



**CITY OF SOUTHPORT
CITY OF SOUTHPORT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA
Indian Trail Meeting Hall
113 W. Moore Street
Southport, North Carolina 28461
May 6, 2026**

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. April 1, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
- F. Public Comment**
- G. Old Business**
 - 1. Updated Local Historic Preservation Design Standards
- H. New Business**
- I. Other Business**
- J. Announcements**
- K. Adjourn**



**CITY OF SOUTHPORT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
INDIAN TRAIL MEETING HALL
113 W. MOORE STREET, SOUTHPORT, NC 28461
April 1st, 2026
4:00 PM
Minutes**

Present Members: Chair Charles Drew, Vice Chair Bonnie Bray, Jim McKee, Joanne Wesson, Tal West, Bonner Herring, Katherine Hufham, 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: Alexis Gore-Graves

A. Call to Order

Chair Drew called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Opening Remarks:

Chair Drew provided an overview of the Historic Preservation Commission's (HPC) ongoing efforts over the past three years to establish a Historic District overlay, including associated guidelines and standards. It was noted that the draft guidelines have undergone substantial revision, with over 100 changes, deletions, and modifications aimed at addressing public concerns and opposition.

Chair Drew acknowledged that, through compromise, the HPC has faced challenges in maintaining focus on its core mission: preserving the City's historic character, promoting education, and preventing incompatible demolition and development. Preservation was reaffirmed as a top priority identified by more than 600 participants in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

He clarified that the intent is not to restrict growth, infringe on property rights, or impose undue burdens on property owners, but rather to ensure continued preservation of Southport's character for future generations. He noted that it was

emphasized that current zoning regulations, including the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), do not provide protection for architectural design in residential or commercial districts, and that a Historic District overlay is the only enforceable mechanism available under North Carolina law. And noted that advisory-only alternatives were described as non-enforceable and ineffective.

Chair Drew addressed prior concerns regarding the Yacht Basin area, stating that it is not considered historic, as it was developed approximately eight years ago on former marshland, and may be addressed separately through future zoning actions at the discretion of the Board of Aldermen.

Chair Drew encouraged the Commission to refocus on its original preservation goals, set aside speculative concerns (e.g., legal challenges, deannexation, insurance), and work toward finalizing the draft for submission to the Board of Aldermen.

Chair Drew addressed a question raised at a prior meeting by Mr. Paul Swenson regarding whether the Commission would prohibit replacing a one-story structure with a two-story home.

Speaking as an individual Commissioner, Chair Drew cited provisions within the draft guidelines: Section 3.1.2 allows for exceptions where additions are congruent within the surrounding neighborhood. And Section 3.2.7 permits new construction with differing height, scale, and massing if it is congruous with neighborhood character.

Chair Drew stated that such redevelopment scenarios could be permissible, particularly for non-historic structures, and emphasized that the intent is not to prevent appropriate new construction. He acknowledged newer residents of Southport who have built homes, noting that their contributions have enhanced the City's character.

Chair Drew also addressed concerns about potential future HPC overreach, noting that such issues could be addressed through established democratic processes, including policy revisions by the Board of Aldermen.

Chair Drew stated that the goal of the meeting was to receive guidance from Staff regarding North Carolina General Statute requirements, consider final revisions to the draft Historic District overlay guidelines, and ultimately prepare a recommendation for submission to the Board of Aldermen for consideration at its May meeting.

Chair Drew invited Ms. Hufham to offer the invocation.

B. Invocation

Ms. Hufham provided the invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Drew led members in the Pledge.

D. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Ms. Bray and Seconded Ms. Wesson to approve the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

E. Approval of Minutes

a. February 4th, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

Ms. Bray expressed concerns regarding the February 4th, 2026, meeting minutes, stating that she had difficulty reviewing and approving them due to their length and level of detail. She stated that an initial 11-page document was distributed, but the version included in the current Agenda Packet had expanded to approximately 21 pages. Ms. Bray stated that she did not recall much of the additional detail included in the longer version and emphasized that, while she remembered the general discussion, decisions, and speakers, she did not recall the extensive, near-verbatim content reflected in the minutes.

Ms. Bray stated that the Commission has traditionally approved concise minutes summarizing actions taken, rather than detailed, word-for-word accounts. She expressed discomfort approving a document of such length and detail without access to the meeting recording to verify its accuracy and suggested that if minutes continue to be prepared in this format, Commission members may need access to the audio recordings for proper review. She also noted minor discrepancies between the earlier draft and the final drafted version, adding to her concern about accuracy.

Mr. Herring inquired about how to access or play the meeting recording. Ms. Bray responded that she was unsure, noting that the issue arose while attempting to review the minutes and reiterated that the volume and differences between versions made it difficult to determine what was being approved. She raised the possibility of establishing a process or guideline, potentially involving access to recordings if the minutes are longer than five pages, so the HPC can adequately fulfill its responsibilities when reviewing lengthy minutes, and suggested that Staff may need to provide guidance on the matter.

City Clerk Deviney explained that the increased length and detail of the minutes reflect a change in direction from prior practices, noting that earlier versions were considered overly summarized and potentially reflective of

individual interpretation. She stated that the current approach aims to provide a more verbatim and comprehensive record to reduce ambiguity and accurately capture discussions, particularly given the Commission's relatively recent establishment.

City Clerk Deviney also emphasized that maintaining detailed minutes is important for documenting the intent and reasoning behind the creation of the HPC and its guidelines, allowing for clearer reference in the future. She also noted that concerns had previously been raised regarding omissions in public comment sections, reinforcing the need for a more complete record.

She clarified that the Clerk's Office is responsible for preparing minutes based on audio recordings to ensure accuracy, while the Commission's role is to review and approve the content as written, regardless of length. She added that, while the minutes may become more concise over time, detailed documentation is especially important during the Commission's formative stages.

Ms. Bray reiterated her concerns, noting that the previously received 11-page draft and the 21-page version in the Agenda Packet both pertain to the same meeting but contain differences beginning on page one and continuing throughout. She stated that certain sections of concern had been significantly expanded in the later version, prompting further review and uncertainty as to which version was accurate.

Ms. Bray asked whether there is a way for Commission members to access the meeting recording for verification purposes and inquired if members would be permitted to bring their own recording devices to meetings to assist in reviewing the minutes.

City Clerk Deviney stated that Commission members are permitted to record meetings using their own personal devices. She also noted that members may submit a public records request to obtain access to official meeting recordings. However, she clarified that recordings maintained by the Clerk's Office are deleted after the minutes have been formally approved.

Ms. Bray stated that the Clerk's explanation underscores the importance of addressing the issue prior to approval, noting that both the recording and the minutes would no longer be available for review once the minutes are approved. She emphasized that this makes it critical for the Commission to resolve any concerns and ensure accuracy before taking action to approve the minutes.

City Clerk Deviney emphasized that it is important for the entire Commission to reach a consensus on how minutes should be prepared, rather than relying on the preference of a single member. She noted that the format and level of detail should be directed by the HPC during a meeting, acknowledging that making such decisions can sometimes be challenging but it is necessary to ensure consistency and clarity in the official record.

Ms. Bray asked whether the Commission should use the current meeting to begin discussing how to reach a consensus on the format and level of detail for meeting minutes, or if that discussion should be deferred to next month's meeting.

Chair Drew stated that determining the format and level of detail of the minutes is not the HPCs responsibility. He noted that the Clerk's Office is tasked primarily with summarizing the meeting, rather than creating a detailed or verbatim record.

City Clerk Deviney clarified that, legally, the minutes are only required to record the motions made and actions taken during the meeting. She noted that, at a minimum, the minutes could simply indicate, for example, that "Ms. Bettie spoke at the meeting," without capturing detailed discussion or verbatim statements.

Chair Drew stated that the Clerk is not required to produce a verbatim record of the meeting. He suggested that if there are specific issues in the minutes that inaccurately reflect what was said, those should be identified and corrected during the meeting before approval, rather than attempting to revise the entire document in detail.

City Clerk Deviney confirmed Chair Drew's understanding, agreeing that the Clerk's responsibility is not to produce a verbatim record and that any necessary corrections to accurately reflect discussion should be addressed by the HPC during the meeting.

Ms. Bray noted that, given the volume and detail of discussions from two months ago, it is difficult to recall specifics well enough to identify errors in the minutes unless something stood out. She suggested a potential approach: the Clerk's Office could continue to summarize the meetings in the minutes, while maintaining the verbatim recording (the tape) as the official detailed account. Members who wish to review the full discussion could then submit a public records request to access the recording, rather than including all details in the minutes.

City Clerk Deviney explained that if the Commission wishes to make the audio recordings available to the public, the HPC would need to formally approve that. She noted that consideration is also needed regarding who is allowed to record the meetings. Unlike the Board of Aldermen, which is live-streamed, these meetings are not routinely broadcast. She clarified that the Clerk's Office currently records meetings solely to assist in preparing minutes, but that there is no legal obligation to maintain an audio recording. In the event the recording fails or is not made, handwritten notes taken during the meeting would still constitute the official minutes.

Ms. Bray asked for clarification on whether a vote would be required to implement public access to the recordings. Ms. Bray then emphasized her concern that without access to the verbatim recordings, it is difficult to determine which version of the minutes, such as the 11-page draft or the 21-page final version, accurately reflects the meeting. She questioned why one draft was shorter than the other and why the earlier version was summarized rather than more detailed, highlighting the challenge of approving minutes when discrepancies exist between documents.

City Clerk Deviney explained that when reviewing minutes, if a member encounters a section they question, whether summarized or intended to be verbatim, they should highlight it and bring it to the Commission's attention during the approval process. The Commission could then table a motion to the next meeting to investigate, clarify, and revise the minutes as appropriate, ensuring accuracy before final approval.

Ms. Bray noted that the approach described by the Clerk, highlighting questionable sections and addressing them during approval, is one possible option. She asked whether there are other options available for handling minutes, and whether some alternatives might be allowed or prohibited under the rules governing the HPC.

City Clerk Deviney explained that once the HPC is fully established, meetings are not required to be recorded or documented verbatim. The current near-verbatim approach is being used temporarily to provide a detailed record, which may be important for future reference, for example, if a similar HPC is created in the future, it will help to understand exactly what was said and why decisions were made. This detailed record is intended to assist the Commission during its formative stage.

Ms. Bray asked how the differences between the 11-page and 21-page versions of the minutes could be explained, noting that discrepancies appear even on the first page.

City Clerk Deviney responded that she was unsure, suggesting that additional detail may have been added or different wording used, but could not explain the specific differences.

Ms. Bray summarized the concern, noting that while the Commission can offer recommendations on the minutes, the Clerk's Office ultimately prepares them. She emphasized the need for a process to address discrepancies: if a member objects to how a section is written and wishes to verify exact language, the HPC should have the option to access the audio recording. This ensures members can review and clarify the record when necessary.

City Clerk Deviney explained that Commission members could request the recording through a public records request or by emailing the Clerk's Office (either herself or Deputy City Clerk Baillargeon), who would provide access. She noted that members could also record the meeting themselves and review it after the minutes are distributed.

Ms. Bray stated that because the public document does not distinguish the differences, obtaining a copy of the recording would be necessary to verify content.

City Clerk Deviney clarified that no formal rules currently exist regarding audio access, and if a recording were not made, there would be nothing to provide.

Ms. Bray questioned whether it would even be possible to produce a detailed 21-page document without reference to the recording, highlighting concerns about accuracy and source of the content.

City Clerk Deviney stated that detailed minutes could be prepared solely from notes if necessary, confirming that a recording is not strictly required.

Chair Drew suggested that one reason the minutes were expanded was due to public comment from Ms. Barnes, who requested more detail, prompting Staff to add additional content to the minutes.

Planner Tysinger acknowledged some confusion and noted that multiple drafts were prepared to help ensure accuracy before submission to the HPC. She emphasized that reviewing minutes ahead of the meeting is the responsibility of Commission members. Planner Tysinger explained that members should make notes of any sections they question, especially statements they personally made, and raise them during the meeting. She clarified that verbatim accuracy is not usually critical, as the Staff's transcription may differ slightly from how statements were heard in real time. She outlined the process: members review the minutes in advance, raise

corrections during the meeting, make a motion to approve “as written” or “as corrected,” and the minutes are then adopted. This ensures the official record is accurate while allowing the Commission to move forward efficiently.

Ms. Bray asked whether it would be feasible to receive the minutes and Agenda Packet a week in advance so that, if she noticed discrepancies, she could immediately request the recording from the Clerk’s Office. She inquired whether the recording could be provided within 24 hours to allow sufficient time to compare it with the minutes before the meeting.

City Clerk Deviney responded that a 24-hour turnaround for providing recordings, as well as making any corrections submitted thereafter, could not be guaranteed.

Planner Tysinger explained that members do not need to review an entire meeting recording, only the sections in question. She noted that the Clerk’s Office can isolate specific segments of the recording, allowing members to listen to, cut, and reference those portions as needed. She emphasized that minor transcription errors, such as misheard words, can be addressed ahead of time or during the meeting. For more significant issues, such as motions or the exact wording of a discussion, members should raise corrections during the meeting to ensure accuracy.

City Clerk Deviney added that the Staff would not take offense to requests for corrections or clarifications, reinforcing that this process is meant to support accurate minute preparation.

Ms. Bray asked whether the Commission could collectively decide to withhold approval of minutes if one or more members raise an objection that they feel is significant. She expressed concern that the differences between the 11-page and 21-page drafts, even on the first page, reflect substantive changes, not just minor edits, and noted that she would personally raise an objection based on those discrepancies. She also expressed confusion over how two different versions of the same meeting minutes were produced.

Planner Tysinger acknowledged confusion over why two different sets of minutes were distributed, noting that only one set should have been provided.

Ms. Bray explained that the Commission received an initial set about a month ago and a second set with the current Agenda Packet.

Planner Tysinger asked if any objections were raised between the two distributions.

Ms. Bray stated that she had raised an objection to one section but was unsure if any other members did.

Mr. McKee admitted that he had not had time to review the minutes until last week.

Chair Drew clarified that the first set was distributed in anticipation of a March meeting that did not occur, so he had not reviewed it, but he had read the current set three times.

City Clerk Deviney explained that due to prior concerns about conflicts in the minutes, she and Planner Tysinger had gone back and proofread the draft prepared by Deputy City Clerk Baillargeon, which may explain the differences between the two sets.

Ms. Bray responded that this explanation made sense and addressed her concern.

Planner Tysinger explained that the expanded length of the minutes was partly due to formatting changes. Earlier drafts listed statements in numbered sequences, whereas the revised draft presented a more conversational flow, making it easier to read. She emphasized that these changes did not alter the content of the discussions.

Ms. Wesson agreed that this formatting change could naturally expand the page count.

Ms. Bray acknowledged the explanation but noted that she observed some changes in content as well.

Planner Tysinger asked the Commission what their objective was for the current meeting.

Ms. Bray stated that since several members had not fully reviewed the minutes, she would make a motion to not approve the minutes at this time.

Mr. Herring clarified, asking if she intended to postpone approval. Ms. Bray confirmed.

Chair Drew asked for clarification, and Ms. Bray explained that postponing the minutes to the next meeting would allow all members time to review them and access the recording, requesting that the recording not be erased.

Chair Drew confirmed if this was a formal motion. Ms. Bray stated that it was, and Mr. Herring seconded the motion.

A motion was made by Ms. Bray and seconded by Mr. Herring to postpone approval of the February 4th, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission meeting minutes until the May 6th, 2026, Regular Meeting. The purpose of the postponement is to allow the Commission time to obtain the audio recordings and review the minutes thoroughly before taking action.

Chair Drew noted that a motion and second had been made and called for further discussion.

Ms. Wesson asked whether the motion included obtaining the audio recording as well.

Ms. Bray responded that access to the recording would be available only if a Commission member requests it. She asked whether such a request would be considered a public records request or a Staff request.

City Clerk Deviney clarified that members would need to submit a public records request to obtain a copy of the recording.

Ms. Bray acknowledged that each member would need to request it individually.

Chair Drew asked whether the motion was intended to require all members to review the audio. Ms. Bray clarified that it would be only for members who had questions or needed to verify content. Chair Drew noted that he did not wish to review the audio himself.

City Clerk Deviney explained that if the Commission approves the minutes despite a member's objection, that member can formally state their disagreement, which would then be included in the record and reflected in the next set of minutes.

Ms. Bray clarified that the motion did not obligate the entire Commission to obtain or review the recording.

Chair Drew confirmed that the motion is to postpone approval of the minutes until the May 6th, 2026, meeting. Ms. Bray affirmed.

Chair Drew called for discussion. Hearing none, he called for a vote.

The motion carried.

Nay: Mr. McGee

Chair Drew noted that since Ms. Gore-Graves was absent, he moved to elevate Tal West from Alternate to Full Commissioner status for the purpose of voting on the minutes.

F. Public Comment

Sherol Lappala 316 W. Brunswick Street

Ms. Lappala spoke regarding the proposed Historic District overlay, acknowledging that historic preservation is identified as a priority in the City's Comprehensive Plan, but stating that the plan does not distinguish between differing approaches. She expressed that many residents within the proposed district do not support a regulatory approach and raised concerns that the proposed standards may be overly rigid, potentially limiting innovative renovations and increasing costs for property owners. She compared the regulations to a homeowner's association (HOA), noting that many residents did not choose to live under such constraints.

Ms. Lappala also advocated for increased transparency, suggesting that meetings be video recorded, like the Planning Board and Board of Aldermen, to allow the public to review proceedings and better understand differences in meeting minutes. She advised against using partial audio excerpts, recommending that recordings be maintained in full to ensure accuracy and context.

She shared insights from a continuing education course, including a discussion from a member of the Wilmington Historic Preservation Commission regarding the potential use of Hardie Plank for improved fire safety while maintaining historic appearance.

Ms. Lappala also raised concerns about a reported interaction with Staff, describing it as troubling and inappropriate. She reported that her husband visited the Planning Office in City Hall to inquire about setbacks on a lot outside the proposed Historic District. During the interaction, a Staff member asked if the property was within the proposed Historic District. Upon confirming that he lived in the proposed Historic District but did not wish to be subject to its regulations, Ms. Lappala stated that the Staff member responded, "you can afford it." She described the exchange as troubling.

In response, Chair Drew thanked Ms. Lappala for her comments and noted that the proposed guidelines do allow for the use of Hardie Plank types of siding in certain circumstances.

Ms. Lappala expressed concern about unintended consequences of the guidelines, explaining that understanding the full impact can be difficult without experience in property renovations. She stated that while flexibility is desirable, the Commission's membership will change over time, and future members may have different motivations. Ms. Lappala emphasized that the process could become expensive and time-consuming, potentially requiring additional Staff and slowing development. She acknowledged that the UDO provides some protection but noted that the proposed Design Standards would add another layer of regulation.

Chair Drew explained that meetings are not currently video-recorded due to staffing limitations and resource constraints but noted that this could be considered in the future.

Paul Swensen 107 N. Atlantic Avenue

Mr. Swenson shared observations from a recent conversation with Alderman Karen Mosteller regarding the historic district in Charlotte, where contrasting outcomes were observed between regulated historic areas and nearby unregulated neighborhoods. He noted that in unregulated areas, older homes were sometimes demolished and replaced with modern construction, which drew concern from some residents.

Mr. Swenson contrasted this with a personal example from his son's neighborhood in Raleigh, where a mix of older ranch-style homes, renovated properties, traditional new builds, and modern homes coexist. He stated that residents there appreciate the architectural diversity, including the combination of preserved older homes and newer construction.

Alderman Mosteller clarified that the homes referenced in the Charlotte example were not typical brick ranch-style houses, but rather older Craftsman-style bungalows located within a historic area. She noted that these homes are more traditionally historic in character, distinguishing them from mid-century ranch homes and emphasized their architectural significance.

He clarified that the examples discussed included a range of historic housing types, such as Craftsman bungalows. He emphasized that a neighborhood's character can evolve in different ways depending on community preferences.

Mr. Swenson stated that he has come to recognize that there are differing perspectives on historic preservation and acknowledged that people may disagree. He shared that, after reflection and personal discussions, he has concluded that he does not support the HPC and wished to clearly state his opposition.

Mr. Swenson questioned the underlying need for the proposed Historic District overlay, stating that in his experience living in Southport since 1990, he has observed

very few examples of development that negatively impact the City's character. He cited one example on Bay Street but otherwise expressed the view that existing development patterns have been appropriate and that property owners have maintained the character of the community without additional regulation.

He stated that many long-time residents and families with generational ties to the area have expressed opposition to the HPC, emphasizing concerns about property rights and the potential requirement to seek approval for renovations. He commented on remarks made by Mr. Herring at the previous meeting, noting that his speech was heartfelt and emphasized the culture of Southport. He expressed agreement with Mr. Herring's sentiment that newcomers often embrace the town's character, and that giving residents an opportunity fosters positive renovation and construction outcomes.

Mr. Swenson also referenced prior public comments regarding the cultural character of Southport, stating that newcomers tend to adopt and respect the existing character of the town. He questioned whether there had been significant public demand for the creation of a proposed Historic District, suggesting that the initiative may have originated from the Board of Aldermen rather than from widespread community input.

Mr. Swenson expressed concern about public outreach, stating that he did not recall receiving notice or communication during the development of the proposed Historic District and would have expected earlier notification to affected property owners regarding potential impacts on their property rights.

Chair Drew stated that public notice regarding the HPC process was likely distributed approximately one year prior during public hearings held at the community building, and that notices were included with City water bills.

Mr. Swenson responded that he did not recall receiving such notice and asked whether it was distributed to the entire City.

Chair Drew confirmed that notifications regarding the proposed Historic District overlay were sent citywide via the water bill, including those residents who have signed up for auto draft.

Mr. McKee added that residents who do not receive a water bill would not have received the notice.

Chair Drew stated that residents still receive a water bill, even if they are using their own auto draft system, as he does. He added that if the bill is not opened, then the information or notification contained may go inadvertently unnoticed.

Mr. Swenson concluded by reiterating concerns like those expressed by other speakers, stating that he has a genuine fear of the Commission functioning in a quasi-judicial capacity. He expressed concern that decisions could become subjective or inconsistent, potentially leading to outcomes perceived as inflexible or unfair, and stated that this possibility is troubling to him.

Debbie Barnes 425 W. West Street

Ms. Barnes clarified that her prior comments regarding meeting minutes were focused on accuracy rather than increased detail and emphasized that recordings can help ensure clarity and an accurate account of discussions.

She also addressed concerns regarding public notice concerning the formation of the HPC and stated that residents enrolled in automatic water bill draft through the City did not receive physical mailings and instead received email notifications without attachments, which may have resulted in missed communications.

Ms. Barnes noted that when utility billing transitioned to the county, paper bills resumed, but no additional information regarding the HPC was included, creating a gap in outreach. She stated that there may be broader community concern regarding whether adequate notice was received and concluded her comments to the Commission.

Ms. Wesson addressed Mr. Swenson's comments and added that architectural diversity already exists in Southport, with older and newer homes coexisting throughout various neighborhoods. She explained that the intent of the proposed Historic District overlay is not to eliminate diversity, but to ensure that new construction and renovations are compatible with the existing character. She emphasized that the goal is not uniformity, but congruity.

She noted that the City frequently promotes itself as "Historic Southport," highlighting its heritage, location along the Cape Fear River, and origins as a small fishing village. She stated that the purpose of the HPC is to preserve that character and protect historic properties for future generations.

Mr. Swenson expressed concern that the proposed HPC regulations could have the effect of "freezing" the character of Southport, limiting natural evolution and redevelopment. While acknowledging that the past cannot be recreated, he stated that overly strict guidelines could restrict property owners and architects from pursuing creative or modern designs.

He questioned the historic value of certain existing structures, such as non-historic or mid-century buildings, and suggested that redevelopments such as replacing them with larger, traditionally styled homes should be permitted. He emphasized the importance of allowing architectural flexibility and cited examples of well-designed

newer homes as evidence that growth and preservation can coexist without strict regulation.

Mr. Swenson referenced other historic communities, including Charleston and McClellanville, South Carolina, to illustrate his concerns. He suggested that in some cases, historic regulations may limit development and economic vitality, noting that communities with fewer restrictions may experience more growth and vibrancy.

He concluded by stating that Southport's appeal lies not only in its historic character but also in its livability, walkability, and active community, expressing concern that excessive regulation could hinder those qualities.

Mr. Herring acknowledged Mr. Swenson's contributions to the visibility and success of Southport, noting that individuals like him have helped put the City on the map.

He stated that, in his view, all parties, both the HPC and the public, share the same overall goal of preserving the character and success of the community, but differ in their approaches. Mr. Herring emphasized that for the HPC to be successful, it must have strong community support, noting that if a significant portion of residents perceive the regulations as a burden, the effort may fall short of its intent.

He suggested that achieving community buy-in should be a primary objective and questioned whether regulatory measures alone would accomplish that goal. Instead, he expressed the view that residents generally want to do the right thing and may respond better to guidance and recommendations rather than strict mandates.

Mr. Herring also reflected on the City's heritage and culture, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the independent and resourceful spirit of the community. He cautioned against approaches that could be perceived as overly restrictive, stating concern that such measures could diminish that character.

Mr. Herring concluded by acknowledging that while all parties share the goal of preserving the City's character, there are differing approaches to achieving that goal. He emphasized the importance of gaining public support and engagement, noting that meaningful input from residents, particularly those within the proposed Historic District, will be essential to the success of the initiative. He stated that with broader community support, he would be fully supportive of the effort.

Ms. Bray noted that the HPC has repeatedly incorporated public feedback over the past three years. She stated that each time concerns were raised, the HPC revisited earlier drafts, made revisions, and worked to address those concerns through compromise. She emphasized that the current version of the proposed guidelines is significantly less restrictive than earlier drafts.

Mr. Herring agreed, stating that the current proposal is substantially different from the original version and reflects the many changes made throughout the process in response to public input.

Ms. Bray expressed concern that, despite extensive revisions to the proposed Historic District overlay Design Standards over a three-year period, the HPC continues to hear the same concerns that the document is overly restrictive. She stressed that the HPC has repeatedly incorporated public input, significantly reducing the level of restriction from earlier drafts, and noted that the current version reflects substantial compromise.

She questioned assertions regarding the level of public opposition, stating that feedback has been mixed and that no formal or definitive measure, such as a verified poll, has been established. She also noted that petitions presented are not binding and cannot be used as a governing tool.

Ms. Bray also stated that, if a significant majority of affected residents oppose the proposal, broader participation at meetings would be expected. She highlighted that much of the feedback has come from a consistent group of participants throughout the process.

She reaffirmed that the HPC is fulfilling its responsibility as directed and that the goal is to implement reasonable architectural standards to preserve the character of Southport. She clarified that the process is not intended to be arbitrary or overly rigid, but rather collaborative, with Staff working alongside property owners on a case-by-case basis. She emphasized that the quasi-judicial framework requires fairness, transparency, and adherence to established procedures, and does not allow for arbitrary or unilateral decision-making by individual Commission members.

Mr. McKee addressed the historical context of Southport, emphasizing that much of the town's original post-colonial architecture has been lost or altered over time. He noted that while some historic structures have been preserved and modified tastefully, others were demolished or extensively changed. He framed the Commission's role as being mindful not only of the past but also of the town's future, balancing preservation with practical considerations for current and future property owners.

He stressed that the Commission is committed to collaboration, listening to residents, and creating a workable set of guidelines. A point he raised for ongoing discussion is whether current property owners should be "grandfathered" under the new regulations, suggesting that some flexibility may be necessary to avoid imposing undue burdens on existing homeowners while still preserving the historic character for the long term.

Mr. McKee framed the challenges facing the community of Southport by finding common ground: protecting historic resources while accommodating the needs, preferences, and realities of current residents. He noted that this approach sets up a continued discussion on how to implement the proposed Historic District rules in a way that is fair, practical, and forward-looking.

Mr. Herring raised a question about whether the proposed Historic District could be voluntary under state law. Director Meehan and Mr. McKee clarified that the state statute does not require the district to be voluntary.

Mr. Herring expressed confusion, noting that it seems contradictory to have a voluntary framework that is still legally enforceable.

Ms. Bray acknowledged the dilemma, emphasizing that while the process is intended to be voluntary and collaborative, residents are largely already acting responsibly in preserving their properties.

Mr. McKee explained the tension between local autonomy and state regulation: the state often defines what local governments can and cannot enforce, limiting the flexibility of the proposed Historic District. He stressed that the goal is to provide guidance rather than strict mandates, residents can follow the guidelines at their discretion, except in cases like demolition, where the Commission has authority to delay action for up to a year to ensure decisions are thoughtful and not arbitrary.

Mr. Herring stated that the necessary path is to develop meaningful guidelines for the proposed Historic District. He believes this method fosters the buy-in needed for long-term success.

Mr. McKee added that the past three years were not wasted; rather, the process, though intensive, is essential for ensuring the plan's viability over time, whether that's one year, five years, or even decades into the future. He reflected on earlier efforts, in the late 1990s, that followed a similar intent but lacked the inclusivity and intensity of the current approach. He underscored that even with good intentions, public engagement is critical.

Chair Drew closed Public Comment and asked Staff to present the item under Old Business noting that the meeting must wrap up at 6 p.m.

