historic District in any area visible from public view. Energy-saving or “low-E” glass may be used only if it is not tinted”; she noted that it addresses the exclusion of “tinted glass”.

Mr. McGee spoke to the issues that arise concerning “tinted glass”; and shared an anecdote regarding “mirrored glass” and the similarities among gradation of tint; and suggested adding, “glass with reflective or tinted properties may not be appropriate.”

Mr. West spoke about store-bought tint as it is occasionally applied to store front windows to reduce sun exposure; and suggested an alteration to the wording to include “excluding Low E glass” to safeguard environmental considerations.

Vice Chair Bray shared that the proposed change would read to remove Low E glass in favor of “tinted glass *may not be* appropriate”.

- and addressed pg. 64, Section 2.4.7, and requested the addition of “if possible” to the language; that it should be left to the Board of Aldermen to consider; and suggested breaking the sentence in two for clarity.
- and confirmed that pg. 64, 2.4.9 and 2.5.9 were correct per the recommendations.
- and emphasized that 2.6.7 should be deleted.

Planning Services Director Meehan shared that the current language in the Standard already reflects the changes; but emphasized the guidelines concerning brick facades.

Vice Chair Bray suggested the addition of “*may be inappropriate*” to soften the language as written; and add “*maybe*” instead of “*is*”; she shared that they would pause here due to time constraints and would take up the matter again at the next regular meeting.

F. New Business

1. Annual Meeting

- Annual Report
- 2026 Regular Schedule Meeting Calendar

Historic Preservation Planner Tysinger shared that the Annual Report can wait until the next regular meeting in December and that she would forward Chair Drew and Vice Chair Bray a copy of the proposed Regular Meeting Schedule for review and consideration.

A motion was made by Mr. McKee and seconded by Ms. Gore-Graves in favor of moving the Annual Report to the December meeting.

The motion carries unanimously

G. Other Business

None

H. Announcements

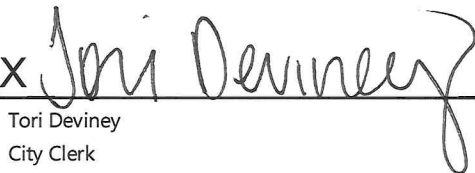
None

I. Adjourn

The Historic Preservation Commission adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

X 

Charles Drew
Chair

X 
Tori Deviney
City Clerk