Chair Drew called for a five-minute recess at 5:12
The Commission reconvened at 5:17pm

G. Old Business

- a. Updated Local Historic Preservation Design Standards

Director Meehan explained that Staff had revisited the proposed Historic District Design Standards to ensure they comply with state statutes while also making the process administratively feasible. And shared that some elements that were initially proposed for removal are required by state law, so they must remain in the standards, and Staff reviewed the document comprehensively to ensure all statutory requirements are addressed.

Director Meehan emphasized that the goal is to make obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) as simple as possible, allowing minor projects to be incorporated into the building permit workflow so that applicants may not even realize HPC review is occurring, thereby reducing unnecessary delays and administrative burdens.

She stressed that the HPC's mission goes beyond architecture to protect the overall character and charm of Southport, including streetscapes, landscaping, and the community's visual environment. The four core goals of the HPC are to preserve local heritage through architectural Design Standards, protect landmark buildings as necessary, use COAs to ensure projects are congruous with the City's historic character, and enforce standards consistently while facilitating citizen participation.

Director Meehan explained that any exterior features, including masonry walls, fences, light fixtures, steps, pavement, above-ground utility structures, and signage, require a COA under 160D in the North Carolina General Statutes, and that architectural style, materials, building scale, window and door types, and other design elements are included in this review. She concluded by emphasizing the balance Staff are trying to achieve between statutory compliance, administrative efficiency, and preservation goals to maintain Southport's historic character without creating unnecessary hurdles for residents.

Director Meehan explained that Staff had to revisit the standards after the February 4th, 2026, meeting to ensure that, even with the changes requested, the document still met state requirements. She also emphasized that obtaining a COA requires review by the HPC, which uses the standards as guidance to determine whether proposed changes are congruous with the proposed Historic District's special character. She clarified that the standards define the architectural, aesthetic, historical, cultural, and archaeological elements that give the district its unique identity, ensuring that any modifications preserve the character and feel of Southport.

Director Meehan noted that Staff have incorporated the changes recommended since the July 2025 public hearing, and the previous meeting in February's recommendations, while also including statutory requirements

and elements that help identify and preserve the fabric of the district, such as cemeteries, archaeology, and disaster preparedness measures to protect against increasingly frequent and severe storms.

She emphasized the increasing need to address environmental challenges, including more frequent and severe storms, as well as recurring King Tide events. These factors highlight the importance of both preserving and protecting historic sites, buildings, and other significant features throughout the City. And she encouraged the Commission to consider these elements as part of the ongoing and future preservation efforts.

While reviewing the highlighted portions included in the section entitled, “Routine Maintenance Actions (COA Not Required)”, on page 37 of 130 in the Agenda Packet, Director Meehan explained that while certain routine maintenance items are exempt from requiring a COA, applicable building or zoning permits may still be required.

Chair Drew sought clarification confirming that a COA is not required for the items just discussed under “Routine Maintenance Actions (COA Not Required)”, on page 37 of 130 in the Agenda Packet.

Director Meehan stated that he was correct. She stressed that a COA would not be necessary for the items listed.

Director Meehan presented an additional document, a COA matrix, provided to the Commission, explaining that it outlines the primary topics for discussion alongside the proposed changes to the Design Standards.

She offered recommendations distinguishing between Minor and Major COAs. Director Meehan noted that due to the complexity of the topic, the Commission may begin discussion at this meeting and continue at a future meeting if needed.

Director Meehan explained that a Minor COA would function as an administrative approval process. In such cases, Staff would review applications, such as those associated with building permits (e.g., accessory structures like sheds), to ensure compliance with the Design Standards. If Staff determines that a request is consistent with the district’s standards, it may be approved administratively. However, if Staff are unable to confirm consistency with the district, the application will be referred to the Commission for review. Staff will not deny COA applications but will ensure that proposals meet established standards and guidelines.

Director Meehan also explained that Major COAs involve a quasi-judicial process, requiring the applicant to present their case before the Commission and demonstrate that the proposed project is consistent with the character and standards of the proposed Historic District.

Director Meehan clarified that the Design Standards are locally adopted and are intended to serve as guidelines and will not be used separately from UDO. While they will be adopted at the local level, they will not be codified as ordinance nor applied as a standalone regulatory tool in the same manner as the UDO. She emphasized that the Design Standards will not carry the same level of regulatory authority as the UDO.

Director Meehan acknowledged the breadth and complexity of the material presented and invited the Commission to determine how they would like to proceed with review. She offered to guide the Commission through the document during the meeting or allow members additional time to review the materials independently.

Director Meehan concluded by stating that she and Staff were available to answer any questions and facilitate discussion as needed.

Chair Drew requested clarification regarding the specific action being requested of the Commission.

Director Meehan responded that Staff have provided preliminary considerations within the Design Standards regarding classifications of Minor and Major COAs. She emphasized that these classifications are open for Commission review and discussion, and that any desired changes can be considered.

Director Meehan stated that Staff could incorporate any feedback and return with a revised, clean version of the document reflecting Staff's updated recommendations for further Commission consideration.

Ms. Bray requested clarification regarding the Design Standards, specifically asking whether the items highlighted in yellow could be removed (or altered) without conflicting with state statutes.

Director Meehan clarified that only one item needed to be included per state statute and it related to skylights, noting that skylights must be included as they impact the roof when visible. She explained that, aside from this revision, items highlighted in yellow and shown as struck through in the matrix have been removed as indicated.

Chair Drew provided clarification regarding the yellow, blue, and green highlights shown in the supplementary matrix distributed by Staff at the beginning of the meeting.

Planner Tysinger explained that items highlighted in yellow could be reconsidered by the Commission if they wished to reinstate them in the Design Standards. She noted, however, that from July 2025 to the present, the Commission had agreed to the content currently presented in the Design Standards.

Planner Tysinger additionally explained that Staff reviewed the document to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and the Commission's prior directives. As a result, the new version removes these items entirely, meaning topics previously marked as "A" would no longer appear for discussion.

Director Meehan informed the Commission that the worksheet version of the Design Standards has been completed and will be made available online. She explained that the worksheet is a cleaned-up version that excludes strikethroughs, allowing the Commission and residents to view the document in its entirety as a reference tool.

Planner Tysinger explained that statutory requirements (highlighted in green) must be included in the Design Standards, and that revisiting these items could potentially reintroduce content previously removed. She noted that while Staff has followed statutory guidelines, the Commission now needs to determine how to classify these items as Minor or Major COAs.

Planner Tysinger noted that removing all Minor COAs in previous drafts unintentionally placed a heavier administrative burden on the public. Items that could have been processed quickly by Staff as Minor COAs may now require a Major COA and Commission review, potentially causing delays of several weeks. She emphasized that Minor COAs are beneficial for efficiency, while Major COAs remain available for cases where Staff are unable to make a final determination.

Planner Tysinger stated that statutory requirements (green highlighted items) must be maintained in the document and encouraged the Commission to decide how to classify these items going forward, either as Minor or Major COAs.

Ms. Bray asked whether all state-required items that must be reinstated in the Design Standards could be classified as Minor COAs.

Planner Tysinger responded that she could not make that determination.

Mr. McGee thanked Staff for the clarification and noted that, given the large number of statutory (green highlighted) items, it would not be feasible to classify all items as Minor or Major during the current meeting. He suggested scheduling a follow-up meeting in the coming weeks to allow Commissioners time to review the items individually and then reconvene to make informed decisions.

Director Meehan noted that Staff had added new items to the Design Standards and provided recommendations for initial consideration. She suggested that these recommendations could serve as a starting point for the Commission when determining COA classifications.

Director Meehan explained that alterations to existing features would generally be considered Minor, whereas new construction or large-scale projects would likely require review by the Commission.

Planner Tysinger advised the Commission to use previous iterations of the Design Standards as a guide when reviewing and filling out the new matrix. She emphasized the importance of considering the historical context of changes to understand why certain items were included or removed.

As an example, Planner Tysinger noted the chapter on resiliency and flood management. Although the Commission had previously considered striking the chapter, it had never been a concern for the public or the Commission. She explained that while the chapter is not a statutory requirement, it aligns with best practices and state guidance. Staff recommended retaining the chapter to support preservation and disaster preparedness, particularly given increasing storm intensity and other environmental concerns.

Planner Tysinger emphasized that reviewing statutory requirements comprehensively can reveal related considerations that may require reinstating items previously removed. She advised Commissioners to read the Standards carefully, ideally in one sitting, to understand the broader context of each element.

She also noted that the purpose of these guidelines is to facilitate a smooth process for both citizens and the Commission. Planner Tysinger highlighted that the proposed Historic District encompasses more than just structures, including natural and environmental features that contribute to the City's unique character, such as the ocean, oak trees, and local vegetation. And she reminded the Commission to consider whether such elements should be included in the Design Standards to ensure comprehensive preservation and protection of the district.

Ms. Bray asked whether the elements discussed, such as natural features and flood management, are addressed within the UDO.

Planner Tysinger responded that while some elements are addressed in the UDO, not all are covered. She emphasized the importance of conveying to property owners that the proposed Historic District encompasses more than individual properties, highlighting that each investment contributes to a larger, collective preservation effort.

Ms. Bray asked how the Commission could determine which items were covered by the UDO. She suggested reviewing previous versions of the Design Standards, which included all Minor and Major COAs, noting that items addressed in the UDO were indicated. She acknowledged that some content was removed in the current version to reduce document size, and that information from prior standards could be used as a reference.

Director Meehan noted that much of the landscaping content removed early in the process, including certain tree removal guidelines, is generally acceptable because some aspects are already addressed elsewhere. However, she emphasized that the removal of mature trees requires careful consideration, as these trees contribute significantly to the character and overall canopy of the proposed Historic District.

She wants the Design Standards to encourage property owners to incorporate preservation into their site planning. While tree removal may sometimes be necessary, alternative approaches, such as relocating structures or accessory buildings, should be considered to preserve the canopy and maintain the district's overall character. She stressed that the focus should be on preserving the canopy as a whole, rather than individual trees.

Chair Drew asked for clarification, stating that the intent behind removing certain items was to avoid duplication if they were already addressed in the UDO or the tree ordinance. He questioned whether this approach was acceptable, given Staff's guidance.

Director Meehan clarified that Staff are not discouraging the Commission from removing items addressed in the UDO or tree ordinance. She noted that the tree-related guidelines were specifically reinstated as a point of discussion, reflecting their importance in the context of the Historic District.

Chair Drew asked whether the green highlighted topics throughout the Design Standards indicate that those items are addressed in the North Carolina General Statutes as mandatory requirements.

Director Meehan noted for clarity that not all items highlighted in green within the Design Standards are strictly required by North Carolina General Statute. Some of these items were included by Staff for discussion and consideration by the Commission.

Planner Tysinger used trees as an example to illustrate the importance of including certain items in the Design Standards. She explained that if a topic, such as trees, is not addressed in the Design Standards, the Commission cannot formally consider it in future discussions.

Planner Tysinger emphasized that including such items does not prevent removal or modifications but ensures that any decisions, such as the removal of a mature tree, are handled through the proper quasi-judicial process. She stressed the importance of this approach for maintaining consistency and accountability in Commission decisions.

Ms. Bray suggested that the removal of a tree could be classified as a Minor COA, allowing Staff to work directly with the property owner to achieve the best outcome.

Planner Tysinger reiterated that the classification of tree removal as a Minor COA is a matter for Commission discussion. She reemphasized the importance of reviewing the Design Standards thoroughly, ideally in one sitting, to understand the broader context of each element. Planner Tysinger also stated that Staff are available to address any questions the Commission members may have.

Chair Drew inquired about the availability of the Indian Trail Meeting Hall for a follow-up meeting on April 15th, 2026. Staff confirmed that the meeting space is available on Monday, April 13th, 2026, and the Commission agreed to reconvene the regular meeting on that date to continue discussion of the Design Standards and COA classifications.

Chair Drew suggested to recess the current meeting and reconvene Monday, April 13th, 2026, to continue discussion of the Design Standards and COA classifications.

The Commission agreed to recess the meeting until 4 p.m. Monday, April 13th, 2026.

Mr. McGee stated that he would hold his comments until the Commission reconvenes from its recess.

Chair Drew introduced the next item on the agenda.

H. New business

None

I. Other Business

None

J. Announcements

None

K. Board Liaison Comments/Updates

None

L. Recess until April 13th, 2026, at 4 p.m.

A motion was made by Ms. Bray and seconded by Mr. McKee to recess the April 1st, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission's Regular Meeting, and reconvene on Monday, April 13th, 2026, at 4 p.m. to be held at the Indian Trail Meeting Hall.

The motion carried unanimously.

The Commission recessed at 5:52 p.m.

M. Reconvene the April 1st, 2026, Regular Meeting on April 13th, 2026.

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

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

Absent: Joanne Wesson

Chair Drew welcomed the Commission back and called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. He asked for a motion and second to reconvene the April 1st, 2026, Regular Meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. McGee and seconded by Mr. McKee to reconvene the April 1st, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting to discuss Section G. New Business, Item a. Updated Local Historic Preservation Design Standards.

The motion carried unanimously.

Absent: Joanne Wesson

G. Old Business

a. Updated Local Historic Preservation Design Standards.

Chair Drew welcomed the Commission back and called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. He shared that Staff would present an overview of the previous meeting and the Commission would then go through the document entitled Levels of Review, Routine Maintenance Actions (COA Not Required). He then turned it over to Staff to discuss.

Director Meehan addressed the Commission and referenced prior discussion from the previous meeting regarding revisions to the Updated Local Historic Preservation Design Standards. She explained that certain items previously considered for removal must remain, as they are required by state statute. Accordingly, Staff updated the review matrix to ensure all applicable items requiring a COA are properly included.

Director Meehan outlined statutory requirements, noting that following the designation of a historic district, no exterior portion of any building or structure, including masonry walls, fences, light fixtures, steps, pavement, and other appurtenant features, nor any above-ground utility structure or outdoor advertising sign may be erected, altered, restored, moved, or demolished without prior approval of a COA application submitted to the City.

She clarified that “exterior features” are defined to include architectural style, general design, and arrangement of the exterior of a building or structure, including building materials, scale, and elements such as walls, windows, doors, light fixtures, signs, and similar features.

Director Meehan stated that Staff had reviewed the standards in detail, identifying all statutorily required items (previously highlighted for clarity) and developing a routine maintenance list consistent with those requirements. A revised, “clean” matrix was presented for the Commission’s review.

She reminded the Commission that routine maintenance items do not require a COA and may be performed by property owners at any time. Minor COAs will be handled administratively by Staff, providing a streamlined process for applicants, often without the need for additional building or zoning permits, and without extending normal review timelines.

Director Meehan concluded by inviting questions and discussion from the Commission regarding the proposed matrix and COA requirements.

Chair Drew stated, for the benefit of members of the public in attendance, that he would like to review the actions that do not require a COA.

At the request of Ms. Sherol Lappala, the document under discussion was projected on the screen for public viewing. Director Meehan connected her laptop, and the document was displayed for the audience.

Chair Drew reviewed, for the benefit of the public, the types of routine maintenance and actions that do not require a COA. These included minor repairs; changing paint colors or repainting surfaces; seasonal decorations; movable playground equipment; temporary real estate, open house, or yard sale signs placed and removed the same day; replacement of gutters or downspouts with like materials and matching trim colors, provided no significant architectural features are removed or obscured; landscaping activities, including planting or removal of trees; and temporary emergency measures such as roof tarps, temporary window air conditioning units, fans, or portable generators.

He also noted that other actions not requiring a COA include the alteration or removal of storm windows or doors; alteration or removal of existing shutters on rear or non-visible side elevations; construction, alteration, or removal of swimming pools; demolition of accessory structures; construction of new accessory structures under 144 square feet; maintenance and emergency restoration of existing above-ground utilities; installation of mailboxes; seasonal lighting and plantings; installation of small free libraries; and installation of security cameras.

Chair Drew then asked if any Commissioners had questions regarding the items that do not require a COA.

Ms. Bray referenced Section 2.3.3 on page 60 (page 83 of 130 of the Agenda Packet) of the design guidelines, noting language stating that replacement of certain features in kind, in accordance with the design standards, does not normally require a COA. She explained that this applies to standards for exterior wood siding, trim, and ornamentation. She suggested that, since the section indicates a COA is not normally required, these items should be added to the routine maintenance list.

Ms. Bray also inquired whether there is a location on the City's website where the public can easily access the design standards.

Alderman Davis asked whether the design standards are easily accessible on the City's website and requested clarification on where they could be found.

Director Meehan responded that the documents are available through the agenda portal as part of the meeting agenda packets. She added that there is a link on the City's homepage that directs users to meeting agendas where the materials can be accessed.

Chair Drew noted that the City website also includes a dedicated HPC section intended to provide access to such information.

Ms. Lappala commented that the documents were not appearing in that section, observing that only minutes from 2024 and earlier were visible. She stated that she had to navigate through the City Clerk's page to locate the agenda and supporting materials and suggested there may be a glitch related to the transition to the new website.

Planner Tysinger explained that on the City's new website, users must select the appropriate board or commission and follow the navigation path to access meeting minutes, which are then redirected to the agenda portal. She noted that agendas and minutes from the past several years are available through this system, though users may need to search by specific dates. She added that HPC agenda materials are housed within the portal for approximately the past three or more years, up to a certain point.

Alderman Davis expressed concern regarding website accessibility, stating that information should ideally be reachable within two clicks from the City's homepage. She asked Staff to clarify the specific navigation steps required for a user to access the relevant HPC materials from the City website.

Deputy City Clerk Baillargeon provided guidance on how to access meeting materials through the City's website. He explained that users can navigate from the homepage by selecting "City Hall" or "City Departments," then proceeding to the "Board of Aldermen" section. From there, users can access the "Agendas and Minutes" page via a dropdown menu.

He stated that on the Agendas and Minutes portal, users may scroll to find links to view meetings or access additional information. A link directing users to the meeting portal allows them to search for specific meetings or select from recent listings. By selecting the April 1st Historic Preservation Commission meeting, users can view the meeting details and access the full agenda packet, which includes supporting documents such as memoranda and prior meeting minutes.

Deputy City Clerk Baillargeon noted that this process allows citizens to access meeting materials relatively quickly through the City's online system.

Alderman Davis recommended that the Commission coordinate with the Public Information Office, specifically ChyAnn Ketchum, to improve public access to meeting materials on the City's website. She emphasized that ease of access to information is a current priority and stated that it is important to ensure citizens can readily obtain accurate information and facts.

Chair Drew asked if there were any additional comments from the Commission.

Ms. Bray referenced Section 2.2.3 of the design guidelines and read the provision for the benefit of the audience. She explained that it addresses replacement of historic elements only when the original material is too deteriorated to repair. She noted that, when replacement is necessary, new materials should match the original as closely as possible in properties such as shape, profile, texture, and detail, and noted that the deteriorated condition should be documented. She stated that replacement of these features in kind, consistent with the standards, does not normally require a COA, and suggested the item be considered routine maintenance when those conditions are met.

Planner Tysinger expressed concern that the provision is lengthy and subject to interpretation, particularly regarding determinations of whether materials are sufficiently deteriorated to warrant replacement without a COA. She cautioned against classifying it as routine maintenance in a way that could be interpreted as overly permissive, noting that such classification might imply broader approval than intended. She indicated a preference for simplifying the matrix and avoiding cross-referencing that could create confusion.

Ms. Bray responded that inclusion in both categories could be appropriate, provided the replacement is truly "in-kind" and consistent with the standards.

Planner Tysinger reiterated that Staff's approach was to keep the document simple and avoid duplication or cross-referencing, suggesting that the provision be removed from the routine maintenance list.

Mr. McGee asked for clarification, stating his understanding of the discussion and inquiring whether the Commission was effectively indicating that such work would require a Major COA.

Mr. McGee sought clarification on whether the discussed work would require a Major COA.

Ms. Bray responded that it would not require a Major COA and clarified that it would instead fall under a Minor COA category. She explained that the

provision being discussed indicates that, when work is performed in-kind and in accordance with the standards, a COA is not required.

Chair Drew added that the item would not require either a Minor or Major COA and suggested that it may instead fall under routine maintenance.

Mr. McGee acknowledged the clarification.

Ms. Bray stated she did not want to prolong discussion on the item and noted that there was a long agenda ahead. She reiterated her view that the provision should be categorized as routine maintenance.

Planner Tysinger responded that Staff would review the language to determine whether it could be rephrased to avoid misinterpretation or being taken out of context.

Ms. Bray suggested that inclusion of the provision under routine maintenance would be beneficial for clarity to the public.

Mr. McGee expressed agreement.

Ms. Bray raised an additional question regarding routine maintenance items, noting that the guidelines state that alterations or installations in rear or side yards not visible to the public may be exempt in certain instances. She suggested considering whether that concept could be included within the routine maintenance section so that it is clearly communicated from the outset.

Planner Tysinger expressed concern that defining “visibility” could lead to ongoing disputes regarding whether a feature is visible or not, noting that such determinations could become contentious and administrative in nature.

Ms. Bray acknowledged the concern and agreed that inclusion could complicate interpretation. She noted that, under the current structure, members of the public would only be aware of allowances for rear and side yard modifications by reviewing the individual standards in detail.

Planner Tysinger stated that the intent is to focus on assisting property owners within the district in a clear and practical manner, noting that guidance may often be best provided through direct communication such as phone calls, office visits, or site visits. She indicated that this approach is preferable to incorporating additional regulatory language into the ordinance or standards, emphasizing that the process should remain administrative and not overly prescriptive.

Ms. Bray asked whether a statement could be added within the routine maintenance narrative advising that, if an individual does not find their proposed work listed and is unsure whether a COA is required, they should contact Staff for clarification.

Planner Tysinger stated that the guidance for navigating the document is addressed throughout the standards and that she did not believe additional language was necessary within the routine maintenance section. She noted that the document is intended to be used as a comprehensive guide for processing applications and understanding requirements.

Ms. Bray disagreed, stating that the routine maintenance section is likely the first section many members of the public will consult.

Planner Tysinger responded that users should not rely solely on that section, as the document is structured as a complete guide rather than a single ordinance reference. She emphasized the importance of understanding the full process and how different standards apply, rather than relying on isolated sections or informal conversations.

Ms. Bray stated she had made her point and asked if others wished to comment.

Planner Tysinger redirected the discussion to prior suggestions, asking for clarification regarding inclusion of rear and non-visible yard provisions.

Ms. Bray reiterated her preference for including such language or alternatively adding a statement within the routine maintenance section advising that if a user has questions about any listed item or does not see their proposed work listed, they should contact Staff for confirmation.

Planner Tysinger indicated that a compromise solution may be possible by incorporating the intent into a broader narrative section to address the concern.

Ms. Bray expressed appreciation for Staff's proposed approach and stated she believed the suggested language would be beneficial.

Chair Drew then asked whether there were additional comments regarding routine maintenance actions. Hearing none, he requested that the Commission proceed to discussion of Major COAs and asked Staff to provide guidance.

Planner Tysinger explained that there are two pathways for COA review: Minor COAs, which are Staff-approved and generally apply to less intensive repairs or alterations, and Major COAs, which are brought before the Commission for review and decision. She noted that state statutes do not permit Staff to formally deny a COA application; in cases where Staff identifies concerns that would otherwise result in denial, the matter is instead forwarded to the Commission for review and determination.

Chair Drew asked for clarification, confirming that Staff does not have authority to deny Minor COA applications and must either approve them or elevate them to the full Commission for consideration. He asked whether this structure helps ensure impartiality in Staff-level decisions and reduces the potential for inconsistencies or personnel-related concerns.

Staff indicated general agreement with this understanding.

Planner Tysinger explained that the review matrix is organized into categories including site and setting, exterior changes to buildings, new construction/additions, relocation and demolition, disaster preparedness, prevention, and other considerations. She stated that the chart serves as a quick reference tool, while the detailed standards and narrative sections provide the primary guidance for review.

She noted that earlier versions of the standards had removed certain site and setting-related COA requirements; however, Staff later determined that this created additional administrative burden for the public. She explained that reinstating COA requirements for certain items was intended to streamline the process and reduce delays, allowing some approvals to be handled quickly at the staff level rather than requiring Commission review.

Planner Tysinger stated that the reinstated COA framework aligns with statutory requirements and improves efficiency for both Staff and applicants. She emphasized that most items are included in the matrix, with the exception of changes to “significant” site features, noting that determination of what constitutes “significant” remains a matter for Commission review.

Chair Drew requested clarification regarding Minor COAs, specifically asking whether removal of a mature tree within the historic district would require a Minor COA, such as in the case of a diseased tree. He asked whether a separate tree permit would also be required.

Planner Tysinger responded that both processes would generally occur simultaneously.

Chair Drew asked whether any fees applied to either the Minor COA or tree permit process.

Planner Tysinger stated that fees for Historic Preservation COAs had not yet been established, and that currently there is no charge for a tree permit. Chair Drew questioned the purpose of requiring both a tree permit and a HPC review for properties located within the historic district, noting that an existing ordinance already governs tree removal and asking whether the additional requirement constituted an unnecessary “extra layer” of review.

Planner Tysinger responded that she did not consider it an additional layer, but rather an added level of review. She explained that the HPC provides another set of review criteria consistent with the design standards, including statutory and locally identified preservation priorities. She noted that while structures are a primary focus, other site features, such as trees, may also be considered in terms of preservation value.

Planner Tysinger added that review of such features allows for consideration of alternatives prior to removal and emphasized that the intent is to ensure that significant site characteristics are evaluated before irreversible changes occur. She explained that preservation considerations can extend beyond trees to other site-related features such as topography, slopes, and overall site design, which may influence how structures are sited and integrated into a property.

Mr. McKee expressed concern regarding the fee structure, stating that it did not appear consistent to require a tree permit without associated charges while other processes may involve fees.

Planner Tysinger responded that the current recommendation from the Commission was to have no fees at the outset, noting that fee structures would ultimately be determined by the Board of Aldermen, as they fall outside the Commission’s authority.

Ms. Bray stated that she agreed with Chair Drew’s earlier concern regarding the “double layer” of review. She noted that the routine maintenance section clearly includes “removal or planting of trees” without distinction and therefore appears to encompass all trees.

Planner Tysinger responded that Staff’s intent is to ensure that mature trees are recognized as a significant component of the historic district and should be preserved where possible. She acknowledged that trees are living resources, unlike structures, but emphasized their importance to the character of the district.

Ms. Bray suggested removing the reference to tree removal and planting from the routine maintenance section, or at minimum distinguishing between mature and immature trees. She stated that the current language could be interpreted inconsistently, particularly given that removal of a mature tree requires a Minor COA while the routine maintenance section broadly references tree removal and planting.

Planner Tysinger responded that she was uncertain how “immature tree” would be formally defined and reiterated that the Minor COA process for tree removal serves as a safeguard. She explained that all tree removals would still require a separate tree removal permit, which functions as an additional layer of review.

Chair Drew interjected noting that he was preparing to plant a 16-foot tree at the Fire Department.

Planner Tysinger noted that Staff are aware of instances in which property owners have removed trees and donated them to homeowners’ associations for replanting, which she described as a positive outcome when feasible and when proper equipment is available, as it allows trees to be preserved and relocated.

Mr. McGee stated that the language in the draft appears internally inconsistent, noting that different sections of the document seem to provide conflicting direction. He suggested that the Commission clarify whether tree removal should be addressed through a single, consistent standard, potentially based on criteria such as tree size or diameter.

Chair Drew expressed concern about maintaining duplicate regulatory layers, noting that property owners are already subject to an existing tree ordinance and associated permitting process. He referenced prior discussions in which redundant requirements were removed to reduce administrative burden and avoid duplicative review. He stated that while he supports tree preservation, the Commission should be cautious about adding overlapping requirements.

Mr. McGee asked whether the existing tree permitting process includes site-specific evaluation, including consideration of tree size and location, and suggested that if such review already occurs, additional requirements under the HPC may be unnecessary.

Director Meehan responded by suggesting a potential compromise approach, noting that the standard could be refined to focus on the removal of “heritage trees,” defined in the City’s tree ordinance as trees over 30 inches in diameter.

She added that inclusion of landscaping-related review remains a policy decision for both the HPC and the Board of Aldermen.

Chair Drew noted an apparent inconsistency within the document, stating that the routine maintenance section indicates that temporary window air conditioning units do not require a COA, while the matrix table lists installation of window air conditioning units or window fans as requiring a Minor COA.

Planner Tysinger clarified that the requirement for a Minor COA applies to permanent installations, whereas temporary units are exempt under routine maintenance.

Chair Drew acknowledged the clarification.

Planner Tysinger returned to the discussion of tree removal and suggested that, if the Commission chooses to proceed with the concept of “heritage trees,” a formal definition should be included in the standards.

Chair Drew confirmed his understanding that removal of heritage trees could be categorized under Minor COA requirements, subject to an appropriate definition.

Planner Tysinger cautioned the Commission to avoid becoming overly constrained by ordinance language beyond what is necessary.

Mr. McGee commented that tree size is a key factor, noting that removal of very small trees would not typically warrant review and that significance should be tied to measurable criteria.

Mr. Herring suggested that the terminology in the matrix could be revised to reference “heritage trees,” with a corresponding definition provided to clarify applicability.

Planner Tysinger suggested revising the language in the matrix by replacing the term “mature trees” with “heritage trees,” and adding a formal definition to clarify applicability.

Ms. Bray noted that the routine maintenance section still includes language regarding tree removal and suggested that Item “g” could be removed entirely to eliminate inconsistency.

Planner Tysinger responded that an alternative approach would be to retain “planting of trees” under routine maintenance while removing “removal of trees” from that category.

Chair Drew agreed with this approach, proposing that removal be excluded from routine maintenance and instead addressed under Minor COA requirements for “heritage trees,” with a corresponding definition added.

Alderman Davis requested clarification on the proposal, and Chair Drew restated that the recommendation was to remove “removal of trees” from routine maintenance and require a Minor COA for removal of heritage trees.

Alderman Davis cautioned that the City already has a comprehensive tree protection ordinance governing tree removal, including provisions for trees located in rights-of-way and setback areas, as well as defined standards for heritage trees. She expressed concern about creating duplicative regulatory layers and encouraged the Commission to carefully consider what additional requirements are necessary.

Director Meehan explained that state statute allows the HPC and Board of Aldermen discretion in addressing landscaping within historic districts. She reiterated that the existing tree ordinance requires a permit for removal of trees over three inches in diameter and includes mitigation requirements for regulated and heritage trees. She noted that these provisions are already established and enforced through the current ordinance.

Chair Drew added that any recommendations from the Commission would ultimately be reviewed by the Board of Aldermen, which has authority to modify or remove provisions as it deems appropriate.

Alderman Davis concluded by emphasizing the importance of clearly identifying which requirements are essential and avoiding unnecessary duplication within the regulatory framework.

Chair Drew recognized Mr. McGee.

Mr. McGee suggested a simplified approach to address tree-related requirements in the matrix by adding a note in a comments column directing users to “See landscape ordinance.”

Planner Tysinger responded that previous drafts had included cross-references and comments; however, those were removed following prior direction to simplify the document and eliminate cross-referencing. She noted that the intent of removing the comments column was to streamline the

matrix, though she acknowledged that cross-references had previously helped clarify how HPC requirements relate to other City ordinances.

Planner Tysinger explained that without some reference to tree removal in the matrix, users might incorrectly assume they are free to remove trees without restriction, when in fact other City ordinances, such as the tree ordinance, would still apply. She emphasized that the broader regulatory framework remains in effect regardless of how the matrix is structured.

Ms. Bray commented that the discussion had become complex and suggested the Commission consider a clearer or more practical way to approach the issue.

Planner Tysinger reiterated that the goal, based on prior feedback, is to make the process easier for citizens navigating the requirements. She emphasized that property owners may need to obtain multiple permits, including building, tree, floodplain, and other permits, and that coordination can be challenging.

She stated that the HPC review process can serve as an entry point, allowing Staff to guide applicants through all applicable requirements. She described the role of Staff as similar to a project manager, helping applicants navigate the full permitting process, including requirements beyond the Commission's scope.

Chair Drew stated that the Commission's earlier approach had been to reduce the number of Minor COAs in an effort to simplify the process. However, he expressed the view that increasing the number of Minor COAs and reducing Major COAs may better serve the public by streamlining approvals.

He noted that Minor COAs can be handled administratively by staff and cannot be denied outright; if staff identifies an issue, the application is instead forwarded to the Commission for consideration. He characterized this as a straightforward and efficient process for applicants, allowing them to initiate requests directly through City Hall with minimal delay.

Mr. McGee requested to offer an additional comment and apologized for speaking at length. He emphasized that many members of the public will not be familiar with the design standards or have read the full document in detail.

Referencing Alderman Davis's earlier remarks, Mr. McGee suggested incorporating an executive summary at the beginning of the document to provide a concise overview of the standards and review process. He explained

that such a summary would allow users to quickly understand the purpose and key elements of the document without needing to review it in its entirety.

Mr. McGee stated that, in his opinion, the document is well-prepared and comprehensive, and recommended that both the summary and the matrix table be placed near the front, following the table of contents, so users can easily reference them. He added that this approach would help users determine whether they have sufficient information or need to consult staff or review additional sections of the document in greater detail.

Planner Tysinger stated that while summary materials such as guides, flyers, and frequently asked questions may be developed in the future, it would be premature to finalize such content at this stage, as the document is still evolving.

Mr. McGee asked whether an executive summary would be included within the guidance document itself. Planner Tysinger responded that she was uncertain at this time.

Chair Drew noted that the document already contains an overview section, referencing page 14 of the Design Standards, which outlines levels of review and routine maintenance. He clarified that while the agenda packet pagination differs, the referenced section is included within the Design Standards document.

Planner Tysinger explained that the document is structured to guide users from an introductory overview into more detailed standards, allowing different audiences, including property owners, architects, and builders, to understand both the process and applicable requirements.

Mr. McGee acknowledged the clarification.

Chair Drew summarized points of emerging consensus within the “site and setting” section, stating that the Commission appeared to support revising language to replace “removal of mature trees” with “removal of heritage trees,” with a corresponding definition to be added. He also stated that the Commission discussed clarifying that installation of permanent window air conditioning units or similar equipment would require a Minor COA, with the term “permanent” explicitly included.

Planner Tysinger sought clarification regarding the use of the term “permanent,” and Director Meehan confirmed the distinction between permanent and temporary installations.

Chair Drew reiterated the proposal to include “permanent” installations under Minor COA requirements and to define “heritage trees.”

Ms. Bray raised a separate concern regarding the “exterior changes to buildings” section, noting that two listed items appeared duplicative.

Chair Drew requested that the Commission proceed section by section to avoid confusion and asked whether members agreed with that approach or if a formal motion was necessary.

Planner Tysinger reiterated that the Commission may proceed by section, with a final motion required at the conclusion of the review to formalize all agreed-upon revisions.

Chair Drew confirmed that consensus had been reached on the “site and setting” section and emphasized his goal of keeping the process clear and straightforward. The Commission then proceeded to the “exterior changes to buildings” section.

Ms. Bray identified potential redundancy between items related to foundation work, noting overlap between references to installation or alteration of foundations or foundation vents and alterations to foundations or building walls. She suggested consolidating the language for clarity.

Mr. McGee proposed revising the second item to focus specifically on installation or alteration of foundation vents.

Ms. Bray agreed and recommended removing references to foundation alterations from that item, limiting it to foundation vents as a Minor COA, while broader foundation or building wall alterations would remain categorized separately.

Planner Tysinger clarified that Staff recommendations were based on statutory requirements and the need to distinguish between Minor and Major COAs, with Minor COAs generally applying to smaller-scale or less intensive work.

Director Meehan summarized the proposed revision, stating that installation or alteration of foundation vents would be classified as a Minor COA, while alterations to foundations or building walls would remain under Major COA review. Commissioners indicated general agreement with this interpretation.

Mr. McGee commented that minor adjustments to foundation vent locations should not require Major COA review.

Ms. Bray then raised a question regarding language on removal of non-historic siding materials where original siding remains beneath. She noted a reference indicating that if more than 25% of original material must be removed or replaced, HPC review is required, and asked where this threshold is defined.

Director Meehan explained that the 25% threshold applies to the proportion of original material on a given structure and may vary depending on the building. She provided an example involving removal of non-historic siding (such as asbestos or aluminum) to restore original wood siding beneath. If less than 25% of the original material requires replacement, the work may be handled as a Minor COA; if more than 25% must be replaced, it would require Major COA review.

Alderman Davis confirmed her understanding of this distinction, noting that projects involving more than one-quarter of original siding would trigger Major COA review.

Ms. Bray suggested that the matrix explicitly reflect this distinction by listing both scenarios, less than 25% as Minor COA and more than 25% as Major COA, to improve clarity for users.

Planner Tysinger expressed concern that duplicating the language could make the document more complex, though acknowledged the intent to improve clarity.

Chair Drew asked who would be responsible for determining the percentage of material affected.

Planner Tysinger responded that Staff would make that determination as part of the review process.

Mr. Herring suggested increasing the threshold for replacement of original siding materials from 25% to 50%.

Chair Drew expressed concern that a 25% threshold may be too low, particularly for smaller structures, where that percentage could represent a relatively minor amount of material.

Planner Tysinger noted that adjusting the threshold raises broader considerations regarding contributing versus non-contributing structures and the variability in building size and condition. She cautioned that the guidelines are intended to provide general direction rather than account for every

possible scenario and indicated hesitation in setting a threshold higher than 50%.

Mr. Herring stated his support for a 50% threshold.

Mr. McKee agreed, noting that retaining at least half of the original material would preserve sufficient historic character, even if portions of the exterior have been replaced due to damage or deterioration. He observed that many structures have undergone partial replacement over time due to weather events, pests, or other factors.

Mr. McGee added that a 50% threshold is consistent with broader building permit practices in North Carolina for determining the significance of alterations and stated that aligning with that standard would provide consistency.

Chair Drew suggested simplifying the standard by revising the threshold language to “more than 50% of original material,” without separately listing a corresponding category for work below that threshold.

Ms. Bray expressed concern that, without identifying a Minor COA category for work below the threshold, there would be no clear mechanism for Staff review and verification. She noted that inclusion of a Minor COA ensures Staff involvement in determining whether the percentage of material affected meets the applicable threshold.

Mr. Herring invited input from Mr. Carl Ward, a local builder, regarding the proposed threshold. Mr. Ward stated that while 25% may be too low, 50% would be more appropriate. He also expressed support for maintaining a Minor COA requirement so that Staff can review conditions in the field, noting that conditions in older structures can vary and percentages may be subject to interpretation.

Ms. Bray reiterated that the purpose of the Minor COA category is to ensure Staff review and verification.

Mr. McGee commented that Staff involvement could be handled administratively and questioned whether an HPC review would be necessary in such cases.

Planner Tysinger clarified that the Commission would not conduct site visits, and that Staff would gather and present relevant information if a matter were elevated for Commission review.

Alderman Davis asked whether, under the current structure, work involving less than 25% replacement would not require a COA.

Ms. Bray clarified that the intent of including a Minor COA category is to ensure Staff review even for work below the threshold. She explained that the matrix should reflect both scenarios, Minor COA for work below the threshold and Major COA for work exceeding it, so that there is a clear process for determining how each project is classified and reviewed.

Chair Drew raised a question regarding consistency in the standards, noting that “installation of gutters and downspouts” is listed as a Minor COA, while similar work involving replacement with like materials appears under routine maintenance as not requiring a COA. He also questioned similar overlap regarding installation of storm windows and doors, which appear both under routine maintenance (as removal or alteration) and under the table as requiring a Minor COA.

Planner Tysinger clarified that replacement of gutters and downspouts with like materials, matching trim, and without removal of significant architectural features would fall under routine maintenance. She explained that installation of new gutters and downspouts would require a Minor COA.

Ms. Bray sought clarification regarding installation of new gutters and downspouts.

Mr. McKee added a similar question regarding installation of new windows.

Chair Drew summarized that installation of storm windows or doors appeared in the Minor COA table, while removal or alteration of storm doors and windows was listed under routine maintenance. He stated his understanding that installation requires a Minor COA, while removal does not.

Director Meehan confirmed that revisions had been made to clarify that removal or alteration of existing shutters on non-visible or rear elevations is considered routine maintenance, while front-facing or visible elevations are subject to COA requirements as reflected in the updated chart distributed earlier.

Ms. Bray acknowledged the clarification.

Chair Drew asked if there were further questions under “exterior changes to buildings,” and, hearing none, stated the Commission would proceed to “new construction and additions.”

Planner Tysinger explained that the standards distinguish between primary and accessory structures. She stated that construction of a new primary structure, or substantial additions or alterations to a primary structure, would require Commission review. She noted that certain accessory structure work, such as alterations or construction exceeding 144 square feet, would be treated as a Minor COA, while construction of accessory structures under 144 square feet would fall under routine maintenance.

Ms. Bray asked whether the Commission has jurisdiction over non-historic accessory structures, such as sheds, and whether such structures are subject to review when located within the historic district.

Planner Tysinger responded that the City's intent is to consider all structures within the district, including accessory structures, noting that while not all are historic, all may have relevance to the character of the area. She added that structures become older over time and may eventually gain historic significance. She also noted that some accessory structures within the City are already considered historic.

Ms. Bray asked whether "historic" in this context is defined as 50 years or older and questioned whether the City would treat newer accessory structures, such as sheds built within the past several years, differently.

Planner Tysinger responded that consideration depends on the nature of the structure and its materials, including whether it reflects historic construction methods or is a modern prefabricated structure.

Ms. Bray stated that even if an accessory structure is historic, it remains an accessory structure and asked whether its historic status changes its classification or regulatory treatment.

Director Meehan referenced the Levels of Review handout, noting that demolition of accessory structures is listed as Item "L", (located on page 14 of the Design Standards, page 37 of 130 of the Agenda Packet), and is classified as a Major COA.

Ms. Bray reiterated her question regarding whether the historic nature of an accessory structure affects how it is regulated.

Director Meehan responded that accessory structures are treated as a category within the standards and that distinctions can be made if the Commission chooses to define them further.

Chair Drew asked whether the discussion pertained specifically to demolition, repair, or general treatment of accessory structures.

Mr. McGee noted that demolition of accessory structures is already addressed in the standards.

Ms. Bray clarified that her question was broader, asking whether historic accessory structures receive different consideration than non-historic ones, particularly when both may be decades old, such as an old pump house.

Mr. McGee provided an example of an older utility structure, noting that such cases may still fall under existing categories.

Ms. Bray reiterated that her intent was to clarify whether historic designation affects regulatory treatment for accessory structures.

Planner Tysinger responded that demolition of any structure or building is classified as a Major COA under the “Relocation and Demolition” section and emphasized that the standards should be read as a comprehensive framework, with individual provisions interpreted in context of the full document.

Ms. Bray requested clarification on the distinction between a “structure” and a “building.”

Planner Tysinger explained that an accessory structure may include items such as a pool and noted that a structure can also include an accessory building or platform.

Mr. McGee stated that a building is typically considered to be occupied.

Ms. Bray stated that under the “routine maintenance” provisions, demolition of an accessory structure is clearly addressed. She then raised concern regarding other sections related to relocation and demolition, noting what she perceived as inconsistency in how demolition is classified. She stated that demolition of a structure is treated as a major action but questioned why demolition of an accessory structure is not consistently treated in the same manner across sections.

Chair Drew responded that most accessory structures are in rear yards and are not visible from the street. He stated that the intent of the regulations is to protect the streetscape and the overall character as viewed from the street, rather than focusing on structures that are not visible from public view.

Ms. Bray reiterated her concern, stating that the language in the “routine maintenance” section and other sections appeared inconsistent, particularly regarding the treatment of demolition of structures versus accessory structures, and suggested clarification was needed.

Chair Drew proposed that the ordinance could specify that routine maintenance includes demolition of accessory structures not visible from the street and questioned whether additional language distinguishing visibility from the street would address the concern.

Ms. Gore-Graves responded that the matter had already been addressed in the existing language and stated that further specificity was not necessary. She expressed concern that adding such details could unnecessarily narrow the interpretation of the provision.

Alderman Davis stated that, based on her understanding of the UDO, accessory structures are not permitted in front of the main residence or within the front yard.

Director Meehan confirmed this interpretation, noting that accessory structures must be located beyond the front yard. She clarified that such structures may still be visible from the front right-of-way, and that visibility is often a determining factor in classification. Work on non-visible sides is typically considered routine maintenance, whereas work on side yards or areas visible from the right-of-way is generally classified as minor work.

Alderman Davis asked whether the demolition of an accessory structure, listed under routine maintenance (Item “I”), would continue to be treated as routine maintenance.

Chair Drew confirmed that demolition of an accessory structure remains categorized as routine maintenance under the current ordinance.

Planner Tysinger suggested that clarification may be needed, specifically whether the language should be revised to include a “non-visible” qualifier.

Ms. Bray noted that there appears to be conflicting language within the ordinance, indicating inconsistency between sections.

Chair Drew asked whether a permit is currently required to demolish a shed located in a backyard.

Director Meehan deferred to Planner Tysinger regarding the threshold for demolition permits.

Planner Tysinger stated that there is no clearly defined threshold within the current ordinance, noting that the building code references a 144-square-foot threshold but does not fully address all situations.

Chair Drew inquired whether a permit is required to purchase and install a prefabricated accessory structure, such as one obtained from a hardware store.

Planner Tysinger explained that determinations regarding demolition are handled on a case-by-case basis, as multiple factors must be considered before providing a definitive answer. She noted that conditions such as the presence of utilities, including electricity, may trigger additional regulatory requirements. She stated that these interpretations are part of an ongoing process and will continue to evolve as the Commission works toward more comprehensive and unified guidance.

Chair Drew remarked that, based on personal experience, accessory structures are not permitted on vacant lots without a primary residence, even if the lot is owned by the same individual.

Ms. Bray proposed revising the chart language under Item “l” to read: “demolition of a structure or building that is in public view.”

Planner Tysinger acknowledged and agreed with the proposed revision.

Chair Drew then transitioned the discussion to new construction and additions, asking if there were any outstanding questions.

Alderman Davis inquired why patios are included under “New Construction & Additions” rather than being classified as routine maintenance. She referenced the item concerning the alteration, construction, addition, or removal of patios.

Chair Drew responded that patios may impact the historic character of the streetscape, which justifies their inclusion in this category. However, he clarified that such work is considered Minor rather than Major and would therefore be reviewed and approved at the staff level rather than requiring full Commission review.

Alderman Davis asked whether this classification would still apply if the patio is located at the rear of the house.

Chair Drew stated that this determination may vary on a case-by-case basis, particularly where archaeological considerations may arise due to excavation or foundation work associated with patio construction or removal.

Chair Drew then asked if there were any additional questions regarding relocation and demolition. Hearing none, the Commission moved forward to the topic of disaster preparedness and prevention. It was noted that the chart includes two items under this category: maintenance and emergency restoration. Existing above-ground utilities are classified as Minor, while elevating a structure or building is classified as a Major action.

Planner Tysinger explained that the resiliency chapter included in the draft standards was added following strong encouragement from the State. She noted that the State has invested significant funding, including grant resources, to assist municipalities in developing resiliency standards, particularly for those without the means to hire consultants. These efforts included the creation of guidance materials and statewide training sessions, which several Commission members attended. While not currently mandated by statute, Planner Tysinger emphasized that inclusion of resiliency provisions is highly encouraged and may eventually become codified.

Mr. Rich Alt raised a concern regarding the interpretation of “emergency restoration,” questioning whether, in the event of a hurricane-related power outage, a property owner would be required to wait for staff review before restoring utilities, such as reconnecting overhead power lines. He expressed concern that the language could imply delays of several days before action could be taken.

Chair Drew responded that the ordinance includes provisions intended to address emergency situations such as hurricanes and natural disasters.

Mr. Alt noted uncertainty about how the term “emergency restoration” is applied in practice.

Chair Drew acknowledged that this was a valid concern.

Ms. Bray suggested revising the language by removing the term “emergency” and simplifying the category to “maintenance and restoration.”

Planner Tysinger explained that, based on past storm experiences, property owners are generally permitted to take immediate action to secure their property, and that insurance companies also operate under this assumption. She indicated that the City typically issues temporary guidance during storm events, such as suspending permit requirements or allowing activities like

tree removal for a limited period, and that the proposed guidelines would not be intended to override those established emergency practices.

Mr. Alt noted that City responses to storm events are typically case-dependent and not uniformly applied in every situation. He expressed concern that retaining the term “emergency” could create ambiguity or disagreement regarding what constitutes an emergency. He suggested that the Commission consider removing the term to avoid potential conflicts in interpretation.

Chair Drew recommended striking the word “emergency” and revising the language to read “maintenance and restoration of existing,” stating that this change would provide greater clarity.

Alderman Davis then requested an example scenario to better understand when the provision would apply and what specific circumstances would trigger its use.

Chair Drew provided examples of events that could trigger the provision, including thunderstorms, tornadoes, hurricanes, and other disaster-related situations.

Alderman Davis noted that removing the term “emergency” would leave the provision as “maintenance of above-ground utilities.”

Chair Drew clarified that the revised language would read “maintenance and restoration of existing above-ground utilities,” and that such work would be classified as a Minor COA, to be reviewed at the Staff level rather than requiring full Commission review. He explained that, in practice, situations involving utility restoration, particularly electrical service, would still require coordination with the building inspector. He noted that power cannot be restored without prior inspection and approval to ensure safety, regardless of the classification under historic preservation guidelines.

Alderman Davis acknowledged this explanation and questioned whether such provisions appropriately belong within historic preservation regulations.

Chair Drew responded that these provisions are guided by general statutes, and multiple Commission members and Staff concurred with that assessment. He noted that the Commission had previously considered removing the disaster preparedness and prevention section but revisited its inclusion due to its statutory and practical relevance.

Mr. Herring asked about the primary advantage of aligning the Commission's regulations with State general statutes, requesting a brief explanation of the benefit. He referenced a prior visit from a state preservation expert, noting her observations regarding the presence of vinyl siding and fiber cement siding within the community, which she viewed unfavorably. Mr. Herring questioned the necessity of adhering to State statutes and asked what advantages such alignment provides for the City.

Planner Tysinger responded that the issue is primarily a legal matter, explaining that local governments derive their authority from the State and are limited to the powers granted by statute. She noted that, unlike some states where municipalities have broader autonomy, North Carolina local governments operate within a more constrained framework and cannot enact regulations that exceed or conflict with State law. As such, adherence to State statutes is not optional but required. Planner Tysinger stated that the rationale is less about specific advantages and more about ensuring legal compliance and consistency with governing authority.

Chair Drew stated that failure to follow State general statutes could result in the loss of the City's authority to maintain its historic preservation framework.

Mr. McGee added that noncompliance could jeopardize the existence of the historic district itself.

Planner Tysinger explained that State statutes are structured to allow flexibility, recognizing that not all historic districts are the same, which is why they provide a range of considerations for local governments.

Chair Drew clarified his understanding that the City may adopt regulations that are more restrictive than State standards but cannot be less restrictive.

Alderman Davis questioned why the provisions under discussion fall within historic preservation regulations, noting that State statutes apply broadly to all properties, not just those within the historic district, and asked why this issue is being addressed in this context.

Planner Tysinger explained that these provisions stem in part from the widespread damage to historic structures across the State due to storms. She noted that museums, archaeological sites, and historic buildings, often located in vulnerable areas such as along rivers and in low-lying regions, have required additional consideration in regulatory frameworks.

Chair Drew, speaking from his experience as fire chief, observed that following storm events, property owners often begin repairs immediately

without permits, including rebuilding docks and other structures. He stated that incorporating these provisions into historic preservation regulations provides an additional layer of protection to ensure that repairs are conducted appropriately and in accordance with established standards. He reiterated that the discussion at hand specifically concerns the maintenance and restoration of existing above-ground utilities.

Alderman Davis acknowledged the explanation but reiterated that the focus remains on how such provisions apply within the context of historic preservation regulations.

Director Meehan explained that under Section 160, a COA is required for alterations, erection, or restoration of above-ground utility structures, which are included within the list of regulated items. She emphasized that the disaster preparedness and prevention section is intended not only for post-storm response but also for proactive measures. She stated that the purpose of the section is to ensure that structures are fortified and made as resilient as possible in advance of storm events, thereby helping preserve existing historic resources.

Alderman Davis requested an example of an above-ground utility structure, and Director Meehan responded that a light pole would be one such example.

Chair Drew asked if there were any additional comments regarding the disaster preparedness and prevention section. Ms. Bray noted that the section, which has been restored, is approximately 28 pages in length and constitutes the largest portion of the design standards. She stated that, while extensive, only a very small portion of the section requires a COA. She explained that the remaining sections of the standards total approximately 38 pages combined, highlighting that the disaster preparedness section represents a significant portion of the document. Ms. Bray emphasized that its inclusion is driven by State guidance and investment, as previously discussed, and that only a minimal fraction of the section, approximately a very small percentage, triggers COA requirements.

Chair Drew clarified that the only item within this section requiring a Major COA is the elevation of a structure. He then directed the Commission's attention to the "Other" category, noting two Minor COA items: renewal of a previously granted COA for work not completed within the one-year validity period, and public safety-related issues.

Chair Drew asked if there were any questions regarding the final section. Hearing none, he stated that he would entertain a motion concerning routine maintenance actions as presented.

A motion was made Mr. McGee and seconded by Ms. Bray to approve the revisions made to the Routine Maintenance Actions (COA not Required).

The motion carried unanimously

Absent: Joanne Wesson

Chair Drew noted that approximately 40 minutes remained in the meeting and reiterated his goal of limiting meetings to two hours. He directed the Commission's attention to the sections highlighted in green within the Design Standards, explaining that these items require further discussion. He clarified the color-coding used throughout the document: yellow highlights represent changes made since the July 2025 public hearing, blue highlights indicate revisions requested by the Commission at the February 26th meeting, and green highlights identify items associated with or required by North Carolina General Statute 160D. He stated that the Commission would begin review with the table of contents, located on page 28 of the agenda packet and corresponding to page five of the Design Standards.

Planner Tysinger noted that, based on the day's discussion and any changes made, portions of the document may require further editorial revisions to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Chair Drew asked whether the Commission has discretion regarding the items highlighted in green, specifically whether it could choose not to include items recommended by the General Statute.

Planner Tysinger responded that the Commission does have some flexibility in certain areas. She provided the example of archaeology, noting that while it appears in the statutory list as a consideration, it is not mandatory and may be included or excluded based on the Commission's preference.

Director Meehan added that items such as cemeteries and archaeology had previously been removed at the Commission's request during the February meeting, as they were not considered architectural features. However, she noted that these elements were reintroduced for consideration due to their significance within the City and historic district. She emphasized that the Commission retains the authority to determine whether such items, along with others such as landmarks, trees, cemeteries, archaeology, and disaster preparedness, should remain part of the Design Standards.

Chair Drew stated that approximately 40 minutes remained in the meeting and reiterated his intent to limit meetings to two hours. He directed the Commission's attention to the sections highlighted in green within the Design Standards for continued discussion. He explained the document's color-coding system, noting that yellow highlights represent changes made since the July 2025 public hearing, blue highlights indicate revisions requested by the Commission at the February 26th meeting, and green highlights identify items associated with North Carolina General Statute 160D. He further noted that the review would begin with the table of contents, located on page 28 of the Agenda Packet and corresponding to page five of the Design Standards. Planner Tysinger stated that, based on the day's discussion and any resulting changes, Staff would revisit the document to make necessary editorial revisions to ensure clarity and consistency.

Chair Drew asked whether the Commission has discretion regarding items highlighted in green, specifically whether it could choose not to include items recommended by the State statute.

Planner Tysinger responded that the Commission does have some discretion regarding items highlighted in green, noting that certain elements, such as archaeology, are included in State guidance as considerations but are not strictly mandatory and may be addressed at the Commission's discretion.

Director Meehan explained that cemeteries and archaeology had previously been removed at the Commission's request during the February meeting, as they were not considered architectural features. However, she stated that these items were reintroduced for consideration due to their significance within the City and the historic district. She emphasized that the Commission retains the authority to determine whether such elements, including landmarks, trees, cemeteries, archaeology, and disaster preparedness, should remain within the Design Standards.

Ms. Bray suggested that archaeology and cemeteries be addressed in the narrative portion of the document rather than within enforceable standards. She explained that these topics could be treated similarly to background sections on history and architecture, providing context and guidance without establishing regulatory requirements tied to a COA.

Mr. McKee noted that much of the property within the City has already been disturbed, limiting the likelihood of significant archaeological findings on private lots. He added that archaeological requirements are more applicable to public or State-owned property.

Planner Tysinger provided an example, noting that certain historically significant sites are already protected under State regulations, which differ from typical residential properties undergoing development.

Mr. McKee further explained that permits related to archaeological activity are generally required for public or State property but not for private land.

Planner Tysinger stated that including guidance within the standards could still be beneficial, even if not strictly required, to provide direction in situations where archaeological considerations arise.

Ms. Bray reiterated that the narrative section already references resources such as the Office of State Archaeology and suggested that this approach is sufficient, as there are no COA requirements or enforcement mechanisms tied to archaeology standards. She recommended maintaining these topics as informational guidance rather than regulatory standards.

Chair Drew observed that the cemetery standards section contains only a few provisions, which largely reference existing State statutes. He asked whether the Commission would be agreeable to retaining those standards as currently written.

Ms. Bray expressed concern that including cemeteries and archaeology as formal standards could unnecessarily expand and complicate the list of enforceable standards. She stated that while the information is valuable and provides strong guidance, labeling it as a “standard” may give it undue weight and make the document more cumbersome. She suggested that these topics would be more appropriately included as informational or narrative content rather than regulatory standards.

Chair Drew noted that there are existing City ordinances that already address some of these matters.

Ms. Bray acknowledged this point and reiterated her recommendation that the language related to cemeteries and archaeology be incorporated into the narrative sections of the document, such as the introductory or historical context portions. She explained that this approach would preserve the informational value while avoiding unnecessary expansion of enforceable standards and would direct inquiries to the appropriate authorities outside of the Historic Preservation Commission when applicable.

Chair Drew confirmed for the record that docks, piers, and boardwalks have been deleted from the standards, and Planner Tysinger affirmed that this was

correct. Planner Tysinger then asked for clarification regarding how existing ordinances relate to cemeteries.

Ms. Bray stated that the HPC does not provide direct regulatory oversight in this area and that guidance related to cemeteries typically comes from other agencies.

Planner Tysinger noted that retaining such items within the standards could potentially be beneficial in the future, particularly in relation to grant opportunities or demonstrating a structured framework, suggesting that the absence of such standards might be viewed negatively in some contexts.

Ms. Bray responded that the information would still remain within the document in a narrative format, even if not included as enforceable standards.

Planner Tysinger acknowledged that while the information would still be present, it would not carry the same weight without being designated as a formal standard. Ms. Bray agreed with that distinction.

Ms. Hufham provided information regarding local cemetery conditions, noting that most cemeteries within the City are regulated, with the exception of the Moore Cemetery located behind the Apostolic Church. She stated that the property is privately owned and that access has required permission from the owner. She further noted that portions of the cemetery have been encroached upon by a parking area, resulting in gravesites and headstones being obscured or no longer visible. She expressed concern that, as unregulated private property, the land could potentially be sold without protection in place.

Mr. McKee added that a number of graves are believed to exist beneath the current parking area.

Chair Drew acknowledged Ms. Hufham's comments and thanked her for providing the information.

Ms. Bray advised that the Commission avoid becoming overly focused on the issue within the context of the Design Standards, noting that while cemeteries are an important part of the community, the standards themselves do not address broader issues such as the sale or ownership of privately held cemetery property. She emphasized that the proposed standards primarily relate to preservation measures, such as preventing the defacement or desecration of gravesites, and that such matters are already governed by State law. She referenced existing statutes that classify the desecration of

graves as a misdemeanor or felony offense, indicating that these protections fall outside the scope of the Commission's regulatory authority.

Mr. McKee noted that while State and federal protections exist for cemeteries and gravesites, enforcement often depends on identifying violations as they occur. Chair Drew inquired whether, if a privately owned cemetery property were sold, a future owner could relocate graves to develop the site.

Mr. McKee responded that such actions could occur, though they are subject to regulatory requirements. He stated that, in many cases, permission from family members is required unless the cemetery is considered abandoned, and that while the process is regulated, relocation of graves is possible under certain conditions.

Planner Tysinger commented that the discussion reflects the distinction between guidance and enforceable regulations, noting that the standards may serve more as guidance in this context.

Ms. Bray questioned whether a COA would be required, observing that certain proposed standards, such as those requiring identification, retention, and preservation of cemeteries, could provide a level of protection if development were proposed on such a site. She suggested that these provisions could trigger involvement from appropriate agencies during the review process.

Mr. McKee cautioned that outcomes often depend on oversight and enforcement, noting examples where development has occurred adjacent to or impacting cemetery sites.

Planner Tysinger added that including guidance within the standards could be beneficial, referencing past experience where construction activity was halted due to the discovery of human remains. She stated that such situations can result in immediate intervention by State authorities and emphasized the importance of having guidance in place prior to development to help avoid conflicts and ensure proper procedures are followed.

Ms. Bray asked whether cemetery-related considerations are addressed within the UDO and whether outside agencies should be involved in such matters.

Planner Tysinger responded that these issues are primarily governed by State statutes and stated that the current language within the Design Standards is sufficient to address potential concerns. She explained that if cemetery-related issues arise during the review of a COA, they would be considered as part of the overall evaluation.

Planner Tysinger also noted a suggested editorial revision within the introduction of the document. Referring to page 30 of the agenda packet (page seven of the Design Standards), she stated that Ms. Hufham recommended changing the wording from “to conserve the historic neighborhoods” to “to preserve the historic neighborhoods” in the second-to-last paragraph of the first column. He indicated that this would be a minor wording adjustment.

Planner Tysinger stated that, in the interest of time, the Commission should focus on items highlighted in green, which were added in response to State statutory considerations. She emphasized that the discussion should center on the subject matter of those items as they relate to the district as a whole, including elements such as cemeteries and trees addressed throughout the document.

Planner Tysinger stated that site setting plans would remain in the document, as they are already identified within the chart, and noted there was no need for further discussion unless the Commission wished to revisit them. She explained that several items, such as exterior lighting, driveways and street parking, and signage, must remain in the standards and cannot be removed. She asked for consensus regarding cemeteries, noting that they are not mandated in the same way, and suggested leaving them as previously discussed. He also indicated that “mature trees” should be revised to “heritage trees,” with corresponding edits.

Chair Drew agreed and emphasized the need to include a clear definition for “heritage trees” within the document.

Planner Tysinger confirmed that this would be addressed. She also noted that references to paint appear in the document as guidance rather than regulation. She explained that examples include discouraging the painting of masonry surfaces that were not historically painted and recommending appropriate paint types where surfaces have previously been painted. She stated that this guidance is consistent with State recommendations, including considerations regarding the composition of pre- and post-1930 brick. She emphasized that the standards do not regulate paint color but instead provide best-practice guidance.

Planner Tysinger then asked whether the Commission wished to retain the resiliency planning section, referencing the relevant pages of the document.

Ms. Bray commented that the section is thorough and provides strong guidance.

Planner Tysinger sought consensus from the Commission, indicating that the document was nearing completion.

Chair Drew proposed that staff prepare a clean version of the document without highlights, edits, or color coding for review at the May meeting. He requested that the finalized draft be uploaded to the City's website in advance to allow public access. He stated that, at the May meeting, the Commission would review the clean document and determine whether it is ready to be forwarded to the Board of Aldermen.

Ms. Bray asked whether the document could be placed on the Board of Aldermen's May meeting agenda.

Director Meehan indicated that this timing may not be feasible.

Planner Tysinger reminded the Commission that, during the February meeting, there had been a request to send the document back to the State for review prior to forwarding it to the Board of Aldermen. She asked whether that direction remained or if the Commission wished to rescind it.

Chair Drew suggested that, given the inclusion of required statutory elements, it may no longer be necessary to send the document back to the State.

Mr. McKee made a motion that the document not be sent back to the State and instead be forwarded to the Board of Aldermen for review and consideration.

A motion was made by Mr. McKee seconded by Ms. Bray to rescind the previous directive from the February Meeting to submit the changes to the State and instead forward the completed HPC Design Standards directly to the BOA for review.

The motion carried unanimously

Absent: Joanne Wesson

Planner Tysinger noted that several board terms will be expiring in the near future. He explained that all board appointments are subject to review and reappointment by the appropriate governing authority. He further stated that members whose terms are ending must submit a new application if they wish to be considered for reappointment to the Commission.

Deputy City Clerk Baillargeon stated that notifications had been sent to applicable individuals regarding upcoming term expirations. He indicated that not all members were contacted simultaneously but confirmed receipt of at

least one response. He advised that members wishing to be considered for reappointment should submit their applications directly to him so the process can proceed. He further noted that several terms are expiring concurrently and that staff will coordinate follow-up communication and schedule interviews as needed.

Ms. Bray stated that approval of the February 4th, 2026, meeting minutes had been tabled at the previous meeting. She made a motion to approve the February 4th, 2026, meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Ms. Bray and seconded by Ms. Hufham to approve the February 4th, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes.

The motion carried unanimously

Absent: Joanne Wesson

Mr. McGee provided comments regarding HPC's work and the development of the proposed historic district and design standards. He noted that he was unable to attend the February meeting but had reviewed the minutes and conducted research on the history of historic preservation efforts both locally and across North Carolina. He stated that historic preservation has long been a priority in the State, with numerous local historic districts established under State law, and emphasized that compliance with State statutes is necessary for enforcement.

Mr. McGee referenced prior planning efforts, including the City's 2014 CAMA Core Plan and the 2050 Comprehensive Plan, noting that both documents reflect strong public support for preserving Southport's historic character. He stated that the establishment of the HPC in 2022 was a foundational step, and that the development of design standards represents the final step prior to formalizing a historic district.

He emphasized that preservation efforts should extend beyond architectural features to include broader community assets such as waterfront vistas, heritage trees, and the overall character of the City. He expressed concern about the potential impacts of unchecked development and the importance of ensuring compatibility with Southport's historic and environmental character.

Mr. McGee suggested that the Commission consider reevaluating the boundaries of the proposed historic district, including whether a smaller or phased approach, similar to models used in other municipalities, may be

appropriate. He also raised concerns regarding potential legal liability for Commission members, recommending that provisions be considered to protect volunteers from litigation arising from their official actions.

Additionally, Mr. McGee encouraged the Commission to increase community engagement prior to finalizing the standards, suggesting that residents be given an opportunity to provide input on elements they may find unacceptable. He emphasized the importance of balancing enforceable guidelines with public support and stated that establishing design standards consistent with State law is essential to the success of the historic district.

Chair Drew then proceeded to the next agenda item.

Mr. Rich Alt requested to speak and stated that his comments were intended to be non-confrontational. He expressed general agreement with prior remarks and clarified that, while he had previously received input from the City Attorney in closed session, he could not disclose those details. He emphasized that his primary concern is the potential financial impact of litigation on the City. He noted that legal questions regarding the applicability or interpretation of statutes may ultimately be resolved through the courts and suggested that the City seek additional expert legal guidance rather than relying on a single source. He further stated that his interest in the matter stems from his prior role as mayor and his fiduciary responsibility to the City.

Chair Drew announced that the next meeting of the Commission would be held on Wednesday, May 6th, at 4:00 p.m. And recognized Aldermen Davis to speak for two minutes.

Alderman Davis thanked Mr. McGee for his comments and expressed agreement regarding the need for increased public input. She provided background on the formation of the HPC, explaining that it originated in 2022 following significant public concern over a proposed development project. She stated that the response from residents prompted the creation of an *ad hoc* committee, which ultimately led to the establishment of the current Commission. She noted that there was strong interest in participation, with numerous applicants, and commended the Commission for its work to date while emphasizing that the process is not yet complete.

Chair Drew thanked Aldermen Davis for her comments. He asked the Commission for a motion to adjourn.

N. Adjourn

A motion was made by M. McGee and seconded by Mr. Bray to adjourn the April 13th, 2026, Historic Preservation Commission's Regular Meeting.

The motion carried unanimously.

The Commission adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

X

Charles Drew
Chair

X

Scott Baillargeon
Deputy City Clerk



City of Southport *Historic Preservation Commission*

Southport Local Historic District Design Standards 2026

Draft: April 28, 2026 | Adopted Date





Photo credits

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Acknowledgments

The Southport Historic Design Standards manual was prepared by the Southport Historic Preservation Commission with assistance from City Development Services Staff and Stewart. We also thank the many Southport citizens who participated in the public meetings and provided input for project completion.

Mayor

Dr. Joseph P. Hatem
Richard Alt, Former Mayor

Board of Aldermen

Karen Mosteller, Mayor Pro Tem
Robert Carroll
Lowe Davis
Paul Gross
Rebecca Kelley
Marc Spencer
Frank Lai, former
alderman

Historic Preservation Commission

Charles Drew, Chair
Bonnie Bray, Vice-Chair
Alexis Gore Graves
Bonner Herring
Katherine Hufham
Josh Cline McGee
Jim McKee
Joanne Wesson
Tal West
Rick Pukenas,
former member

City Staff

Maureen Meehan, Planning
Services Director

Penny Tysinger, HPC Planner

Project Consultant

Andrea Radford, Community Planning Team Lead



STEWART

*Standards adopted by the City of Southport Historic Preservation
Commission:*

State Historic Preservation Office Advisors

Kristi Brantley, Local Preservation Commission/CLG



Foreword

The Southport Local Historic District was designated by the Board of Aldermen in TBD. The Southport Local Historic District encompasses the entirety of the Southport Local Historic District (1980) and a portion of the Historic District Boundary Amendment (2010). The Southport Historic Preservation Commission was established to protect and preserve the historic character of the district by reviewing applications for Certificates of Appropriateness. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required prior to any other permit; it is issued for changes to buildings and sites within the district to ensure changes are congruous with the character and qualities of the historic district.

The Southport Local Historic District is a collection of buildings and sites that embody important elements of the city's culture, history, and architectural history. The special character of the district is outlined in this document.

The purpose of the local historic district designation and regulations is to encourage the preservation of the historic character and architectural details of the Southport Local Historic District for the benefit of present and future generations. Through a historic district overlay, the Southport Local Historic District is protected from unmanaged change through a design review process that is based on the Southport Local Historic District Design Standards. The intent of these design standards is to:

1. Provide guidance to assist all parties, including property owners, tenants, contractors, and architects as they plan to restore, rehabilitate, or make changes to the exterior of properties within the Southport Local Historic District.
2. Provide standards for planning staff and commissions members to evaluate proposed changes, including, new construction, alterations, additions, relocation, and demolition to determine congruity with the special character of the district.



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Introduction



Introduction

The Southport Design Standards are intended to assist property owners in the locally designated historic district and owners of historic landmarks when they are planning changes to the exteriors of their properties. The standards also assist the Southport Historic Preservation Commission and its staff in determining the appropriateness of proposed changes. *These standards do not replace the need to follow current development ordinances or building permit requirements.

A historic district is created because, taken as a whole, it embodies important elements of the city's cultural and architectural heritage. Therefore, when considering projects within a historic district, the Commission is charged with reviewing exterior alterations to an individual building, as well as their impact on the district as a whole. Originally designated in 1980, the City of Southport National Register Historic District consists of a combination of residential, commercial and institutional buildings.

Design standards do not apply to National Historic Districts Register. The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of nation's historic places worthy of preservation.

Listing in the National Register is an honorary designation and places no restrictions on what an owner may do with a listed property. Locally designated historic districts are created to protect historic properties from insensitive alteration. Therefore, standards help property owners determine appropriate maintenance and rehabilitation measures for their historic buildings. Where the boundaries of a local historic district and a National Register historic district coincide or overlap, the application of design standards is in effect strictly due to the local designation.

Through the establishment of the Southport Local Historic District (historic district), the City of Southport and the Historic Preservation Commission hope to retain the remaining historic building stock, to encourage the efforts of area residents to preserve the historic neighborhoods, and to protect Southport's character and charm. Local designation provides review of proposed changes to exteriors,

site features, and archaeological resources.

Structures existing at the time of the adoption of the local historic district overlay are not required to retroactively come into compliance with the Southport Local Historic District Design Standards.

Additionally, exterior elements, materials, and mechanical features existing prior to the adoption of these standards may be repaired or replaced with like kind materials. Compliance with the Southport Local Historic Design Standards begins on ____ after the adoption of these standards and the local historic overlay zone.

How to Use the Design Standards

Users of these standards are encouraged to read them in their entirety. They can also reference selected sections to answer specific questions about the repair, alteration, and rehabilitation of Southport's historic architecture, and new construction within the historic district.

Section 1.0 – Site and Setting discusses the setting of the historic district related to fencing, utilities, lighting, and signage.

Section 2.0 – Standards for Exterior Changes to Buildings provides standards for proposed changes to individual landmarks and buildings in the Southport Local Historic District.

Section 3.0 – New Construction and Additions provides guidance for new construction and its integration within the historic district.

Section 4.0 – Relocation & Demolition Standards discusses best management for relocation of buildings.

Section 5.0 – Demolition of Landmarks and Buildings discuss the topics of appropriate demolition in the district.

Section 6.0 – Disaster Preparedness and Prevention provides standards for historic properties within flood prone areas and best practices of preparation for and rehabilitation after natural disasters.



Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are the broad preservation principles on which these Design Standards are based. These ten national standards outline a hierarchy of preservation practices that focus on the maintenance and protection of historic properties, valuing preservation over the repair or replacement of historic features. The standards also address site and setting as well as additions and new construction.

The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, developed in 1992, were codified as 36 CFR Part 68 in the July 12, 1995, Federal Register (Vol. 60, No. 133). They replaced the 1978 and 1983 versions of 36 CFR Part 68, entitled The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects. The ten Standards are listed below with additional information and guidance available on the National Park Service website: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rehabstandards.htm>.

In the rare instance that a particular application includes an element that is not specifically addressed in these Design Standards, the Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation will be applied to that part of the application. It should be noted that, although the first standard addresses use, the Commission does not review proposed uses of historic buildings. The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are as follows:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to project the integrity of the property and its environment.



10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Administration of the Southport Local Historic District

Historic Preservation Legislation—Federal, State, and Local

Historic preservation activities in Southport are guided by several important pieces of legislation on the federal, state, and local levels. Foremost of these is the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966. Among other things, this landmark federal act and its amendments established the National Register of Historic Places, the system of State Historic Preservation Offices, and the Certified Local Government program. It also mandated consideration by the federal government of the effects to historic resources from federal undertakings. Through additional historic preservation-related legislation enacted in 1976 and 1986, the federal government has created tax credits for the certified rehabilitation and preservation of income-producing historic properties.

In North Carolina, localities can establish historic districts and Historic Preservation Commissions to administer them pursuant to the provisions of North Carolina G.S. 160D-940-951. This statute defines the criteria for historic district and landmark designation, details the potential powers and duties of a local Historic Preservation Commission, and mandates that a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) be obtained for changes to the exterior of individual landmarks and buildings within a historic district or to their setting.

The state statutes provide the legal underpinning for the City of Southport's Local Historic District Ordinance, first adopted by the Southport Board of Aldermen on September 8, 2022. The Southport Local Historic District Ordinance, much of which is based on the State Statute above, is found in Chapter 2, Division 3 of the City Code of Ordinances.

Southport Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)

The City of Southport's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) consists of seven (7) regular members and two (2) alternate positions, who are voted in as voting members when a regular member is absent. The HPC elects its own chairperson and vice-chairperson to one-year terms. All members must be residents of the City of Southport, though not necessarily a resident of the historic district, and shall have demonstrated special interest, experience, or education in preservation, history, or architecture. The HPC is assisted in its duties by City Staff, including the Planning Services Director, City Planners, Building Inspectors, and the City Clerk's Office.

The Southport Historic Preservation Commission holds regularly scheduled meetings on the first Wednesday of every month at 4:00 PM. Meetings are generally held at the Indian Trail Meeting Hall (113 W. Moore Street). All cases are advertised in accordance with City ordinance. The HPC may also hold special meetings to discuss particular topics and are advertised as such, and all meetings of the HPC are open to the public.



Goals of the Historic Preservation Commission

Goal 1: The City of Southport Historic Preservation Commission endeavors to preserve the heritage of Southport by enacting regulations and architectural design standards within the locally designated historic district(s), by extending protection of landmark status to especially significant structures, buildings, sites, areas, or objects, and by utilizing Certificates of Appropriateness to ensure that projects within those districts or involving those landmarks are consistent with the historic character of the City.

Goal 2: The City of Southport Historic Preservation Commission shall establish policies and procedures to prevent the loss of historically significant structures within locally designated historic districts.

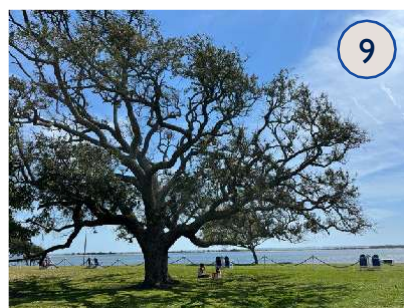
Goal 3: The City of Southport Historic Preservation Commission will lead efforts to provide education on the benefits of historic preservation to property owners and residents of the City at large.

Goal 4: The City of Southport Historic Commission shall support public participation in the historic preservation process, including but not limited to publicly- initiated nominations of local landmarks and through transparency in Commission actions in accordance with all applicable state statutes



Protecting Southport's Historic Vistas

1. Battery Island and Quarantine Platform
2. Tree-lined streets
3. Water views at street ends
4. Franklin Square Park
5. Old Burying Ground
6. Howe/Moore corridors
7. Yacht Basin
8. Brunswick Street Marsh
9. Garrison Lawn
10. Indian Trail Tree and Keziah Memorial Park





Duties and Responsibilities of the HPC

Among the most important powers and duties of the HPC detailed in Section 2.195 of the Southport Local Historic District regulations are the following:

- a. Maintain an inventory of historic properties;
- b. Recommend to the Board of Aldermen the designation of historic districts and landmarks in Southport, as well as recommend the removal of a building or landmark's historic designation;
- c. Review and act upon proposals for alterations, demolitions and relocations, or new construction within historic districts in Southport; the HPC also reviews changes to individual landmarks.

This last duty is the one most frequently encountered by the public in Southport. To fulfill this responsibility, the HPC is empowered to "review and pass upon the appropriateness of the construction, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, moving or demolition of any buildings, structures, outdoor advertising signs or other exterior features in the historic district."

The purpose of the review is to assist the HPC perform its duty as provided by N.C. General Statute 160D-947 to prevent the construction, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, moving, or demolition of buildings or structures, appurtenant fixtures, outdoor advertising signs, or other significant features in the district which would be incongruous with the special character of the landmark or district.

Certificate of Appropriateness

Probably the most frequently asked question of the HPC is "When do I need a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)?" The COA is a permit that a property owner receives indicating that a proposed change or action has been reviewed and approved by the HPC for congruity with the special character of the historic district or landmark and for consistency with the historic district regulations. Per NCGS 160D-947 a COA is required for any change to exterior fixtures planned for a local historic landmark or building within the local historic district (See Map on [page 37](#)) including masonry walls, fences, light fixtures, steps and pavement, other appurtenant features, above-ground utilities, and outdoor advertising signs. Exterior features include the architectural style, general design, general arrangements of buildings or structures on the site, size and scale of the buildings or structures, building materials, types and styles of windows, doors, light fixtures, signs, and other fixtures. As a part of the COA review process, the HPC shall consider the preservation of the character and integrity of the City and its historic districts and individual landmarks. To verify that the proposed action requires a COA, call the City's Historic Preservation Planner at 910-457-7900.

According to [Section 2.1.99](#) of the City historic district regulations "ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior architectural feature in the Southport Local Historic District which does not involve a change in design, material, or outer appearance" does not require a COA. As a general rule, however, all other external changes or modifications to a building/structure or its setting in the historic district, demolitions and relocations in the historic district, new construction in the historic district, and the installation or alteration of any sign in the historic district can only be undertaken after the granting of a COA. The COA must be obtained before any proposed work can be performed. A COA is generally required regardless of whether any other building or zoning permit is required. Note that the interior of a publicly owned building or an individual landmark for which consent for interior review has been given by the owner also falls under HPC review.



Quasi-Judicial Decision

Local historic designation requires a certificate of appropriateness (COA) from the HPC to make any changes to their property. The commission reviews all COAs and makes its decision based on evidence and the design standards in this document. The Commission must use its judgment to come to a conclusion of law.

Per NCGS 160D-947 (c), due to the judgment required to make the COA decision, the standard procedural requirements for quasi-judicial decisions found in NCGS 160D-406 shall be followed. The standard that applies to historic preservation decisions asks “is the project congruous with the special character of the district or landmark?” (as identified in these design standards).

Procedural elements that must be followed as outlined in the general statutes include:

The preservation commission

- a. “Shall take such steps as may be reasonably required in the ordinance and/or rules of procedure to inform the owners of any property likely to be materially affected by the application”;
- b. “Shall give the applicant and such owners an opportunity to be heard”
- c. “Will hold a public hearing concerning any major works application”;
- d. “Shall review and act upon all applications “within reasonable time, not to 90 days from the date a complete application for a certificate of appropriateness is filed.”



Levels of Review

Exterior changes to properties in the Southport Local Historic District are divided into two categories: Minor Works and Major Works. The following pages and table outline the types of work that fall into each category. It is always best to contact the City's Historic Preservation Planner early in planning stages in determining which level of review is required for the project.

Routine Maintenance Actions (COA Not Required)

Property owners should be aware of certain actions that are considered "routine maintenance" or are otherwise not subject to HPC review and thus do not require a COA. While a COA may not be necessary, some actions will require building and/or zoning approval. These items include:

- a. Repair or change of color of painted surfaces;
- b. Seasonal decorations;
- c. Moveable playground equipment;
- d. Temporary real estate "open-house" or "yard sale" signs placed and removed on that day;
- e. Replacing gutters or downspouts with like materials, construction, and matching trim colors as long as significant architectural features are not removed or obscured;
- f. Landscaping;
- g. Planting of trees;
- h. Temporary emergency items such as roof tarps, temporary window air conditioning units, fans, or portable generators;
- i. Alteration/removal of storm windows or doors;
- j. Alteration/removal of existing shutters on rear or non-visible side yards;
- k. Alteration/addition/construction/removal of swimming pools;
- l. Demolition of an accessory structure not visible from public view or street;
- m. Construction of a new accessory structure less than 144 square feet;
- n. Mailboxes;
- o. Seasonal lighting and plantings;
- p. Little free libraries;
- q. Security cameras.



Pre-Application Process

For all but the smallest project, a property owner is strongly urged to take advantage of the HPC's pre-application process. This process, involving informal consultation with City staff can save time, money, and headaches during the rest of the COA application process. It allows owners/applicants to present conceptual ideas, to discuss different alternatives, and to receive helpful guidance and comments. An applicant may request an informal meeting with Staff to become familiar with the Southport Historic Design Standards.

It is important to realize that completion of the pre-application process does not guarantee approval of the COA application by the full HPC, or that the COA application will not be modified. The HPC renders its decision on an application after careful consideration, hearing of evidence from other Southport residents or expert witnesses, and discussion among its members, all accomplished at the regularly scheduled HPC hearings.

Minor Works

Minor works include a limited in-kind replacement of materials or features as well as relatively minor alterations that do not significantly impact the special character of the property. These minor alterations require administrative staff review therefore expediting the process. A COA application is still required and the proposed work must meet the Design Standards outlined in this document to ensure the proposed work is not incongruous with the special character of the district. Complete applications are reviewed in the order they are received and may take up to two weeks.

If the Preservation Planner finds that the proposed work does not meet the Design Standards, the applicant may revise the application or the application can be reviewed by the HPC. No application may be denied without the formal action by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Major Works

Major works are substantial alterations to a building or site that have the potential to alter or damage the historic character and integrity of the building, adjacent buildings and sites, and the associated historic district. A COA application is required and the proposed work must meet the Design Standards to ensure the proposed work is not incongruous with the special character of the district. Applications for Major Works are reviewed by the full Historic Preservation Commission at their regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

The Planning staff reviews the applications to ensure their completeness, schedules the application to be heard at the appropriate Commission meeting, and provides mailed notification and posted notification about the public meeting.



City of Southport Local Historic District Review

All exterior work and new construction to a locally designated landmark or property within the City of Southport's Local Historic District requires a COA, regardless of whether or not a building permit is required.

The following table provides examples of projects and COA requirements. For any projects not listed below please contact the Preservation Planner for more information.

Proposed Work	Minor COA	Major COA
Site and <u>Setting</u>		
Changes to significant site features		X
Alteration, construction/removal of stone or brick terraces, water features, berms, and ground moving activities	X	
Alteration/construction/removal of fences or walls on front or side visible elevations, including permanent gates on porches	X	
Removal of heritage trees	X	
Alteration/installation of exterior lighting	X	
Alteration/Installation/Removal of sidewalks, walkways, parking lots, and/or driveways	X	
Installation of mechanical equipment including roof vents, exterior air conditioning units, furnaces, generators, TV Antennas, solar panels, and satellite dishes on front or visible elevations.	X	
Installation of permanent window air conditioning units and window fans	X	
Alteration/Installation/Removal of signs	X	
Exterior Changes to Buildings		
Alteration of roof materials and/or form		X
Installation/alteration of foundation vents	X	
Alterations to foundations or building walls		X
Alteration/construction/removal of character defining and service/utility chimneys		X



Proposed Work	Minor COA	Major COA
Removal of non-historic siding materials when the original siding remains beneath and is restored (if more than 50% of original material must be removed or replaced)		X
Removal of non-historic siding materials when the original siding remains beneath and is restored (if less than 50% of original material must be removed or replaced)	X	
Alteration/removal of existing windows, sash, window opening, or trim on front and visible side elevations		X
Installation of new windows on front and visible side elevations		X
Alteration/installation of door(s)/door openings/trim		X
Installation of new storm windows or doors	X	
Alteration/construction/removal of existing shutters on front or visible side elevations	X	
Installation of new gutters and downspouts	X	
Alteration/construction/addition or removal of porches		X
Installation of new porch railing		X
Alteration/construction/removal of storefront materials or design		X
Alteration/construction/removal of temporary features that are necessary for medical conditions, but do not permanently alter exterior features.	X	
Construction/installation of permanent ramps and features structurally attached to the building		X
New Construction & Additions		
Addition to a primary structure		X
Alteration/construction of/ addition or removal of patios	X	
Construction of a new primary structure		X
Construction of a new accessory structure exceeding 144 square feet	X	



Proposed Work	Minor COA	Major COA
Relocation & Demolition		
Relocation of a structure		X
Demolition of a structure or building		X
Demolition of a non-historic addition	X	
Disaster Preparedness & Prevention		
Maintenance and restoration of existing above ground utilities.	X	
Elevating structure or building		X
Other		
Six-month renewal of Certificate of Appropriateness previously granted, ONLY if work has been started but not completed within the one-year validation period	X	
Public Safety Issues (must be approved by Inspections Department)	X	



Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Application Process

1. Early consultation with applicable permitting agencies and the City Building Inspector and City Planning Staff is strongly encouraged so that the impact of requirements on the COA application may be assessed and the permitting process can be facilitated for the applicant.
2. Having determined that a COA is required, having reviewed the sections of the historic district standards relevant to the project and having completed the pre-application process (if needed), the property owner then completes the COA application. This application can be obtained in person from the City Hall or it can be downloaded from the City of Southport website at www.cityofsouthport.gov.
3. The completed COA application must be signed and dated. The COA must be filed with the Planning Services Department in accordance with the Department's established deadline calendar in order to be considered on a respective agenda of the HPC. For the schedule of HPC meetings and meeting agendas, check the City's website at www.cityofsouthport.gov.
 - a. Pursuant to the above, Staff reserve the right to withhold a proposal from an agenda if additional information was requested and not received in time to allow proper public notice of the hearing.
4. In order for a thorough review of the COA to be undertaken by City Staff and the HPC, the application must include sufficient supporting documentation. The level of documentation depends on the complexity of the proposed project, but it is rare that too much documentation is ever submitted. The checklist of required documents for the COA application is found attached to the application.
5. Planning Services Staff screen the completed COA application in an effort to determine compliance with all applicable City zoning ordinances and codes. If Staff determine that an application is not in compliance with zoning or other land use provisions the applicant will be notified. If the applicant does not withdraw his application or amend the same to bring it into compliance with zoning or other land use provisions, the HPC will not have jurisdiction of the application, and will deny a COA on that basis.
6. Applicants should note that in addition to a COA, additional permits may be required for projects within the Historic District, particularly along the waterfront. These include, but are not limited to CAMA permits, wetlands impact permits, stormwater permits, floodplain permits, tree removal permits, ROW permits, and numerous other permits issued by federal, state, and local agencies. City building permits will be issued only after a project has received all required permits, including a COA.
7. Early consultation with applicable permitting agencies and the City Building Inspector is advisable so that the impact of requirements on the COA application may be assessed and the permitting process can be facilitated for the applicant. The HPC may choose to delay consideration of a COA application to consult with federal, state, or local agencies. This is particularly important when the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office (HPO) is asked to review and comment on the project as part of a required environmental review process. Any comments from North Carolina HPO must be documented in writing.
8. Upon completion of local zoning and land use screening, the case liaison will forward the COA application to the HPC for its review and action. Notification of the meeting date, time, and place will be sent to the applicant and adjoining



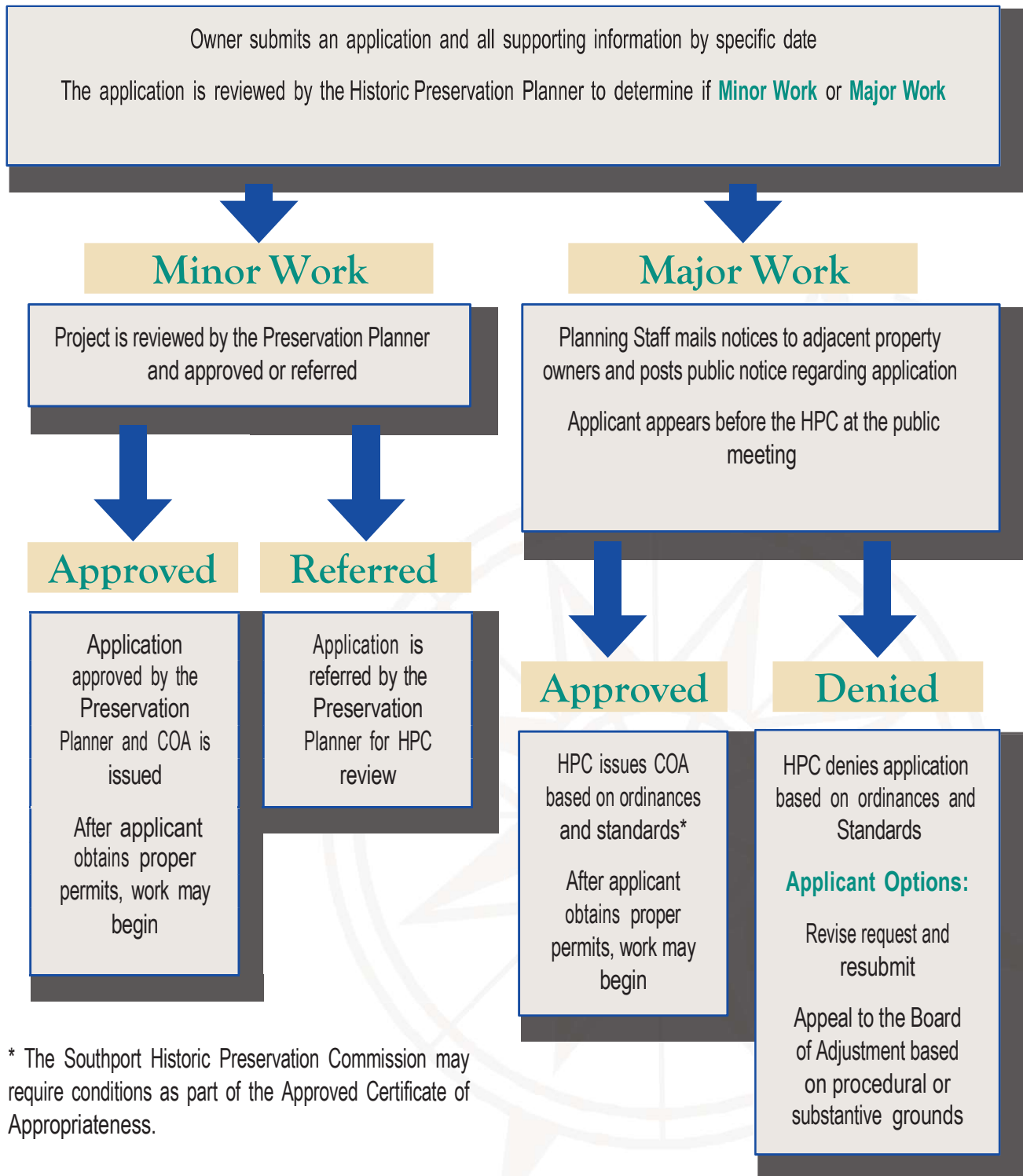
property owners by mail no less than ten (10) days prior to the HPC meeting. Attendance at the meeting by the applicant (or a designated proxy) is required, should any questions or concerns regarding the project arise. Failure of the applicant to attend a meeting may result in unnecessary delay if the HPC fails to obtain information deemed necessary to make an informed decision. Any interested party is welcome to attend the meeting or to review the application at City Hall prior to the HPC hearing.

9. Most COA applications are reviewed and decided upon the day of the meeting. The HPC must issue or deny a COA within ninety (90) days after a completed application has been filed, except when the time limit has been extended by mutual agreement between the applicant and the HPC or when more time is needed to obtain comment from other federal, state or local agencies involved in the permitting, funding, or approval of the proposed project. The time limit extension applies to Staff request for technical advice from HPO.
10. In determining whether the work proposed in the application would be congruous with the special character of the district, or in certain cases, designated landmarks outside the district, the HPC commission will consider the items generally and specifically set forth in these standards including the following principles:
 - a. The special character of the district is primarily defined by the following elements:
 - i. Architectural styles, sizes, scales, height and proportions of historical Southport buildings and other structures.
 - ii. Vistas of the Historic District should be maintained when possible.
11. All decisions of the HPC, in which a COA was awarded or denied, are furnished in writing and mailed to applicants within fourteen (14) working days of the meeting. The COA must be visibly displayed at the project site during the entire duration of the project.
12. Once issued, a COA is valid for twelve (12) months and may be renewed for an additional six months at the written request of the applicant. The COA clock starts at the time of approval or when a building permit is issued, if necessary. If work has not begun after 12 months, the applicant must re-apply for a new COA. An approved COA may also be transferred to a new property owner if that owner certifies in writing that he has reviewed the approved application and agrees to comply with all the terms and conditions of the COA.
13. An approved or pending COA application may be modified by a written request from the applicant to the HPC. The request should include a description of the proposed changes, as well as drawings, a site plan, and other appropriate documentation if necessary. If the HPC finds that the modifications constitute a substantial change from the previous application, a new COA application submission will be required and all notification procedures will be followed.
14. An appeal may be taken to the Southport Board of Adjustment from the HPC's action in granting or denying any certificate. An appeal may be filed by any aggrieved party within 30 days following formal action by the HPC with regard to the granting or denying any certificate in accordance with City ordinance and state statute. Any appeal from the Southport Board of Adjustment's decision in any such case shall be heard in Superior Court.
15. If work is performed without a COA when a COA is required, the persons responsible for such work will be in violation of City ordinance and be subject to enforcement action under the ordinances of the City of Southport.



COA Process Flowchart

The flowchart below illustrates the necessary steps to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA).





Key Terminology

Adaptive Reuse – The process of converting a building to a use other than that for which it was designed (i.e., changing the use of a house into an office).

Appropriate – Suitable or compatible for a particular situation or occasion. In many instances, what is appropriate varies by building size, style, setting, and material.

Architectural Character – The overall appearance of a building as it relates to architectural style, including its construction, form, materials, and ornamentation.

Architectural/Historic Fabric – The physical material of a building, structure, or district—including masonry, wood, and metal—that date from its historic and/or original period of construction. The term fabric connotes an interweaving of the component parts.

Architectural Significance – The importance of a particular building, structure, or constructed site feature based on its design, materials, form, style, or workmanship.

Compatible – Able to exist or occur together without visual conflict.

Congruous - A contextual standard signifying harmony or in keeping with the historic character of the district as a whole, not just neighboring properties or relatively uncommon features within the district (as defined by *A-S-P Associates v. City of Raleigh*, 298 N.C. 207 at 222 (1979)).

Context – The relationship of a building or its elements to its immediate surroundings and the overall district. Context includes elements of the man-made and natural landscape that collectively define the character of the building, site, and district. The Southport Local Historic District has a unique character and context. Smaller sub-areas within the district also have distinguishable characteristics.

Contributing/Noncontributing – A status or classification assigned to properties within historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In those districts, a contributing building is one that is at least fifty years old at the time of designation and is without significant exterior alterations. Change to exterior features of all structures in the historic districts require a COA regardless of whether they are designated as contributing or noncontributing to the corresponding National Register historic district.

Design Standard - A regulatory principle used by the Commission and City Staff to evaluate COA applications and required compliance. Standards are drafted to help property owners ensure that rehabilitation and new construction respect the character and integrity of designated buildings or districts. Only Design Standards that are applicable to a specific project will be used.

Design Review- The process of determining whether modifications to sites, buildings, or structures within the local district meet the Design Standards established by the Southport Historic Preservation Commission.



Deteriorated Beyond Repair – The deterioration of an individual building material or element to a point where the physical fabric cannot be repaired through recognized preservation methods of patching, splicing, consolidating, or reinforcing.

Elevation – The exterior face of a building.

Primary Elevation/Facade - The front of a building, generally viewable from the public rights-of way. Buildings located on a corner lot or along the waterfront may have more than one Primary Elevation.

Secondary Elevation - Typically, the side elevation, an elevation that is partially or minimally visible from public rights-of-way.

Rear Elevation - An elevation that is not visible from the public street, water, or public rights-of-way.

Feasible – Capable of being successfully accomplished within a reasonable time frame, taking into account economic, environmental, technical, legal, and social factors. This term is used in the Design Standards to indicate that while meeting a particular standard in full is usually required, there may be instances in a specific application where it may not be possible to do so. For example, there may be some extremely deteriorated conditions where repairing a feature may not be a reasonable approach. In all cases, the Commission and Town Staff shall make the determination of what is feasible.

False Sense of History – The result of applying materials or stylistic features that make a building or structure appear to be older than it is. It also includes the application of architectural details that may be of the appropriate era, but were not known to be present on the building historically (i.e. the addition of decorative brackets to porch posts without physical or visual evidence of their previous existence).

Heritage Tree – Any species of tree with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of thirty (30) inches or greater.

Historic District - A geographically definable area with a significant concentration of buildings, structures, sites, spaces, or objects unified by past events, physical development, design, setting, materials, workmanship, sense of cohesiveness or related historic and aesthetic associations. The significance of a district may be recognized at the local, state, or national level and may be protected legally through enactment of a local historic district ordinance administered by a historic district board or commission.

Inappropriate – Not suitable or compatible for a particular situation or occasion.

Incongruous – A contextual standard signifying an exterior feature is not in harmony or in keeping with the historic character of the district due to architectural style, general design, and general arrangement of the exterior of a building or other structure, including the kind and texture of the building material, the size and scale of the building, or the type or style of appurtenant fixtures. *(This definition is derived in part from A-S-P Associates v. City of Raleigh, 298 N.C. 207 at 222 (1979)).*

Integrity – The state of being whole and undivided. It is applied to the physical materials and features of a historic property and their collective ability to convey the historic and/or architectural significance of the property or district. An evaluation of integrity requires an understanding of a property's physical character-defining features and how they relate to its significance. The National Register of Historic Places identifies seven aspects or qualities—location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association—that, in various combinations, define integrity. To retain historic integrity, a property will always possess several, and usually maintain most, of these aspects.



Rehabilitation - The act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural values.

Restoration - The act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of removal of later work or by the replacement of missing earlier work.

Right-of-way – A street, sidewalk, alley, or waterway that is not owned by a private party and/or is open to public foot, marine, or vehicle traffic.

Significant Buildings and Sites – A building or site that has documented significance owing to its involvement with a specific event, person, or time period, or is significance as an important example of a past architectural style or development pattern. Significant buildings are generally those that have been designated as National Historic Landmarks, are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or have been noted to have Statewide Significance.

Significant Views and Vistas – The views, generally from a public right-of-way, of significant buildings, sites, or natural features.

Streetscape - The distinguishing character of a particular street as created by its width, degree of curvature, paving materials, design of the street furniture, forms of surrounding buildings, and the presence of vegetation (especially trees) along the curb or sidewalk.

Traditional Materials – Traditional materials are those consistent with construction techniques and architecture of the pre-World War II era, including brick, masonry, brick or masonry veneer, glass, wood, shingle or stucco. Traditional materials do not include vinyl, plastic, metallic or enameled metallic finishes.

Viewshed – The view from a specific vantage point, including views of the water from a waterfront property.



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Southport History and Architecture





A Brief History of Southport

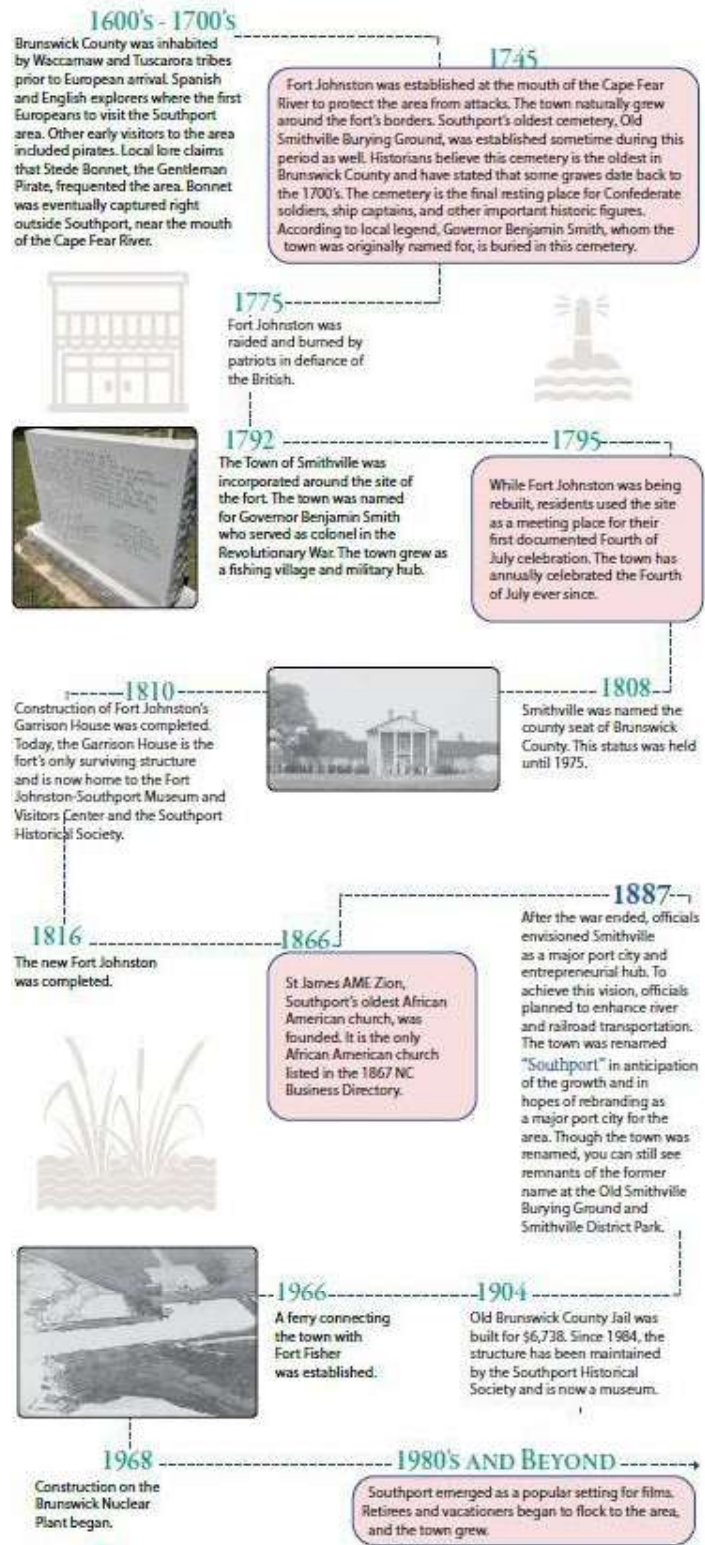
Colonial Settlement

Southport's early beginnings are well-documented. Prior to European arrival, Brunswick County was inhabited by Waccamaw and Tuscarora tribes. The area was first "discovered" by Spanish and English explorers in the 16th century, although the region had been inhabited for years by Native Americans. Spanish ships and pirates circulated the area throughout the 1500s to 1700s, but the area remained predominantly unsettled for more than 200 years after its original notation in the 1500s. (Southport, NC History - SouthPort-NC.com)

The English arrived and settled along the river in the mid-1600s (Southport Historic Society), but the area became more settled in the early-to-mid 1700s once Brunswick Town and Fort Johnston were established at the



Earlier image of the Garrison House (Circa 1804-1809) at Fort Johnson before the modifications during the 1950s. Image Credit: Southport Historic Society, Susie Carson Research Room.





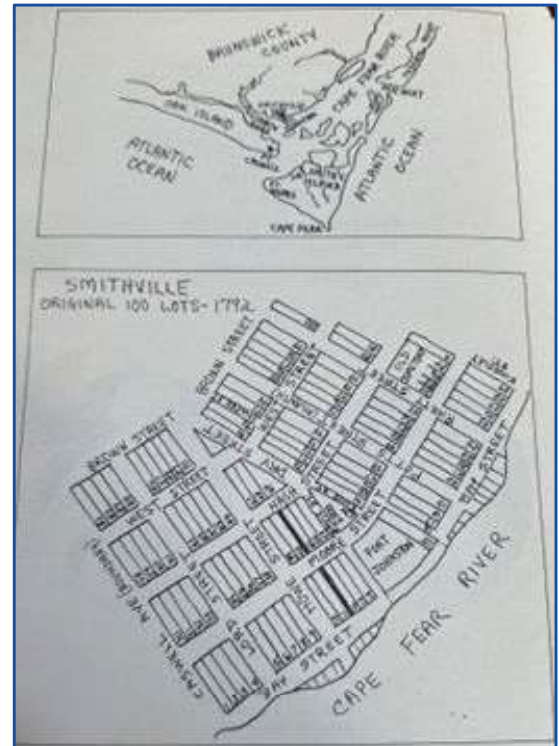
mouth of the Cape Fear River. The fort was established by Provincial Governor Gabriel Johnston in 1745 to protect the Cape Fear area from Spanish and French incursions in pursuit of the abundant natural resources of the area. Development in the area grew around the fort's borders. The earliest settlement was a cluster of small cottages for river pilots at the edge of the river, situated around Fort Johnston. The homes were traditional small, one-story frame cottages, which were a popular style throughout eastern North Carolina during this time. Wealth was rare in Smithville during this time. River pilots were unable to afford more extravagant houses, so they predominantly lived in the small, modest homes. Though the homes were small, they were comfortable and well built. Most simply consisted of a few rooms, kitchen, a small attic, and a porch. None of these original one-story frame structures are still standing, though you can see descendants of their design incorporated into existing homes still standing in Southport today, specifically in the Adkins-Dosher House and the Swain House. This style of home was built in less affluent sections of the town into the twentieth century, though wealthier residents eventually moved on from this style of home to larger, more ornate dwellings (National Register Nomination Form, 1979).

In 1751 a law was passed that directed Fort Johnston to be used as a quarantine station for the inspection of incoming ships.

Incorporation of Smithville and Early Development

Brunswick Town, which was located a few miles away, would eventually be destroyed by Minute Men during the American Revolution, but Fort Johnston remained, and in 1792, the Town of Smithville was officially created around the fort. In 1792 an act was passed to establish a town near Fort Johnston on the west side of the Cape Fear River. The town's original plan, drawn in 1792 by Benjamin Smith and Joshua Potts, consisted of 100 half-acre lots, along with streets and squares (Southport: A Chronology: Volume I (1520-1887)). Smith and Potts designed the town to follow the curve of the shoreline; the streets ran parallel

with the river. Cross streets ran perpendicular to the river, creating some triangular parcels. The original boundaries were Caswell Avenue (originally named Boundary St.) to the



Smithville Original 100 lots 1792 (Source: Reaves Bill, Southport (Smithville) A Chronology: Volume I (1520-1887)).



Garrison House (Circa 1804-1809). The only standing structure remaining (in its original location) from Fort Johnston and dates to the Federal period. Image taken on June 18, 2024.



west and Brown Street to the north. When the town was originally laid out, many of its original dwellings probably sat askew the new property lines. The town was originally named Smithville, which was in reference to one of the original town commissioners, Benjamin Smith, who served in the Revolutionary War and who was later elected North Carolina's Governor.

In 1795, Smithville celebrated its first Independence Day. The Town has annually celebrated Independence Day (except during the Civil War) ever since and hosts the official North Carolina 4th of July Celebration (Southport Historical Society). A few original community amenities were built during this period. In 1798, Smithville's first schoolhouse was constructed. It was a 24 x 16 frame building raised on brick pillars, with shingles and a brick chimney. During this time, building supplies had to be floated down the river from Wilmington, NC, which led to construction delays and shortages of building supplies. This, coupled with a shortage of trained, skilled carpenters and masons in the Smithville area during this time, led to a shortage of housing needed for those who served at the Fort. Furthermore, there were no sawmills in the area, and nails and other hardware were difficult to obtain. Per Southport's National Register nomination, "The dependence of outside supplies of building material remained a constant source of irritation and delay until the late nineteenth century." The lack of readily available building supplies and skilled workers led to a slow pace of building spanning from the late 1700s to the mid-1800s. What development did occur during this time was simple and unadorned.

In 1804, the United States War Department decided to rebuild the dilapidated Fort Johnston. This is an important piece of Southport's architectural history, as this decision assured the continued presence of the military in the Town. This presence led to construction of residential and commercial establishments needed for the servicemen and their families, along with economic development associated with the fort. In 1805, the Town of Smithville was incorporated.

Antebellum Period and Civil War

By the early 1800s, the town of Smithville had grown as both a fishing village and a military community, as well as a summer home for inland vacationers due to its salty sea breezes and location along the waterfront. During this time, development remained clustered primarily around the river, due to the fact that



Walker-Pyke House (Circa 1800-1820). The oldest home in Southport. Image taken on June 21, 2024.



Brunswick Inn. (Circa 1859)



the Cape Fear was the primary source of livelihood and transportation for most residents. At first, construction predominantly occurred along Moore and Bay Streets. In 1809, Smithville's first courthouse, the Brunswick County Courthouse was built on East Moore Street. This encouraged new commercial development in the area such as shops and law offices. Moore Street also connected with a trail that served as the main road to Wilmington, which caused some building activity along the street. More development probably would have occurred along this street if the main form of transportation during this time was not the river. Bay Street developed with docks and homes along the river. Eventually, development spread inland.

Throughout the antebellum period (1820-1861), building styles predominantly remained modest, though there were a few large two-story homes built along Bay Street during this time, most notably the Walker-Pyke House (ca. 1800-1820; 239 E. Bay St.). This home was built in the first or second decade of the nineteenth century and is probably the oldest

surviving private residence in town. The house is reported to have been built as a summer residence for a Wilmington merchant. This 2 ½ story home features a clipped gable roof, 3 dormer windows, and a later two-story porch.

Another notable home from this time period, is the Brunswick Inn (ca. 1859; 301 E. Bay St.), sitting across the street from the Walker-Pyke House. This 2-story home was once used as a hotel known as Hotel Brunswick in the late 1880s-90s under the proprietorship of Dr. W. G. Curtis (Lounsbury, 1979, p. 23). In 1905 the hotel name changed to Brunswick Inn and was under new management. It's 1882 addition was removed around 1912 and moved to 114 S. Davis St. to be used as a private residence and this is where it remains today. It is comprised of two frame houses joined in an H-plan originally with a 1-story porch and simple Italianate details suggesting some Wilmington influence. (Bishir and Southern, 1996, p. 263).

Smithville became the Brunswick County seat in 1808 and became a fashionable place to vacation prior to the beginning of the Civil War. Both of these changes were significant for Southport's architectural history and led to an increase in development (Lounsbury, 1979, p. 10). The Architecture of Southport reports that in July 1871, all of Smithville's boarding houses were full, and there were plans to build new ones. A new courthouse, the Brunswick County Courthouse (ca. 1854, 201 E. Moore St.) was built to replace the earlier one, and new churches ,



Brunswick County Courthouse (Circa 1854). Image taken July 18, 2024.



St. James AME Zion Church (Circa 1957, 1961). This is the only African American church listed in the 1867 NC Business Directory and Southport's oldest African American church.



storefronts, and boarding houses were built. This period cemented Southport as a tourist destination, which further increased development for the Town.

Next to the courthouse, the Chapel of the Cross - St. Philips Episcopal Chapel (ca.1851, 1894-96, 203 E. Moore St.) was erected. The church originally was a rectangular structure with its main entrance on the gable end facing Moore Street. The applied pilasters and pediment of the facade are characteristic of the Greek Revival style.

Growth and development became somewhat stagnant during the Civil War. However, Smithville's primary occupations being tied to the military or the ocean, led to many men serving in the war. During the Civil War, many river pilots served on Confederate blockade runners. Smithville survived the Civil War without any devastating social or economic consequences. After the Civil War ended, the town of Smithville began to see new opportunities in the business realm as entrepreneurs envisioned a city that combined river and railroad transportation to rival the other area port town, Wilmington.



November 7, 1950 City Limits Boundary.

Reconstruction

Throughout the Reconstruction era (1861-1900), Smithville would experience many changes. Following the Civil War, a Freedman's Bureau was established to see to the affairs of former slaves. (Lounsbury, 1979, p. 4) The freedmen purchased land outside the city limits and established two distinct African American neighborhoods, one in the northwestern part of town and a smaller neighborhood in the northeast section. In 1866, Smithville's first African American church was founded, the St. James AME Zion Church, originally known as the Methodist Episcopal Church of the Colored. The original building came from an abandoned hospital found up river and brought to the site, it was presumably part of the old quarantine station. The St. James AME Zion Church is constructed on one of the original 100 lots of Smithville, on the corner of E West St. and N Rhett St. The original building was replaced in 1915 and was later damaged by Hurricane Hazel in 1954. The front of the building was never replaced but an annex was added in 1957. Other formally enslaved citizens owned homes close to the Old Smithville Burying Ground.

Realizing the currents would create a deep channel in the Cape Fear River, work began in the 1870's on closing New Inlet. The closing of the inlet would create an excellent harbor for Smithville and with it would bring affluent businessmen. (Lounsbury, 1979, p.4) In February 1870, a bill was introduced to the North Carolina Assembly to extend the corporate limits of Smithville. The bill proposed extending its jurisdiction a half a mile in every direction from the Brunswick County Courthouse giving Smithville its unique fan shape (See Figure 9.). It was passed in March, meaning the jurisdiction had more room to grow. The extended boundary encompassed the area north of Brown Street which included the Black community.

The Southport Leader wrote that "the old town of Smithville can scarcely be recognized in the new and ambitious City of



Southport.” Real estate prices soared, and new development boomed during this period. During this massive revitalization effort, the town’s name was changed to “Southport” on March 4, 1887. While the community didn’t end up becoming the huge port town that was envisioned, the name Southport stuck. Though the railroad finally arrived in 1911, Southport’s dreams of becoming an entrepreneurial hub never came to fruition, and instead, Southport settled into its identity as a charming, historic coastal village.

Development in Southport in the late 1800s and early 1900s occurred rapidly and was in direct contrast with development that Smithville saw during its antebellum period. Over half of the structures in the district are from the 1885-1905 period when Southport was booming economically. During this period, the appearance of the town completely changed. Per the Southport Local Historic District National Register of Historic Places nomination, “In 1900 there were approximately 260 houses in Southport, over half of them built in the previous eleven years. From 1889 to 1896 alone, one hundred new houses were under construction.” Along the Cape Fear River, there were several new docks to serve the growing importance of the fishing industry and a coaling dock was at the foot of Rhett Street to service steam ships anchored at Southport.

Carpenters and masons found themselves busier than ever. If they weren’t working on new homes, they were working to repair existing homes. Local brick and lumber companies opened in the early 1890s. Southport Brick and Tile Company opened in February 1890. Founded by J. A. Pullan and W. H. Pyke of Ft. Wayne, Indiana, and William Weeks, a former ship carpenter turned real estate agent, the business was located two miles outside of town. In April, the local newspaper noted that “the demand for brick is so urgent that the Southport Brick Company is making brick by hand at its works. The machinery is arriving, but orders cannot wait.” Southport Lumber Company was founded in September of the same year. Most of the wainscoting, ceilings, and interior woodwork found in houses of this period was probably sourced from the Southport Lumber Company.

Once the town had access to local supplies, development increased. Most of the small homes along Bay and Moore Street were torn down or moved, and new larger homes were built in their place. The 100 block North Lord Street was constructed between 1889 and 1894. West Nash Street, West West Street, and others were also constructed in the early 1890s. Brunswick Street was widened in 1891, and new housing was built along it.

Though architecture in the eighteenth and early nineteenth



Samuel Swain House (Circa 1889). Image taken on June 18, 2024.



James Pearce House (Circa 1887 and 1893). Image taken on June 18, 2024.



centuries was modest, architecture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries began to increase in scale and level of ornate detail. Components of Victorian style, such as bay windows and irregular massing, and more specifically, Queen Anne style, including asymmetrical features and intricate details, can be seen on homes built during this time, though it appears local builders were not consciously recreating styles that were trending across the nation. Local building tradition changed very slowly, and many home plans that were used during this time were originally developed decades earlier.

Among the most distinctive homes during the Reconstruction era, are the Samuel Swain House (ca. 1889; 110 W. Moore St.). This 1-story private residence was similar in style to several homes built in the 1890s and includes a bracketed, gable-fronted home with a matching gabled and bracketed porch. The house was built for planter Samuel Swain and was often described as a “tasty cottage”. The Samuel Swain House is an example of earlier hall and parlor house types from the early nineteenth century with more ornamentation than its predecessors (Lounsbury, 1979, p. 26 & Bishir & Southern, 1996, p.263).

The James Pearce House (ca. 1877-1893: 406 Brunswick St.) is another example of distinctive homes from this time period. This tri-gabled roof vernacular home includes part of a tiny four room cottage constructed by James Pearce with a later addition by George Davis in front of the old home making it a more substantial “double cottage”. This 1-story private residence includes a double bracket motif that is repeated on the front porch, lancet windows & fish-scale shingles on the front and side gables, and flat-jigsaw balusters in a decorative style similar to those seen on Folk Victorian style homes from this period.

There are several 2-story homes showing Queen Anne and Colonial Revival influences. The Adkins-Ruark House (ca. 1890: 119 N. Lord St.) is a 2-story steep, shingled, front and side gables that flare out over deep cornices with machine-sawn double brackets beneath the cornice. The front gable is adorned with fish-scale shingles and has a lancet stained-glass window. The double bracket motif is echoed in the homes bay window and porches. This home was built for E. H. Adkins in 1890. His grandson Robert Ruark author of *The Old Man and the Boy* spent much of his childhood in the house (Lounsbury, 1979, p. 49, Bishir & Southern, 1996, p. 263).

By the last decade of the 19th century, Southport’s central business district was forming on E. Moore St. Real estate companies, insurance companies, and a bank were established first.

Although local builders were busy constructing private residences, at this point in time there was not much need for many commercial businesses. The central business district would begin to take form early in the 20th century. Many of the oldest commercial buildings on Moore Street date from the early 1900s.



Bank of Southport (Circa 1905). Image taken July 18, 2024.



Early Twentieth Century through Post World War II

Following the boom of residential construction, at the beginning of the 20th century there was a need for commercial buildings. With the availability of brick from the local Southport Brick and Tile Company, brick became the material businessmen selected for their new commercial buildings.

One of the earliest commercial buildings is the Bank of Southport Building (ca. 1905; 112 E. Moore St.). This two-story machine-pressed brick building has side and rear walls that are constructed with rough bricks. Its windows have segmental arches and stone sills.

The Northrup Building (ca. 1890, 1905: 111 E. Moore St.) is another early example of commercial architecture in the commercial business district in Southport. The front gabled false façade of this building was a typical design during the early 20th century. It is 2-story brick building with masonry piers with granite strips between every 10 to 14 brick courses. The front façade is comprised of smooth pressed brick, a recessed storefront entrance with a granite stoop, and upper story windows with brick arched lentils.



Amuzu Theater (Circa 1918). Image taken on June 18, 2024.

Major institutional buildings from early 20th century include the Masonic Lodge, Brunswick County Jail, and the Brunswick County High School (now the Franklin Square Art Gallery, formally City Hall).

The years during and after World War I brought more commercial and residential development. Colonial Revival stylistic details began to be incorporated into Southport's local building techniques, however there are no homes or commercial buildings completely in this style. (Lounsbury, 1979, p.12)

Colonial Revival elements can be seen in the Smith Building (ca.1925; 107-9 E. Moore St.) with its arched granite broken pediment, upper story stone piers, and dentil molding cornice details. The building's atypical entrance is located on the east side of the front façade and is surrounded by fluted columns with ornamental frieze board, and cornice with dentil molding and egg and dart details.

Another commercial building with classical elements is the Amuzu Theater (ca. 1918; 111 N. Howe St.). This 2-story smooth-machine pressed brick building replaced the original 1912 theater next door. This building features a cast metal cornice, with dentil molding frieze board, and elongated decorative brackets.

Southport was regularly serviced by river steamer until 1925 and served by railroad from 1911 until just before World War II. World War II began in 1939, and during this time Southport thrived economically. Military activity in and around the town sustained development, and after the war, another building boom occurred which led to the creation of new suburbs outside



Southport's historic core.

Modern Era

After this initial boom, Southport continued to grow – though at a slower pace than before – with a ferry connecting the town with Fort Fisher established in 1966. A severe challenge to the continued growth and development of the town emerged in July 1975 when a referendum was passed to relocate the county seat from Southport to Bolivia. The county government departed from Southport in 1978. Its departure left many vacant buildings in the central business district. Following its departure, efforts were made by the Southport Historical Society to study Southport's architectural heritage. Preservation efforts, the City's unique character and Southport's location have played a large role in the revitalization of its downtown and have led to continued visitation and new demand in the form of retirees. The menhaden fleet that was based out of Southport operated until the 1980s until declines in the fishery and rising costs led to its end. The Yacht Basin still contains few fishing operations but has mainly become a tourist destination with restaurants, retail, a waterfront public water access, and a yoga dock.

Today, Southport's historic architecture plays a huge role in the city's character and economic development. The city became so notable for its historic structures and charm that it became a renowned filming location for movies and television shows. Several historic homes and sites throughout the proposed local historic district have been featured in cinema such as Crimes of the Heart, I Know What You Did Last Summer, The Summer I Turned Pretty, Safe Haven, and more.



Southport Historic Districts

The City of Southport is comprised of the Southport National Register District, three individually listed properties on the National Register, Fort Johnston, Old Brunswick County Courthouse, and John N. Smith Cemetery, a study listed district, the Southport Historic District Boundary Amendment, and the Southport Local Historic District. The Southport Local Historic is the only district in the city limits that falls under the historic preservation ordinance. Any proposed changes in the Southport Local Historic District requires an approved Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).

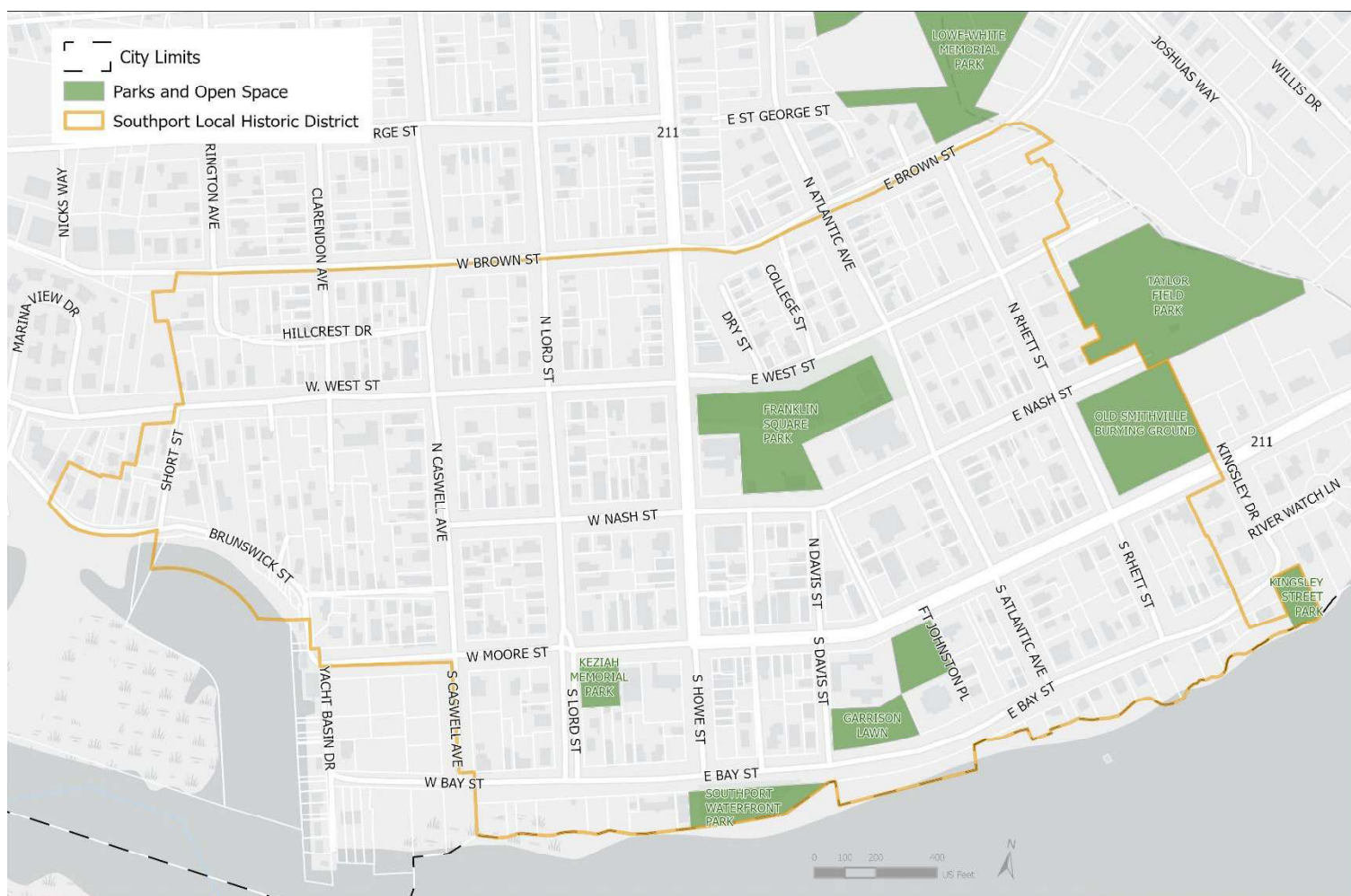




Southport Local Historic District

The Southport Local Historic District was designated as a local historic district on **TBD**. Any exterior work in this district requires an approved COA from the HPC. It is comprised of properties along Bay Street from S Caswell Ave to the East Side of S Rhett Street, Moore Street from Yacht Basin Drive to Kingsley Drive, Nash Street, W West Street beginning at Short Street to E West Street, W Brown Street beginning on the west side of Hillcrest Drive to the east side of N Rhett Street.

The Southport Local Historic District contains the commercial core of the city and its surrounding residential areas that comprise the majority of the original 100 lots. The district contains architectural styles and building types that span over two hundred years of development. Architectural influences found in the local district include many eastern North Carolina vernacular homes with influences from Georgian, Federal, Colonial Revival, Stick, Queen Anne, Greek Revival, and Craftsman styles. Within the district are examples of later architectural styles, including Commercial, Ranch, and Cape Cod.





One of the district's most distinct features is its large rights-of-way and streets that extend in a broken grid pattern along the Cape Fear River. These large rights-of-way allow for Southport's residents to enjoy the salubrious breezes from the Cape Fear River and the Atlantic Ocean. This arrangement resulted in pedestrian-oriented coastal village with a range of small to moderately scaled residences interspersed with civic and religious institutions, and a commercial core located one street from the Cape Fear River. Majority of streets within the district are lined with large live oak trees, most of which have reached height maturity. Along Bay Street, building heights are generally low to protect the views of the Cape Fear River, Bald Head Island, Old Baldy Lighthouse, Fort Caswell, the Oak Island Lighthouse, and Battery Island, the site of North Carolina's largest colony of nesting wading birds protected by Audubon North Carolina, Bald Head Island, Fort Caswell, and the Oak Island Lighthouse.

Within Southport's Local Historic District, is the National Historic Landmark, Fort Johnston located on E Bay Street. Fort Johnston is the oldest surviving component of a military installation dating from 1748. In addition to Fort Johnston, Southport is home to another National Register Landmark, the John N Smith Cemetery. The John N Smith Cemetery was established in 1880 when trustees of an African American Methodist Church purchased a two-acre tract of land for the purpose of making it a grave yard. The cemetery has more than 1,725 burials, many include Black citizens who helped build the City of Southport.

Special Character of the Southport Local Historic District

The Town of Smithville was officially created around Fort Johnston on the west side of the Cape Fear River. The original plan was drawn in 1792 by Benjamin Smith and Joshua Potts, consisted of 100 lots. The "Original 100 Lots" were laid out in half acre lots with streets running parallel with the river and cross streets running perpendicular, forming a number of odd triangular parcels. The original boundaries were the west side Caswell Avenue (Boundary Street) to east side of Kingsley Street extending north up to Brown Street. Some of the original parcels have been further subdivided but the original grid remains visible today.

The "100 Original Lots" were later subdivided and sold into 33' wide and 66' wide lots. With Smithville becoming a tourist attraction, the need to expand the limits beyond the 100 lots was necessary. The slow growth of the coastal village resulted in a variety of building setbacks, most 19th century and early 20th century buildings sitting directly on the parcel line or setback approximately 5 feet. Majority of the homes in the local district were constructed in the late 19th century to mid-20th century, with 52% being constructed prior to 1920. Most earlier settlements can be found clustered closest to the river. With most of the development in the commercial core dating between late 19th century to before World War II with banking institutions, a retail store, and a library dating between 1965 and 1970.



Northrup House, circa 1910.



Adkins-Ruark House, Circa 1890.



T.M Thompson House, Circa 1868.



The residential areas within the local district feature large canopies of live and water oaks shading the homes, sidewalks, and streets. Viewed from the river or from aerial view, the city looks like a park. Many of the residential streets remain uncurbed to this day. Many of the homes in the local district can be traced to an individual carpenter-builder and a specific year of construction, making it an excellent study of vernacular architecture with Victorian style elements. The local district exhibits the distinctive character of North Carolina coastal architecture in its floor plans, roof styles, and forms and contains examples from traditional carpentry craftsmanship to mass production of building materials.

Fort Johnston within the local district played a pivotal role in military history and in the development of the town surrounding the fort (Smithville). Southport's location on the Cape Fear River was significant for early maritime and water-dependent industries such as river piloting, shipping, and fishing industries. Despite never becoming a port city, the City of Southport remained focused on the Cape Fear River and its natural features that are significant elements to the district, including the Cape Fear River, Intracoastal Waterway, Cottage Creek, and the many large live and water oaks along the streets. Viewsheds of the water, as well as the historic streetscapes have shaped development patterns in Southport.

With none of the original small homes, development along the Cape Fear River in Southport was carefully laid out so residents and visitors could enjoy the views and vistas as a result. These unobstructed views are located at the ends of streets that run north-south, including Kingsley Drive, Rhett Street, Atlantic Avenue, Davis Street, Howe Street, Lord Street, and Caswell Avenue. Unobstructed views can also be enjoyed at Kingsley Park, City Pier, Waterfront Park, the lawn at the Garrison House (Fort Johnston), the Yacht Basin CAMA access point, American Fish Company dock, Southport Yoga Dock, and the Southport Historic Riverwalk Marsh boardwalk and gazebo. Significant open space areas include Franklin Square Park, Keziah Memorial Park, Waterfront Park, and the lawn at the Garrison House (Fort Johnston). Franklin Park (named in honor of Benjamin Franklin) was originally set aside as part of a large square of property for the intention of civic, religious, or fraternal organizations. It contains meandering walkways, tight clusters of oak trees, Franklin Square Art Gallery and the City Gym and recreation areas. The park is surrounded by a stone wall along Howe Street and part of E West Street. Keziah Memorial Park includes a monument documenting the significance of the park. It includes a gnarled live oak tree that may have been bent by the Indians to mark the trail to their fishing grounds. The site is surrounded by a mixture of tree canopies including live oaks, crepe myrtles, and shrubbery. Waterfront Park includes monuments, sidewalks, and benches allowing residents and visitors to enjoy views of the Cape Fear River, Battery Island, Bald Head Island and its lighthouse, Fort Caswell, and Oak Island lighthouse.

Landscaping within the local district varies by species, but it generally includes street lined trees (live and water oaks), grassy lawns, foundation planting and hedges, and some seasonal plantings within the large rights-of-way. Southport's Forestry Committee regularly plants live oaks to ensure the existing tree canopy coverage along the historic streets remains uninterrupted. Grassy lawns may include low-lying masonry walls with the occasional iron fence atop or a wood-picket fence extending across the front of the property is common. Several areas include seasonal plantings in the rights-of-way in front of sidewalks. Foundational plantings are common in the district and may occasionally include higher shrubs, hedges, or low canopy trees to define property boundaries.

Concrete sidewalks are located on almost every street in the district which are separated from the street by seasonal planting strips or grass and on-street parking. The streets are generally two lanes with exceptions to the commercial core. The streets in the commercial core include turning lanes on Howe and Moore Streets. Most houses in the district lack driveways therefore on-street parking is necessary. In the commercial core, on-street parking is angled.

The oldest residential building in the local district is the Walker-Pyke House (Circa 1800-1820). The earliest nonresidential building is the Garrison House (Fort Johnston) which has had extensive alterations losing its architectural integrity.



Parts of a Storefront

The photographs below illustrate common parts of STOREFRONTS and is provided to assist the reader with architectural terminology.

- | | | | |
|----------|----------------|----------|-------------|
| A | Pediment | H | Cornice |
| B | Sign Board | I | Belt Course |
| C | Recessed Entry | | |
| D | Sills | | |
| E | Lintel | | |
| F | Door Transom | | |
| G | Display Window | | |





Parts of a House

The photograph below illustrates common parts of a HOUSE and is provided to assist the reader with architectural terminology.

- A** Turret
- B** Front Gable
- C** Balustrade
- D** Exposed Rafters
- E** Upper Porch
- F** Gable Ornament
- G** Brackets
- H** Spindle work Frieze
- I** Turned Post





1. Site and Setting





Site Features and Plantings

Southport's historic districts are enhanced by several site features, including both natural and manmade. Natural features including scenic views of the Cape Fear River, live and water oaks, other tree species, plantings, and salt marshes. Manmade features include historic sign markers, walls, fences, gardens, street furniture, street lighting, and monuments. Additional features that define circulation in Southport's historic districts include streets, walkways, alleys, driveways, and parking areas. Another character defining features in the Southport Local Historic District are its views and vistas.

The retention of trees and the local districts views and vistas are essential to maintaining the character of the local district. Many of the trees in the local district are over two hundred years old and may be in danger of damage from storms, etc. In order to maintain the tree canopy, it is vital to continue planting new trees that will maintain and perpetuate the canopy. The City of Southport is dedicated to maintaining trees in its rights-of-way and formed a Forestry Committee that plants young live oaks on an annual basis.



The City of Southport is home to many heritage live oaks and usable public spaces with scenic views of Battery Island and Bald Head Island.

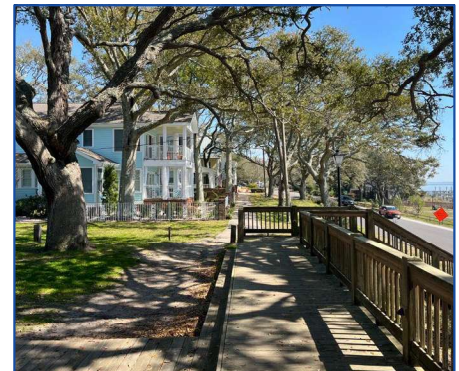


Both natural and manmade features should be preserved to maintain Southport's unique character. Private property owners are encouraged to replace trees when they are removed from their property to help preserve the tree canopy. The City Tree Protection and Landscape Preservation permit process also applies for the removal of any trees. Contact City planning staff for assistance.



1.1. Standards for Site Features and Plantings

- 1.1.1. Identify and if possible preserve and maintain historic public and private landscapes that contribute to the character of the historic district, including open spaces, streetscapes, and yards.
- 1.1.2. Identify and if possible preserve, and maintain the individual components and historic features that contribute to Southport's historic character, including: heritage trees, ornamental trees, and hedge rows.
- 1.1.3. Maintain the relationship between the mass/proportion of the building and open space within the context of the streetscape for new construction and additions.
- 1.1.4. New construction and additions should be sited in locations that will not require the removal of mature plantings, if possible.
- 1.1.5. New walkways should not exceed a width of four (4) feet and shall not be built past public sidewalks where they exist. No hardened structures are allowed within the public right of way. (ROW permits are required for any allowable encroachments.)
- 1.1.6. Historic sidewalks and other paving materials should be preserved and maintained. New sidewalks when possible should be compatible in material, detailing, and finish to existing historic sidewalks.
- 1.1.7. Utility wires, including power, telephone and cable should be placed underground whenever substantial utility construction takes place. Above ground utility boxes, fixtures, and equipment should be in inconspicuous locations and should be screened from view.
- 1.1.8. New tool sheds, swimming pools and other modern yard features should be located in areas screened from public view.
- 1.1.9. Use a combination of fences and plantings to screen parking lots.



See Off-Street Parking Standards.



Fences and Walls

There are a variety of fences and walls in Southport's local district. Fences and walls were used to delineate property boundaries and/or alleviate topographical changes. The material selection often relates to the architectural style and time period of the building. The regularity of low front yard fences and walls make them significant site features within the district. Traditional fence materials include wood, cast iron, wrought iron, stone, brick, or concrete.

Walls are typically much lower than fences but can be used to delineate property boundaries or retain a sloped yard and are constructed with stone, brick, or concrete. Front, side-, and rear-yard fences are typically constructed from wood or iron. Landscaping such as shrubs or hedgerows can also be used to delineate property boundaries or screen mechanical equipment or other features.

1.2. Standards for Fences and Walls

- 1.2.1. Identify, retain and preserve historic fence and wall material wherever possible. If replacement is necessary, use new material that matches the historic material in composition, size, shape, pattern and texture.
- 1.2.2. Design new fences that are compatible with the associated building, site and streetscape in height, proportion, scale, texture, material and design. Substitute fence materials are not appropriate along front or visible side property lines in the historic district.
- 1.2.3. Historic retaining walls should be preserved. New low walls are appropriate only where a sharp change in grade exists and shall not exceed a height of two (2) feet. Such walls should be constructed of brick or concrete block covered with a true sand-finish stucco.
- 1.2.4. The use of false historical details or other non-original architectural embellishments on existing fences is not appropriate.
- 1.2.5. Use a combination of fences and plantings to screen parking lots.
- 1.2.6. Contemporary or utilitarian fence materials are not appropriate for fences in public view. Inappropriate materials include: plastic, vinyl, chain link, wire, and all other modern materials. The use of modern fencing is permitted for rear yards only, in areas not seen from the public view.





Exterior Lighting

Electricity arrived in Southport in early 20th century. Today, lighting is used to illuminate streets, walkways, porches, signs, and buildings. Porch and building lights should reflect the style, scale, size, and detail the special character of the building. Pedestrian level street lighting was added to S Howe Street. Any additional lighting on adjacent streets or in continuation on N Howe Street should be consistent with the existing lighting.

Historic light fixtures should be retained where they exist, however wiring should meet current building codes. When selecting new light fixtures consider the scale and style of the house and yard. When installing light fixtures in multiple locations, the scale, and style must be consistent. The use of energy efficient bulbs is encouraged, but bulbs must emit a soft, warm light that replicates incandescent bulbs.

1.3. Standards for Exterior Lighting

- 1.3.1. Unless original fixtures already exist, choose fixtures that are simple and unobtrusive and complement the building or site.
- 1.3.2. Choose lighting sources that generate a “warm” color similar to that of traditional incandescent lighting.
- 1.3.3. Avoid placing fixtures in areas that will obscure or damage character-defining architectural elements or site features.
- 1.3.4. Use ground-mounted spots or ornamental light fixtures to illuminate signs instead of internal lighting. Screen spots and accent lighting from view.



These pier mounted lamps are stylistically appropriate for stone piers. The cottage style pendant is appropriate for many of Southport's cottage style homes.



Driveways and Off-Street Parking

Many homes in the local historic district do not have driveways, most residents utilize on-street parking. However, where driveways and parking lots exist maintenance and repair can be achieved through monitoring to identify settling and cracking of these surfaces. When necessary, selective, or full, in-kind replacement of paving materials should follow the [Masonry Standards](#), if possible.

The introduction of new parking and driveways, as well as the modification of existing ones must be carefully considered to ensure siting, spacing, configuration, width, and paving materials are compatible with other historic properties within the local historic district. New driveways and off-street parking should be located and constructed in a such a way that minimizes the visual impact on the district. The amount of impervious surfaces should be limited when possible and landscape screening should be incorporated to minimize visual impacts for larger parking areas.

1.4. Standards for Driveways and Off-street Parking

- 1.4.1. Locate new parking lots and driveways in the historic district as unobtrusively as possible. Parking lots consisting of large expanses of concrete or asphalt with little planting or other screening are not appropriate.
- 1.4.2. Proposals for new parking lots or off-street parking areas should be accompanied by scaled site plans and information on proposed lighting types, placement, and intensity.
- 1.4.3. Site new parking areas in interior or rear lot locations where possible.
- 1.4.4. When possible, avoid removing trees and other landscape elements that contribute to the historic character of a site.



Several homes in the local district were constructed before the invention of modern vehicles. The construction of a new driveway should be located to the rear (above) when possible and should limit impervious surfaces (below).





- 1.4.5. Incorporate existing heritage trees into new parking areas.
- 1.4.6. Use paving materials that were traditionally used on surface parking areas and driveways on the surrounding block or street. Gravel, marl, crushed shells, asphalt, and concrete are typical parking lot treatments, while grass, gravel or concrete runners with a grassy median, brick, and marl are typical driveway treatments. Use wood, bricks, stone, or metal to contain loose paving materials. Concrete or plastic edging are not appropriate.

Signage

Southport's Local Historic District is blended with residential and commercial buildings. Signage throughout the district includes interpretive signage in public spaces, historic markers along major thoroughfares, historic plaques, and commercial identification signage. Identification signage is an important identifier for commercial businesses in Southport.

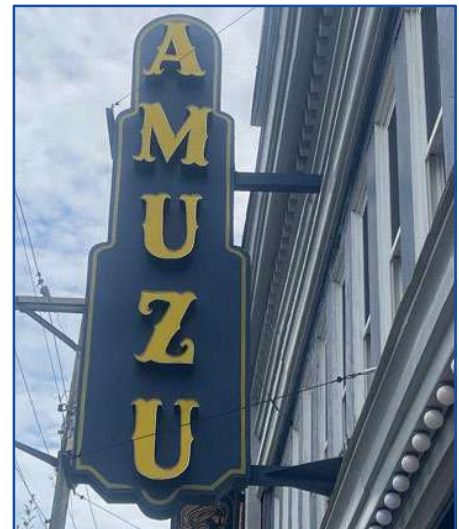
The City of Southport sign ordinance provides detailed guidance regarding appropriate signage. Installation of a sign in the Local Historic District requires a sign permit from the Development Services office as well as a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission. Please review the sign ordinance or contact Development Services for additional information.

1.5. Standards for Signage

- 1.5.1. Use traditional materials found in the district, such as wood and metal for new signage. Substitute materials that have the appearance of wood are allowed. Plastic signs and flashing signs are not appropriate in the historic district. Internal glass mounted signs are not subject to HPC review.



Fascia signs (above), window signs, and projecting signs (below) are appropriate for commercial buildings.





- 1.5.2. Place signs so that they do not visually overwhelm the building or streetscape or damage or obscure character defining architectural details. Recognize that maximum signage allowances granted by the Southport Unified Development Ordinance may be inappropriate in the context of the building or site under review.
- 1.5.3. Signs on commercial buildings are preferred to be located in a signboard frieze located above the display windows. In this location the sign serves as a boundary between the upper and lower façade.
- 1.5.4. Use simple, clear graphics and lettering styles in sign design.
- 1.5.5. Consolidate public signage on uniform poles to reduce visual clutter.



Small post mounted hanging signs (above) and post mounted signs (below) interact with pedestrians.

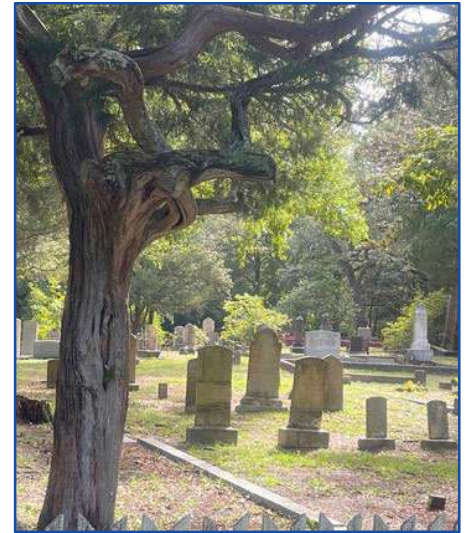


The architectural style should be considered when placing signage on the primary building facade. Decorative signage should complement the existing aesthetic.



Cemeteries

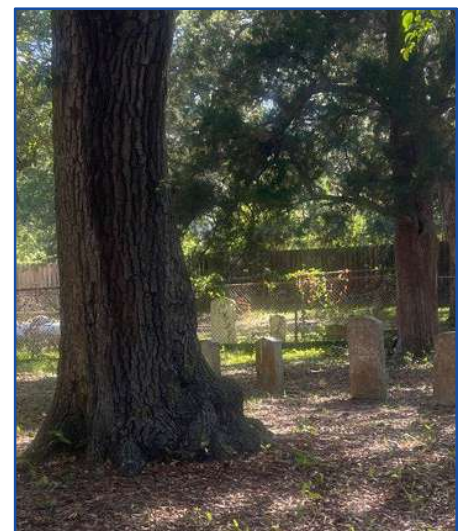
There are several cemeteries Southport including the Old Smithville Burying Ground, John N. Smith Cemetery, and the Old Morse Cemetery. It is important to note that these cemeteries are not the same. They are different in regards to layout, grave markers, landscape, and culture. Therefore, they should be treated and cared for differently. It is important to respect each cemetery for its existing conditions and its cultural traits. Care should be taken to preserve and maintain each cemetery, including grave markers and other objects associated with the cemetery. Under North Carolina, G.S. 14: 148-149 states it is a Class I felony to deface or desecrate grave sites, or plow over or cover up existing graves. Additionally, NC G.S. 70: 29-33 requires that any inadvertent discovery of human remains on a construction site shall stop work immediately and contact the State Medical Examiner and State Archaeologist 910-251-7323.



The Old Smithville Burying Ground is included in the National Register District. It is believed that burials took place here beginning with the presence of Fort Johnson in 1745.

1.6. Standards for Cemeteries

- 1.6.1. Under GS 14.-148 and G.S. 14-149 it is a misdemeanor and Class 1 felony to deface and desecrate grave sites. This includes throwing trash in a cemetery, disturbing a cemetery or items in a cemetery including markers and plantings.
- 1.6.2. Identify, retain, and preserve cemeteries and their features including grave markers, foot markers, statuary, crypts, fences, walls, objects, plantings, and landscapes.
- 1.6.3. Protect and maintain cemetery features, forms, materials, and details through regular maintenance and repair using accepted preservation methods. .



The Old Morse Cemetery is located on property once known as Bryan Morse Plantation. This cemetery dates back to the mid-nineteenth century.

Register cemeteries with the North Carolina Cemetery Survey at archeology.ncdcr.gov/programs/cemeteries



Archaeology

The history of Southport began before the Europeans arrived and may have been inhabited by Waccamaw and Tuscarora tribes. Spanish and English explorers were the first to visit Southport in the 16th century. The area surrounding the Cape Fear River was known to be a popular location for pirates in the early 1700s. The potential for archaeology discovery within the local district and in Southport is high. Typically, archaeology is found underground, but with Southport being located on the Cape Fear River it can also be found under water. The Cape Fear River has the potential to yield information about the history of Southport.

Archaeological resources are important to Southport's heritage. Resources may be discovered during archaeological digs or by using ground penetrating radar. However, archaeological resources may also be discovered during minor site work, including the addition of a sidewalk, gardening, etc. Homeowners are encouraged to contact the City of Southport staff to document these resources before continuing work. Archaeology can provide information on the location of earlier buildings or outbuildings on a property, the location of walls, gardens, walkways, and pathways. Archaeology should be a component of the preservation planning program. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires State and Federal Agencies consider archaeology when planning projects and further requires that the consult with the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office to avoid or mitigate any adverse effects. Private property owners are not required to conduct archaeological studies prior to conducting work on privately-funded projects. The Office of State Archaeology (OSA) is available to provide additional information or assistance with archaeological resources.

1.7. Standards for Archaeology

- 1.7.1. Identify, retain and preserve archaeological resources that are important to the history of the site or district.
- 1.7.2. Minimize ground-disturbing activities in the historic district to avoid possible damage or destruction to known or unknown archaeological resources.
- 1.7.3. Investigate the potential for archaeological resources prior to undertaking a project that affects the grounds surrounding a property. Contact the NC Office of Archaeology (OSA) for additional assistance.



There is a strong potential for archaeological remains associated with the fort on the Garrison House lawn.





- 1.7.4. Recognize that archaeological resources exist both below ground and below water.
- 1.7.5. Preserve archaeological resources intact in their original state and location wherever possible.
- 1.7.6. When disturbance of archaeological resources is unavoidable, use qualified archaeologists to employ contemporary methods of investigation and evaluation.
- 1.7.7. Do not use heavy machinery in areas known to have archaeological resources.

Cemeteries or inadvertent discovery of human remains requires compliance with state statutes GS 14: 148-149 and GS 70: 29-33. If inadvertent discovery occurs the general statute requires that all construction activities stop work immediately and contact the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology. Please see the previous section specifically about cemeteries.



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2. Exterior Changes to Buildings



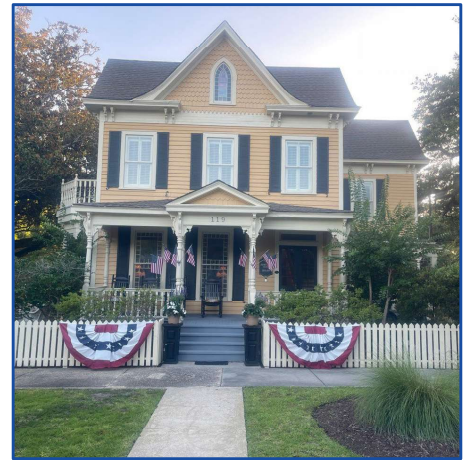


Roofs

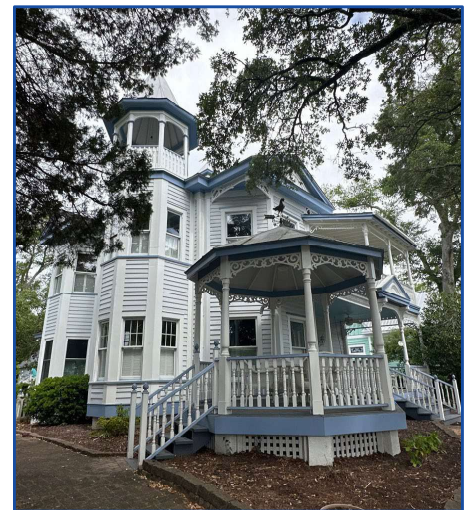
Roof form, pitch, and materials are among the distinguishing characteristics of different styles of architecture. Roofs can be flat, pitched, hipped, curved, or a combination of these forms. Roof forms, pitches, and materials vary in the Southport Local Historic District due to the extended period of development that occurred in Southport. Architectural styles are often distinguished by roof types.

2.1. Standards for Roofs

- 2.1.1. Protect and maintain historic roof-top features such as ornamental eaves, cornices, rake-boards, dormers, gables, chimneys, finials, cresting, steeples, belfries, cupolas, and railings that add to the overall architectural character of a structure. The design of any new roof features should be based on documentary evidence and are compatible with both the building and surrounding buildings. It is inappropriate to damage, conceal, or remove significant roof features.
- 2.1.2. Preserve, maintain, and repair historic roofing details and materials such as slate, standing seam metal, and tile when possible. Replace in-kind only if necessary due to deterioration or damage. Replace only the damaged or deteriorated portion using materials identical to the original if possible.
- 2.1.3. New roofing materials should be compatible with either the existing or original roofing material. Match the historic material as closely as possible in shape, size, and texture. Asphalt, fiberglass-asphalt shingles, and metal roofs are acceptable. Any distinctive patterns of shingles or slates shall be retained and/ or replicated exactly when possible.
- 2.1.4. Contemporary or non-historic roof features may be installed on areas of the roof secondary roofs. Included are skylights, roof-mounted vents, dormers, chimneys, antennas, and solar collectors. These are not permitted when their installation or later removal would damage or destroy a significant roof feature. In certain instances, new dormers may be permitted on side or rear elevations if their design is compatible with the building and the roofline.
- 2.1.5. Install new gutters without damaging or obscuring architectural features.



The Adkins-Ruark House has a multi-gabled roof that flares out over deep cornices.



The Northrup House is a good example of Queen Anne style with its varied roof lines, including the tower.



It is inappropriate to replace concealed, built-in gutter systems with modern exposed gutters. Gutters of all materials except copper shall have a painted finish. Half-round gutters are appropriate for most contributing properties. Wood gutters may be appropriate for certain period restoration projects.

- 2.1.6. Ridge vents, where needed, shall be of the low-profile type and shall not diminish the original design of the roof or destroy any character-defining architectural details. Other vents, such as gable vents and roof-mounted vents, should be installed so as not to be visible from the public view where possible. If they must be visible, they should be installed to respect the architectural details and character of the subject building.
- 2.1.7. It is not appropriate to create a false sense of historical development by making changes to roofs, such as adding conjectural features lacking insufficient historical, pictorial, or physical documentation.
- 2.1.8. It is inappropriate to alter the existing roof pitch or introduce a new roof pitch.
- 2.1.9. Avoid using substitute material for the replacement of a deteriorated historic element that does not convey the visual appearance of the surviving parts of the roof or that is physically or chemically incompatible.
- 2.1.10. Avoid constructing additional stories resulting in an altered appearance that is incongruous with the historic district.



Exterior Wood Siding, Trim, and Ornamentation

Southport's historic buildings are sheathed with a variety of materials that contribute to the special character of the district. The majority of the architecture in the district is wood-frame construction with wood siding, with few masonry construction most which are located in or near downtown. Exterior wood elements includes siding, trim, shingles, door and window surrounds, columns, cornices, pediments, brackets, columns, balustrades, and other architectural moldings or decorative ornamentation. These features are often the character defining features of the building and should be maintained and preserved to retain the special character of the building and the local district.



2.2. Standards for Exterior Wood Siding, Trim, and Ornamentation

- 2.2.1. Identify, repair, and preserve existing original wood siding, trim, ornamentation, and other wood decorative elements that contribute to the character of the historic building and the significance of the district as a whole.
- 2.2.2. Preserve and repair existing wood elements wherever possible. Use preservation techniques which encourage repair (such as epoxies, splicing, and patching where applicable) rather than wholesale replacement.
- 2.2.3. Replace historic wood elements only where the original is too deteriorated to repair. If replacement is necessary, use new replacement wood that matches the original as closely as possible in all properties: shape, profile, texture, and detailing. The deteriorated or damaged condition should be documented. Replacement of these features in kind and according to the standards does not normally require a COA.
- 2.2.4. If a portion of a historic wall is deteriorated beyond repair, replace only the damaged portion. In other words, a damaged portion of a wall does not provide an excuse for wholesale replacement.
- 2.2.5. Prepare surfaces for painting using the gentlest means possible. Low-pressure power-washing should be used only after a test panel of washing has been performed by the contractor and reviewed by the owner





for excessive damage. Sandblasting and high- pressure water blasting are not appropriate treatments.

- 2.2.6. Avoid replacing clapboard siding with shingle siding (or vice versa) or replacing clapboard siding with siding of a different width or profile, particularly if the later siding has gained historic significance in its own right.
- 2.2.7. It is not appropriate to compromise the architectural integrity of a building by introducing or removing siding, trim or other decorative features, or by concealing or removing decorative details such as cornices, corner boards, brackets, pilasters, door and window moldings, pediments, medallions, dentil and modillion molding, corner boards, and other character-defining architectural trim.
- 2.2.8. The use of vinyl or aluminum siding is not permitted. Where vinyl or aluminum siding exists, it can be maintained and replaced.
- 2.2.9. When the original siding is too deteriorated to repair, the HPC may allow the replacement of siding with new substitute siding if the proposed replacement will be more in keeping with the original appearance of the structure and can match the profile and texture of the original siding.
- 2.2.10. The use of fiber cement siding may be approved for new structures and non-historic structures. Fiber cement siding may be appropriate for additions to historic structures.
- 2.2.11. To avoid creating a false historical appearance, do not use trim salvaged from another building or buildings or stock trim. Likewise, avoid moving or rearranging existing trim to another part of a building without historical evidence to back this up. Do not use stock trim when original trim can be replicated.
- 2.2.12. Blown in insulation should be placed in the house so as not to disturb siding.

Must meet standards for Substitute Materials.

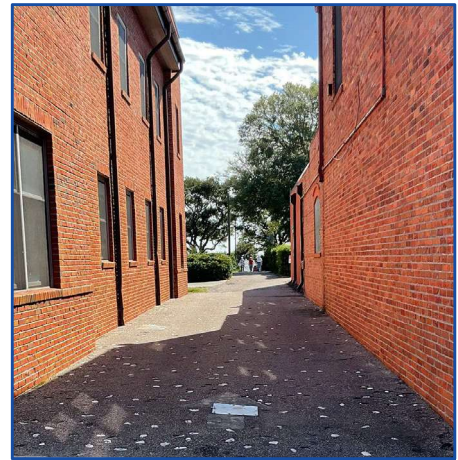


Masonry

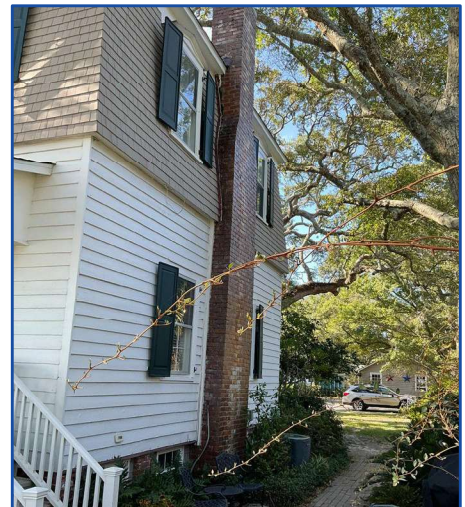
Masonry materials were historically used for aesthetic purposes and because of their durability. The most dominant material in Southport's downtown is masonry. It is also used for foundations, chimneys, and retaining walls. Historic masonry materials include brick, stone, slate, and concrete block. Like all building components, masonry requires routine maintenance to ensure its longevity.

2.3. Standards for Masonry

- 2.3.1. Retain and preserve historic brick and masonry elements, including walls, chimneys, foundations, and retaining walls. When possible, preserve masonry elements that are character-defining features of the building or property.
- 2.3.2. Repair and restore historic masonry elements, rather than replace. Remove vegetation and vines from masonry to prevent structural or moisture damage.
- 2.3.3. Clean historic masonry only with low-pressure water washing and mild detergents formulated for the specific application. Use chemical cleaners formulated for historic masonry only if water and detergent cleaners are not effective.
- 2.3.4. Sandblasting, high-pressure water blasting, and other abrasive cleaning methods which may damage historic masonry are not appropriate in the historic district.
- 2.3.5. Water-repellant sealers are generally not appropriate because they may trap moisture, causing deterioration or discoloration.
- 2.3.6. For repointing, use only mortars that are compatible with historic mortars in composition, strength, and joint finish or surface tooling. Maintain the historic joint width, joint profile, and bond patterns when making repairs. Modern mortars may cause damage to older, softer bricks.
- 2.3.7. Use only hand tools to remove deteriorated mortar joints, under the direction of a skilled mason. Do not use power tools or saws to remove mortar joints.
- 2.3.8. When replacing damaged brick or stone, use replacements that match the original units as closely as possible.
- 2.3.9. It is inappropriate to paint masonry surfaces that were not painted



Masonry materials is the dominant building material in the commercial downtown.



Masonry is a dominant material for chimney construction.



historically. When painting masonry that has been previously painted, use acrylic latex paints for best durability. Pre 1930 bricks may be negatively affected by paint, where post 1930 bricks have a different composition and are more appropriate for painting.

Windows, Doors, and Shutters

Windows, doors, and shutters in the Southport Local Historic District consist of a variety of architectural styles. They are character-defining features and influence the architectural character of the building through their pattern, material, shape, size, fenestration, and style. Windows and doors are functional elements allowing natural light and providing ventilation to enter the building's interior. Shutters in the district may or may not be operable; operable shutters provide additional protection for historic glazing.

2.4. Standards for Windows, Doors, and Shutters

- 2.4.1. Identify, retain and preserve historic windows and doors, including all significant related elements such as frames, sashes, shutters, hardware, old glass, sills, trim, and moldings. Documented restoration is allowable.
- 2.4.2. Repair existing historic windows and doors where possible, rather than replacing entire window or door units. Use accepted preservation methods for repairs. It is inappropriate to remove significant windows, doors, or their details or features rather than repair them.
- 2.4.3. Use replacement windows and doors that match the existing historic elements as closely as possible. Wood windows are encouraged to be replaced with wood windows. If replacement windows or doors are required, consider first replacing only the deteriorated element, such as a single sash or door, rather than the entire frame or unit. Any new replacements shall match the original in all dimensions, materials, and detailing as closely as possible. Replacement or new windows or doors outside of public view can be of other materials than original.
- 2.4.4. It is inappropriate to replace windows or doors with smaller units that do not fill the entire opening.
- 2.4.5. Mirrored glass is not appropriate in the historic district in any area visible from public view.



- 2.4.6. New windows must match the original overall size, opening area, muntin, and grilles. Snap-in grilles or grilles between glass are not appropriate for windows visible from public view.
- 2.4.7. Preserve and repair original or historic shutters, if possible. It is appropriate to add shutters to a historic structure if there is evidence that it once had shutters or if the addition of shutters is congruous with the historic character of the structure. All shutters shall be installed so that they will fit the window frame opening if closed and shall be of correct proportions for each window. Shutters shall be provided with operable hardware, consisting of hinges, pintles, and holdbacks located in the appropriate positions. Shutters may be operable or fixed. Shutters made of synthetic or substitute materials, that duplicate the look, appearance and patina of wood may be allowed. They should not be nailed or screwed onto the building surface.
- 2.4.8. New window and door openings shall not alter the historic character of the building or cause damage to historic materials or other significant architectural features. They must be detailed and sized to be compatible with the existing structure.
- 2.4.9. Avoid the placement of metal awnings over windows and doors. Install awnings in such a manner that they do not conceal architectural features or damage historic building fabric..

Porches and Entrances

Porches and exterior entrances are prominent and visible features on many homes in Southport. These details contribute to the unique sense of place found in historic districts. Porches may be front porches, side porches, two-story porches, sun porches, and balconies.

2.5. Standards for Porches and Entrances

- 2.5.1. Retain and preserve historic porches, entrances and doorways including related features such as railings, posts or columns, ceilings, steps, lattice, flooring, piers, ornamental trim, and other character defining elements.
- 2.5.2. Repair, rather than replace, historic porch and entrance elements, wherever feasible. Use repair techniques which preserve historic material,

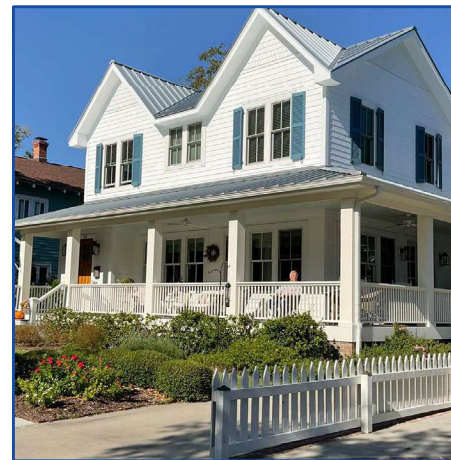


Two-story porches are a prominent feature in many of Southport's homes.



including patching, epoxy repair, reinforcing, or splicing-in of new wood in place of deteriorated sections. Replacement elements should match the original in size, shape, pattern, and texture.

- 2.5.3. Use appropriate materials in the repair and restoration of historic porches. Woods that are naturally rot-resistant or treated will provide the greatest durability for exposed elements such as railings, steps, flooring, and floor framing. The use of pressure-treated wood is appropriate when painted within six months. The use of substitute material that duplicates the look and patina, and architectural detail is allowed.
- 2.5.4. The enclosure or other alteration of original or historic front porches is not appropriate in the historic district. The enclosure of porches at the rear, or other areas not seen from the public view, is appropriate if the enclosure is designed and constructed in a manner that preserves the historic character and features of the porch.
- 2.5.5. Covering a porch with non-historic material such as vinyl or metal siding, or “winterizing” a screened porch by permanently attaching plastic sheeting is not permitted.
- 2.5.6. Use architectural details and ornamentation that are compatible with the style, period, and detailing of the porch and structure. Such features as new metal columns or wrought iron posts, over-scaled columns with elaborate capitals, metal or plastic balustrades are not appropriate. The creation of a false historical appearance, such as adding Victorian ornament to a plain early 20th century porch, is not appropriate. Removing a porch that is not repairable and not replacing it or replacing it with a new porch that does not convey the same visual appearance on contributing historical properties is not permitted.
- 2.5.7. Reconstruct missing porches or porch details based on accurate documentation of such features. Such documentation may include: evidence found on the subject building; historic photographs; or compatible details found on another porch in the district of the same period and general style. The owner shall provide the Commission with such documentation in the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- 2.5.8. It is not appropriate to add new porches, entrances, or balconies to



Many of Southport's historic homes have character defining features such as wraparound porches. Craftsmen style porches often include exposed rafters.





primary elevations or other areas of a building that are seen from the public view if none existed historically. Exceptions may be considered. Applicants shall demonstrate to the HPC that an addition with different height, scale, size, and massing from the existing structure is congruous with the historic district.

- 2.5.9. Permanent gates on porches are reviewed as a minor COA. Gates of any kind at the foot of porch steps create an unnecessary visual barrier and are not appropriate.
- 2.5.10. New handicapped access ramps and other modifications to improve access shall be designed so that the modifications are reversible and do not damage or obscure the buildings' architectural features or diminish its historic character. When feasible, ramps should be located or obscured from primary elevations.

Must meet standards for
Accessibility and Life Safety.

Foundations

2.6. Standards for Foundations

- 2.6.1. Retain and preserve original and historic foundations and related elements wherever possible, including: pier size, vents, grilles, lattice, materials, and other significant details.
- 2.6.2. Retain and preserve existing historic materials wherever possible, rather than replace. For repairs or rebuilding, select new brick, mortar, ballast stones, and other materials to match the historic materials as closely as possible in all respects.
- 2.6.3. If a portion of a historic foundation is deteriorated beyond repair, replace only the damaged portion using materials and finishes that match the original. Do not use replacement of a damaged portion as an excuse for wholesale replacement without thorough documentation of the reasons for this change.
- 2.6.4. New vents or access doors should be centered between piers. Use inconspicuous vents, such as black iron or dark plastic, rather than unpainted aluminum. Locate access doors and other new openings in areas not visible from public view.
- 2.6.5. For infilling between existing brick piers, construct a curtain wall that is





recessed approximately 1" to 2" back from the outer face of the piers so the original piers stand out; use this treatment for both old and new foundations. Flush foundations and infill are not appropriate. Concrete block may be used only if covered with a veneer of brick or sand- finished stucco. Leave foundations under porches open wherever possible to promote air circulation to prevent rot and deterioration; use wood lattice or grilles to enclose.

- 2.6.6. Wood grilles or lattice are appropriate for infill if compatible with the period or style of the structure. Stock lightweight lattice is not appropriate in areas in the public view.
- 2.6.7. It may be inappropriate to paint existing, unpainted historic foundations. Previously painted foundations should be repainted. Avoid removing paint from a previously painted foundation.
- 2.6.8. Covering an existing foundation with later siding (artificial or wood) or covering with stucco, cement, or pressed metal siding strips that replicate rusticated concrete block is not permitted.
- 2.6.9. The raising of a building's foundation should be undertaken for sound structural and/or flood control reasons only, and these reasons should be well-documented by flood maps, an architect or engineer's report accompanying an owner's COA application.
- 2.6.10. Locate new utilities and mechanical equipment such as package unit furnaces, heat pumps, and air conditioning coils at the rear or other areas not seen from public view. Utilities should never be located at the front of a structure or site. Provide screening with plantings, fences, or plant treatments.

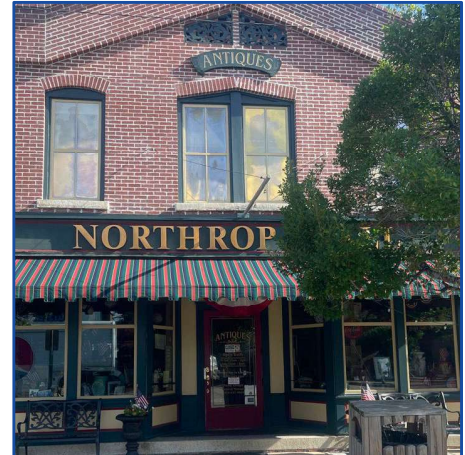
Must meet standards for masonry.



Storefronts

2.7. Standards for Storefronts

- 2.7.1. Retain and preserve historic commercial storefronts and building façades, including display windows, entrance configurations, doors, transoms, bulkheads, windows, cornices, parapets, and brickwork.
- 2.7.2. Replace historic storefront features only when original elements are too deteriorated to repair. Replacement materials should match the originals in design, dimension, texture. Identical replacement materials are preferred but substitute material may be approved on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.7.3. To reconstruct missing or altered storefront features, design new façade details to be compatible with the subject building and the surrounding historic buildings of the same period and style. Consider returning altered facades to original window sizes and configuration. Materials used must conform to the above two (2) standards for replacement storefront features. Base the rehabilitation on sound historical evidence. Avoid historically false “colonial” features such as carriage lamps, eagles, bay windows, broken-arched pediments, and other popular artifices.
- 2.7.4. Preserve and rehabilitate rear facades where possible, particularly where access is provided from rear parking areas. Eliminate or consolidate utility lines, pipes, meters, mechanical units, etc. to improve the appearance of rear facades.
- 2.7.5. Retain original roof forms and features. Do not add additional stories, penthouse, roof decks, skylights, mechanical equipment or any other features that can be seen from the sidewalk, right-of-way or any public rear access walkway. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis if there is a clear historic precedent.
- 2.7.6. Always try to repair or replace on a limited basis, rather than embark on whole-sale replacement. Do not introduce a new design that is incompatible in size, scale, material, with its surrounds.
- 2.7.7. When possible, remove late-twentieth century and early-twenty-first century replacement storefronts and restore storefronts to their historic configurations. Reconstruct storefronts based on historic photos or





physical evidence. Storefronts must be compatible with the historic character of the building with design, proportion, profiles, and finish consistent with those of typical storefronts from the same era.

- 2.7.8. If an entire storefront or building surface, detail, or element must be replaced due to deterioration, replace only with materials that match the original in size, shape, design, profile, scale, and texture.
- 2.7.9. Install fabric or canvas awnings, where historically appropriate, so that they do not obscure windows, doors, or other character defining features. Select an awning design based on historical profiles, styles, and shapes. It is not appropriate to install pent roofs or plastic or metal awnings over commercial storefronts. Flat-roofed metal awnings may be appropriate on buildings/ storefronts constructed in the 1960s and later.

Accessibility and Life Safety

2.8. Standards for Accessibility and Life Safety

- 2.8.1. Locate fire exits, stairs, landings, and ramps so that they are compatible with the character of the building or site. For example, wheelchair ramps may replicate a railing detail on a building or be of a simple design that allows it to blend discreetly with its surroundings.
- 2.8.2. Introduce new or alternate means of access to the historic building, in ways that do not compromise the appearance of an historic entrance or front porch.
- 2.8.3. Construct wheelchair ramps and chair lifts that are portable or temporary and do not permanently damage, obscure, or require the removal of character defining architectural features. Such alterations should be reversible in nature to maintain the integrity of the historic resource. When feasible, ramps should be located or obscured from primary elevations.



Utilities and Energy Efficiency

2.9. Standards for Utilities and Energy Efficiency

- 2.9.1. Locate utilities, vents and meter boxes and other utility connections in side or rear yards and screen from public view with plantings, fencing, or other means.
- 2.9.2. If possible, locate roof ventilators, antennas, solar panels, and satellite dishes in areas not visible from public view. Satellite dishes exceeding 24" in diameter shall not be installed in the historic district.
- 2.9.3. It is inappropriate to install permanent window air-conditioning units on the primary elevation of a historic building.
- 2.9.4. When installing utility fixtures—such as streetlights, signal boxes, or utility poles—in the public right-of-way, take into account the impact of the fixtures on the character of the streetscape and the historic district as a whole. Utility fixtures will be evaluated in terms of location, design, scale, and compatibility with surrounding streetscape features, and the overall visual impact on the district.
- 2.9.5. Install utilities underground whenever possible.
- 2.9.6. Avoid radically pruning street trees located under utility wires. Such pruning practices permanently damage the form and long-term health of the tree.



Substitute Materials

2.10. Standards for Substitute Materials

Humidity, average rainfall, hurricanes, and other storm events are more common in coastal areas. While wood, masonry, and metal are essential in creating weather-tight buildings, excessive moisture can be detrimental to these materials. For this reason, it is important to divert water away from the building with downspout extensions or under-ground drainage systems. Furthermore, paint and other coatings must be intact in order to prevent deterioration of historic materials and the need for replacement.

If replacement is deemed necessary, it is preferable to replace the surface

National Park Service Preservation
Brief 16:
The Use of Substitute Materials on
Historic Building Exteriors
<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/sustainability-energy-efficiency-resilience-historic-buildings.htm>



materials in kind. However, substitute materials can be seamlessly integrated into the surface when the area being replaced is limited and the new material is the same width, texture, profile, and as the existing materials. If substitute materials are used with different physical and visual properties they can cause a radical change in a building's appearance and lead to further damage or deterioration. It is important when selecting an appropriate substitute materials to consider the resiliency of the material.

Genuinely, the concern for loss of integrity of the historic building due to replacing historic materials with substitute materials is contrary to the principles of preservation. However, when materials are deteriorated beyond repair substitute materials can be a more cost-effective solution as long as the replacement materials physical and visual characteristics replicate the original materials. Imperfections from the natural aging of materials and the application of multiple layers of paint are not sufficient to deem replacement of these historic materials.

- 2.10.1. Identify, retain, and preserve historic materials that contribute to the overall character of the building and the historic district, including wood, metal, and masonry.
- 2.10.2. Protect and maintain historic materials, surfaces, and other relative features through routine maintenance and by using accepted preservation methods. Surfaces should be cleaned with the gentlest means possible.
- 2.10.3. Repair historic materials and details using accepted preservation methods for patching, splicing, consolidating, and reinforcing.
- 2.10.4. If historic materials must be replaced due to deterioration, replace only the deteriorated surface or detail. Replacement surfaces and details should match in-kind materials including size, shape, design, scale, and texture.
- 2.10.5. Consider substitute materials only if:
 - A. the historic material is not available,
 - B. skilled craftsman capable of manipulating and installing the material are not available,
 - C. there are inherent flaws in the material,
 - D. modern building codes require a change in material, or
 - E. rapid or repeated deterioration is reasonably expected.
 - F. In these instances, the substitute material should replicate the original in size, shape, design, scale, and texture.
- 2.10.6. It is inappropriate to replace sound historic building materials with new materials to create a new or smooth appearance.



3. New Construction & Additions





Residential Additions

Many homes in Southport have additions in one form or another. The enclosure of a porch or an addition linking the main house to a detached kitchen. Historic homes have been regularly added on to, to meet the needs of their occupants, including changes in use and shifting family and societal needs. These changes illustrate the evolution of the building and are important in understanding the building's history. Additions that are over fifty years old may have achieved historical significance and should be preserved or considered when planning an addition to a historic home. Preserving the historic home and maintaining its architectural integrity can often be achieved when adding onto the home.

Additions should be sited in locations that preserve the historic relationship between the building, site, adjacent homes or buildings, and public rights-of-way. In most cases, additions can be designed and constructed without comprising the integrity of the historic home or building or the historic district. Most often, this is achieved by locating additions on rear elevations.

3.1. Standards for Residential Additions

- 3.1.1. Where possible, locate new additions at the side or rear so that they have a minimal impact on the façade and other primary elevation of the affected building or adjacent properties. Consider the impact from all public rights-of-way when constructing additions on corner lots or waterfront properties.
- 3.1.2. It is appropriate to consider height, scale, size and massing of the additions to ensure it is compatible with the existing structure and does not overpower it visually. Generally, observe the principle of “additive massing” where the original structure remains dominant, and the additions are adjoining and smaller masses. However, exceptions may be considered. Applicants shall demonstrate to the HPC that an addition with different height, scale, size, and massing from the existing structure is congruous with the historic district.
- 3.1.3. It is appropriate to design additions that are compatible with the existing building in terms of materials, style, roof forms, massing proportion and spacing of doors and windows, details, surface texture, and location. Contemporary adaptations of the original which clearly look like an addition and reflect the period of construction are encouraged.

- 3.1.4. If possible, additions should be constructed so that they can be removed from the original building in the future without irreversible damage to significant features.
- 3.1.5. Wood windows are most appropriate for new additions within the historic district; however, substitute window materials are acceptable for new additions provided the proposed windows meet the requirements set forth in the windows and doors standards.
- 3.1.6. Rooflines of new additions should be similar in form, pitch, and eave height to the roofline of the original building so as not to overpower the prominence of the original building.
- 3.1.7. Foundations should be similar to or compatible with the existing foundations in material, detailing, and height.
- 3.1.8. The use of vinyl and aluminum building materials are not appropriate. Fiber cement siding may be used on a case-by-case basis. Use of fiber-cement lap siding may be approved for use on new structures. In all circumstances every effort shall be made to ensure that new structures and the application of modern-day products achieve compatibility with existing historic buildings that define the character of the Southport Local Historic District.
- 3.1.9. It is appropriate to use materials in traditional ways. New materials should appear as if they were applied in a traditional manner to convey the same visual appearance as historically used and applied building materials.
- 3.1.10. It is appropriate to match the foundation height, style, and materials as an addition to the original building, however, differentiate the junction of old and new by recessing the foundation and wall plane of the new addition.
- 3.1.11. Place outbuildings and accessory structures in side and rear yards. Avoid locations that obscure the principal building's prominent architectural features or significant site features.
- 3.1.12. It is appropriate to consider the significance of additions and alterations that are at least fifty years old to determine their contribution to the building's character defining features
- 3.1.13. It is not appropriate to site additions that require the removal of heritage trees or mature plantings.

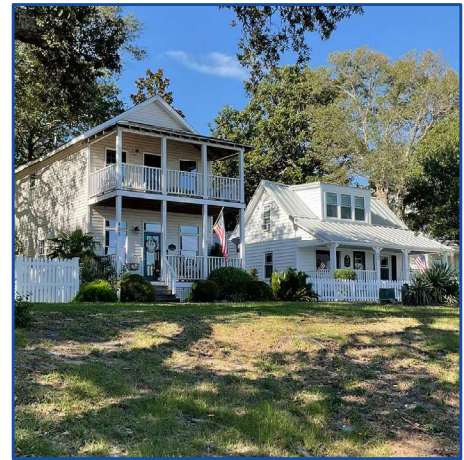
See Standards for Windows and Doors.



New Residential Construction

Southport's architectural history does not represent one era or period of development., but it has evolved over the course of over 200 years. New residential construction can be successful in the historic district and illustrate architectural evolution.

The standards provide a basic overview of the district and its special character. If the proposed siting and design reflects an understanding of, and is compatible with, the special character of the district, new construction can enhance the district by eliminating gaps in the historic street front. However, special attention should be paid to setbacks, spacing, and orientation and ensure the new residential building is consistent with surrounding residential buildings, and that the height, scale, massing, proportions, and roof shape of the proposed new residential building is compatible with surrounding residential buildings.



Checklist for New Residential Construction

- ◆ Is the building orientation consistent with the historic residential buildings?
- ◆ Is the lot coverage consistent of the new residential building consistent with adjacent buildings?
- ◆ Is the fenestration on the primary and visible side elevations in keeping with adjacent properties in the district to maintain the rhythm of the streetscape?

3.2. Standards New Residential Construction

- 3.2.1. Design new residential buildings to be compatible in height, scale, massing, proportion, and roof shape of surrounding residential buildings within the district, so they do not diminish or visually overpower nearby historic buildings.
- 3.2.2. Design new residential buildings that are compatible with the scale, pattern, detail, finish, and composition, of historic buildings in the district.
- 3.2.3. Design buildings with compatible configuration, fenestration patterns, placement, materials, size, and overall proportion of windows and doors are congruous with nearby historic buildings. Openings which vary considerably from the established patterns found on the block in which the new construction is placed will tend to have a disruptive effect on the



desired harmony of the streetscape and should be avoided.

- 3.2.4. Keep the siding and trim material of the proposed building consistent with the materials traditionally used on the immediate block and in the historic district. Wood siding, wood shingles (as typically found in gables of Victorian period residential architecture), and brick, were common sheathing materials and should be used.
- 3.2.5. Use materials in traditional ways. New materials should appear as if they were applied in a traditional manner to convey the same visual appearance as historically used and applied building materials.
- 3.2.6. The use of vinyl and aluminum building materials are not appropriate. Cementitious siding installed in a traditional manner with similar exposure size to emulate horizontal wood siding is appropriate. In all circumstances every effort shall be made to ensure that new structures and the application of modern-day products achieve compatibility with existing historic buildings that define the character of the Southport local historic district.
- 3.2.7. If a contributing building was demolished or moved from the site, design the replacement building to be of similar height, scale, massing, and location as the previously existing building. Applicants shall demonstrate to the HPC that a replacement structure with different height, scale, and massing as the previously existing building is congruous with the Historic District.
- 3.2.8. It is appropriate to maintain a similar front, side, and rear yard setback to other historic buildings on the block and/or side of the street.
- 3.2.9. Maintain the pattern of building separation and lot coverage that is found on the block and/ or side of the street, when feasible.
- 3.2.10. Minimize ground disturbance during new construction to avoid unnecessary damage to unknown archaeological resources.
- 3.2.11. Retain and protect heritage trees during construction.
- 3.2.12. For new construction on Southport's waterfront, minimize any negative impact on historic views and vistas.
- 3.2.13. Provide a date brick or other exterior date identification marker on all new construction to assist future generations in the dating of buildings.



Commercial Additions

The majority of Southport's historic commercial core consists of one and two story buildings. However, within Southport's Local Historic District there are a variety of commercial buildings along N Howe Street and W Moore Street, including small one story commercial buildings with a small building footprint, residential properties that have been converted into commercial uses, and other one to two story buildings with a slightly larger overall building footprint than in the commercial core district.

Change is inevitable in buildings and neighborhoods. Building may need to be updated, expanded, or adapted to fit the needs of another use. When an addition is added, it is inevitable that some loss of materials and change will occur. The relationship between the building and the neighborhood will also change.

Locating an addition to the rear, is the easiest way to minimize its visual impact from the street. The standards provide a basic overview of the district and its special character and ensure additions are congruous with the historic district property. In some rare cases, an addition may be designed and perceived as a separate building, in that case, utilize the Standards for New Commercial Construction.



3.3. Standards for Commercial Additions

- 3.3.1. It is appropriate for new commercial additions to be located along the rear façade of the historic building to reduce the visual impact on the building.
- 3.3.2. It is appropriate to design additions that are compatible with the existing historic building in terms of massing, scale, height, form, size, materials, proportion, fenestration, and roof form.
- 3.3.3. Rear additions should be recessed behind the sides of the historic building so it is not visible from any street.
- 3.3.4. Construct additions with the least possible impact upon the historic building by avoiding the loss of historic building materials, or obscuring character defining features.
- 3.3.5. Substitute exterior materials may be appropriate since most additions are not visible from the street. Cementitious siding simulating clapboards can be acceptable when the exposure width and characteristics of the original building's clapboards are followed.

National Park Service Preservation Brief: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-14-exterior-additions.pdf>

- 3.3.6. Simplified details that reflect the character of the historic building are appropriate.
- 3.3.7. Consider landscape features and plantings, street vistas, and topography when siting new additions.
- 3.3.8. If alternatives exist, it is not appropriate to site additions that require the removal of heritage trees or mature plantings. Heritage trees and mature plantings should be protected during the construction phase.

New Commercial Construction

3.4. Standards for New Commercial Construction

The Southport Local Historic District commercial areas consist of a variety of building sizes in height, scale, massing, proportions, fenestration, and roof shapes along N Howe Street and along W Moore Street. Commercial buildings have evolved based on transportation demands and lifestyle needs of Southport's residents.

New commercial construction should be consistent in scale, height, form, massing, proportion, fenestration, and roof shape with adjacent and nearby commercial buildings. For instance, commercial buildings in Southport's commercial core typically share side walls, while along N Howe Street there is a variety of commercial building types, some with shared side walls and some self standing. Respecting the urban form characteristic of the commercial areas is more important than replicating any specific architectural styles. New commercial construction should reinforce the scale and rhythm of door and window openings along the streetscape. The end result enhances and fill any gaps in the streetscape.

- 3.4.1. It is appropriate to site new commercial buildings to maintain the same or similar setback, spacing, and orientation as the other surrounding historic commercial properties so it does not detract from the historic character of the site or surrounding area.
- 3.4.2. Commercial and institutional buildings setbacks can differ. Most new commercial buildings should front the edge of the sidewalk. Whereas, institutional buildings are often set back on a lawn or plaza.
- 3.4.3. Locate new commercial buildings so they do not obscure significant views and vistas. Consider the impact to all public rights-of-way when designing



projects on the waterfront or corner lots.

- 3.4.4. It is appropriate to design and scale new commercial buildings to be compatible in terms of the height, scale, massing, proportion, fenestration, and roof shape of surrounding commercial buildings so it does not visually overpower nearby historic buildings.
- 3.4.5. Design new commercial buildings so that the building configuration, placement, materials, size, and overall proportion of windows are compatible with surrounding historic commercial buildings.
- 3.4.6. Utilize building materials that are consistent with surrounding historic commercial buildings in regard to integrity, longevity, and appearance—including scale, pattern, detail, texture, finish, composition.
- 3.4.7. Design and construct new commercial buildings to maintain the pedestrian experience of the commercial district, including a prominent ground-level entrance on the facade and ground-level display windows, instead of wide expanses of solid wall.
- 3.4.8. Minimize ground disturbance during new construction to avoid unnecessary damage to unknown archaeological resources.
- 3.4.9. Retain and protect heritage trees during construction.
- 3.4.10. Provide a date brick or other exterior date identification marker on all new construction to assist future generations in the dating of buildings.

Decks

3.5. Standards for Decks

- 3.5.1. Locate decks only on the secondary or tertiary elevations of historic buildings where they are minimally visible from the public rights-of-way and where their construction will not detract from the historic character of the site of district.
- 3.5.2. Locate decks so they do not destroy, damage, or obscure historic materials, details, and other character defining features of the historic building or site. When possible, incorporate existing topography and site features, such as heritage trees.
- 3.5.3. Design decks to align with the first-floor level of the building and

construct them to be structurally self-supporting to minimize structural or material damage to the historic building.

- 3.5.4. Design decks and any related steps and railings to be deferential to, but compatible with the historic building in scale, material, configuration, and proportion.
 - A. Use decking materials including wood and composite that are compatible in scale, pattern, and detail of buildings in the district.
 - B. Avoid replicating historic porch posts and railings for contemporary, uncovered decks.
- 3.5.5. Maintain and protect significant site features and adjacent buildings and structures from damage during, or as a consequence of, deck-related site work or construction.



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4. Relocation & Demolition





Building Relocation

The Southport Local Historic District is a collection of structures and properties that collectively represent the early history of the City's built environment. The buildings themselves as well as their location contribute to the significance and the story of a place. Relocating buildings can impact the integrity of the district. In addition relocation is complicated, expensive and comes with risks. Accordingly relocation of historic buildings in the historic district should be considered as a last resort and only after alternative options have been thoroughly considered. If it is necessary, buildings should remain in the district and as close to the original location as possible. The relocation site should resemble the original property to the degree possible. The lot should allow for the building to be compatible with surrounding structures and allow for spacing, setbacks, lot coverage, orientation and landscaping similar to the original site. The grading of the site should be similar and allow for the foundation of the building to be of similar height.

Detailed planning is necessary when considering the relocation of a structure. Interested parties should contact the State Historic Preservation Office and/or Preservation North Carolina for advice and assistance in advance of efforts to relocate a structure. A qualified and experienced mover should be selected with experience moving historic properties. Steps should be taken to minimize damage to the structure. Coordination with the City of Southport and utilities companies may be needed to plan a route for the move and whenever possible buildings should be moved as a single unit and not sectioned or disassembled.

A COA is required from the Southport Historic Preservation Commission to relocate a property within the district or to move a building into the district.

4.1. Standards for Building Relocation

- 4.1.1. Choose relocation only as a last resort to demolition. Property owners that want to relocate a contributing building should design the replacement building to reflect the relocated building's height, scale, massing, and location. Applicants shall demonstrate to the HPC that a replacement building with different height, scale, massing, and location as the previously existing building is congruous with the historic district.
- 4.1.2. Document the original site thoroughly with drawings and photographs prior



to relocation.

- 4.1.3. Hire reputable movers who have experience with historic properties.
- 4.1.4. Move the building as a single unit in lieu of partial or complete disassembly, if possible.
- 4.1.5. Choose a site in the historic district, if possible.
- 4.1.6. If moved within the historic district position the building on the new site so it relates to adjacent buildings and the overall streetscape. Place the building so that orientation of its principal façade and front and side setbacks are compatible with the surrounding buildings. Refer to New Construction Standards for further information on placement.
- 4.1.7. Provide a new foundation whose height, design, and facing materials match those of the original, if possible.
- 4.1.8. Maintain any existing heritage trees on the new site, if possible. This will help create an established building site context for the new structure.

Demolition of Historic Landmarks and Buildings

Demolition can have significant detrimental effects to the integrity of a historic district. Every structure represents a valuable part of the history of the built environment in the Southport Local Historic District. Each structure is irreplaceable, and demolition should be a last resort only after all possible alternatives have been investigated. A COA authorizing the demolition of a structure in the historic district cannot be denied unless the building is determined to have Statewide Significance. If the building proposed for demolition is determined by the SHPO to have Statewide Significance which is generally defined as being individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places with significance at the state or national level, then the Commission may deny the COA. However, regardless of the determination of significance, the HPC can delay demolition for up to a year (365 days) to allow for the full study of potential alternatives. Property owners are encouraged to work with the Commission to determine alternatives to demolition. Structural stabilization and weatherization are encouraged to preserve buildings while alternatives are explored.

In reviewing a COA for building demolition, the HPC may consider the following:

- ◆ What is the contribution of the building or site to the historic district?
- ◆ What is the condition of the building?
- ◆ How feasible is adapting the structure to other purposes?
- ◆ Could the property be sold to someone willing to use the existing building?
- ◆ Could the building be relocated?
- ◆ Is there a proposed, compatible use for the site after the demolition?

4.2. Standards for Demolition of Historic Landmarks and Buildings

- 4.2.1. Choose demolition only as a last resort. Property owners of contributing buildings should design the replacement building to reflect the demolished building's height, scale, massing, and location. Applicants shall demonstrate to the HPC that a replacement building with different height, scale, massing as the previously existing building is congruous with the Historic District.
- 4.2.2. Document the historic resource prior to demolition. Documentation shall take the form of black and white photographs, and color digital photographs of the building, structure, or site's principal elevations, architectural elements (both in exterior and interior), and special features. Measured drawings of the resource may also be required. The HPC shall determine on a case-by-case basis the extent of documentation required and the parties responsible for producing such documentation. The documentation shall be submitted to the HPC and become a permanent record of the City of Southport.
- 4.2.3. Salvage architectural features and building materials for reuse or study. Contact antique dealers and used building supply establishments to arrange for removal. Consider donations of items to interested non-profit organizations or museums or the NC-SHPO.
- 4.2.4. Minimize ground-disturbing activities during demolition to avoid damage to potential unknown archaeological resources and neighboring historical properties.
- 4.2.5. Retain heritage trees on site, if possible.
- 4.2.6. Clean the site thoroughly of all building debris and leave the lot in safe/similar condition.



5. Disaster Preparedness and Prevention



Disaster Preparedness and Prevention

Southport's location on the Cape Fear River and less than two miles from the Atlantic Ocean make the City susceptible to winds, flooding, and storm surge from storms as well as high tide flooding. A proactive approach to improving the resiliency of structures, infrastructure and the economy is essential to preserve property, save lives, maintain services and speed up recovery from natural hazards. Hurricane Fran was the strongest hurricane to make landfall since Hazel (Cat 4, 1954) in NC in 1996 bringing 24.06 inches of rain to Southport and 137 mph winds. More recently, on September 16, 2024 the City received approximately 17 inches of rainfall within 12-hour period of time from Tropical Cyclone 8. The storm caused significant damage washing out key roadways and flooding homes.



Historic buildings and sites can be made more resilient to natural hazards without detrimentally impacting historic character. This section of the Southport Local Historic District Standards provides guidance on preventative measures, site adaptations, floodproofing, building elevation, foundations, venting, porches and other features, utilities and commercial buildings. Two resources that provide additional detailed guidance on improving the resiliency of structures and rebuilding after events include the following:

- Resilience Design Standards (<https://hrp.sog.unc.edu/resources/>)
- National Park Service Guidelines on Flood Adaptation for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/flood-adaptation-guidelines.pdf>)



5.1. Standards for Temporary Protective Measures

- 5.1.1. Identify, retain, and preserve the historic materials, features, and spaces of the buildings, site, and setting that are important in defining the historic character of the property and sites. Assess their existing capacity for resilience as well as their known vulnerabilities.
- 5.1.2. Select temporary barriers or systems that will:
 - A. Protect the historic building and site from the anticipated type of flooding



or wind damage, and;

B. Deploy with the available warning times, labor, and equipment.

- 5.1.3. Assess the ability of the historic building's masonry walls and temporary flood barriers or wrapping systems covering masonry openings to withstand the forces of flooding. Consult with a structural engineer to determine whether the existing walls will require reinforcing to withstand such forces.

5.2. Standards for Disaster Preparedness and Prevention

- 5.2.1. Identify, retain, and preserve the historic materials, features, and spaces of the building, site, and setting that are important in defining the historic character of the property and landscape.
- 5.2.2. Protect and maintain historic materials, features, and spaces including wood, masonry, metal, foundations and walls, roofs, doors and windows, porches and entrances, storefronts, walkways and driveways, fences and walls, lighting and signage, and outbuildings according to the Standards for Rehabilitation of Individual Landmarks and Buildings in the Southport Local Historic District.
- 5.2.3. Repair historic materials and features—including wood, masonry, metal, paint and color, foundations and walls, roofs, doors and windows, porches and entrances, storefronts, walkways and driveways, fences and walls, lighting and signage, and outbuildings according to these standards. It is inappropriate to remove significant materials and features rather than repair them.
- 5.2.4. If historic materials and features are deteriorated beyond repair, replace in-kind only the damaged portion, matching the original in material, size, shape, design, profile, scale, color, and texture. If the traditional material is located below the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) and is not inherently resilient to flood damage, consider a proven damage-resistant substitute material that matches the original in size, shape, design, profile, scale, color, and texture and meets Standards for Rehabilitation of Individual Landmarks and Buildings in the Southport Local Historic District.
- 5.2.5. Utilize existing historic and non-historic building and site features including window shutters, gutters and downspouts, foundation vents,



and site topography that can minimize and/or mitigate damage from wind and water.

- 5.2.6. Retain historic materials, features, and spaces when planning and undertaking any temporary or permanent flooding adaptation treatment. Consult a structural engineer, contractor, or architect to ensure that the intervention is appropriately calculated and that the building or site feature is structurally able to withstand both the intervention and any displaced loads from wind or water.
- 5.2.7. Install or employ temporary and permanent protective measures in a manner that does not damage or destroy historic materials, details, and other character defining features of the historic building or site.

Site Adaptations and Parking

5.3. Standards for Site Adaptations and Parking

- 5.3.1. Identify, maintain, repair, and/or replace in-kind historic site features, materials, and spaces that are important in defining the overall historic character of the site and district.
- 5.3.2. Retain the historic spatial and topographic relationship between the building(s) and the site and setting.
- 5.3.3. Ensure surface water flows away from building foundations and landscape features.
- 5.3.4. Where topography permits, install a drainage system around the building foundation and footings to avoid any undermining of the building foundation and to allow for proper site drainage.
- 5.3.5. Reduce hardscape and design new driveways and parking areas to maintain as much permeable landscape as possible to reduce overland flows during storms.
- 5.3.6. Limit site runoff by installing new features—including cisterns, bio-swales, permeable pavers, and rain collection systems—that are able to retain heavy rains and floodwaters on-site only if they do not alter the historic features, materials, and spaces.

Alterations to the site must also meet the Standards for Site and Setting.

See Standards for Driveways and Off-Street Parking.



Dry Floodproofing

5.4. Standards for Dry Floodproofing

- 5.4.1. Identify, maintain, repair, and/or replace in-kind historic exterior materials and features, that are important in defining the overall historic character of the site and district—including exterior walls and foundations that are below the Regulatory Flood Protection Elevation.
- 5.4.2. Consider dry floodproofing techniques only if they do not diminish the historic integrity of the building and if they do not have the potential to accelerate the deterioration of historic building materials and finishes.
- 5.4.3. Consider dry floodproofing techniques only for masonry buildings or frame buildings where the Regulatory Flood Protection Elevation is below the top of the masonry foundation.
- 5.4.4. Consult with a structural engineer to determine whether structural reinforcement of the foundation or wall is necessary (and possible) to withstand lateral forces. Any reinforcement should be installed in inconspicuous locations and with as little damage to historic materials as possible.
- 5.4.5. Anchor the structure to the foundation to prevent movement or collapse.
- 5.4.6. Install foundation vents that can be sealed in anticipation of flooding.
- 5.4.7. Consider the application of waterproofing coatings or membranes only on masonry surfaces that have been previously painted. It is not appropriate to apply waterproofing coatings or membranes to unpainted masonry or to wood surfaces, as it will cover the character-defining texture and color of the surface and may trap moisture within the wall.
- 5.4.8. It is not appropriate to apply waterproofing coatings or membranes above the Regulatory Flood Protection Elevation.

See Standards for Foundations, Fences and Walls, and Exterior Wood Siding, Trim and Ornamentation.



Wet Floodproofing

5.5. Standards for Wet Floodproofing

- 5.5.1. Identify, maintain, repair, and/or replace in-kind historic materials and features, that are important in defining the overall historic character of the site and district—including interior and exterior walls and foundations that are below the Base Flood Elevation (BFE).
- 5.5.2. Consider wet floodproofing techniques only where the BFE falls below any finished spaces with historic features and materials and in spaces that can be abandoned for the duration of the period necessary to dry out.
- 5.5.3. Consult with a structural engineer to determine whether structural reinforcement of the foundation or walls is necessary. Any reinforcement should be installed in inconspicuous locations and with as little damage to historic materials as possible.
- 5.5.4. Anchor the structure to the foundation to prevent movement or collapse.

See Standards for Foundations, Fences and Walls, and Exterior Wood Siding, Trim and Ornamentation.

Elevating Buildings Standards

Elevating a historic building above the estimated flood risk level without significantly impacting its historic character is possible but it can be both challenging and expensive. It requires consideration of impacts to adjoining properties and the streetscape. A successful strategy depends on a number of factors, including building size, form, massing, style, materials, foundation type, porches, and setting.

A portion of historic buildings in Southport are in a FEMA floodplain,

5.6. Standards for Elevating Buildings

- 5.6.1. Identify, maintain, repair, and/or replace in-kind historic materials and features, that are important in defining the overall historic character of the site and district—including exterior walls and foundations that may be impacted by elevating the historic building.

See Standards for Foundations, Fences and Walls, and Exterior Wood Siding, Trim and Ornamentation.



- 5.6.2. Consider elevating a frame building only where the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) extends above the top of the masonry foundation.
- 5.6.3. Consult with a structural engineer, architect, general contractor, or house mover to determine whether the building is structurally stable or whether structural reinforcement is necessary for the building to be elevated. Any reinforcement should be installed in inconspicuous locations—such as crawlspaces or within the wall structure—and without damage to historic materials.
- 5.6.4. Document the building through photographs and/or drawings—specifically any materials or features that will be lost—prior to the start of work.
- 5.6.5. When possible, maintain the relationship between the finished floor elevation of the historic building and the adjacent grade. The following design techniques can mitigate the visual effect of elevating historic buildings:
 - A. Consider increasing the height of the grade to meet the finished floor elevation, only if it will not significantly impact surrounding properties.
 - B. Consider adding fill under the house and around the foundation, gradually sloping the soil outward into the historic grade.
 - C. Consider a low retaining wall installed several feet away from the foundation.
 - D. Consider foundation plantings, other landscaping, or a low fence.
- 5.6.6. Maintain the visual relationship between the building, site features, and significant landscape elements including heritage trees, fences, and walls as well as the relationship to neighboring buildings on the site and along the streetscape.
- 5.6.7. Consider the overall proportions of the building to ensure that an elevated façade does not alter the character-defining form or features of the building. For example, elevating a house with a strong horizontal expression (like a Ranch house) may be stylistically inappropriate. Identify, maintain, repair, and/or replace in-kind historic materials and features, that are important in defining the overall historic character of the site and district—including interior and exterior walls and foundations that are below the Base Flood Elevation (BFE).
- 5.6.8. Elevate porches and additions to maintain their relationship to the main

See Standards for Foundations, Fences and Walls, and Exterior Wood Siding, Trim and Ornamentation.



building.

- 5.6.9. When possible, limit elevation to three feet above the BFE.
- 5.6.10. It is not appropriate to elevate a building that was constructed with, or later modified to include, a raised basement. Instead, consider utilizing wet floodproofing at the basement level.
- 5.6.11. It is not appropriate to elevate a building in order to allow parking under the structure.

Foundations and Foundation Vents

The modification or replacement of a historic building's foundation or piers to prevent flood damage is critical to preserve the building's character and appearance. When considering modification or replacement, consideration should be given to the size, configuration, topography, landscaping, height, mass, proportion, form, orientation, construction type of the building, existing setbacks, adjacent properties, and local building code regulations. It is essential to consult with a structural engineer or architect and a local code official to determine whether the building is structurally stable enough to be elevated and whether the existing foundation is capable of being extended or if a new foundation is necessary. In addition to supporting the building, the modified or new foundation must be capable of resisting lateral forces from increased height, storm surge, and wind loads. The modified or new foundation may also require structural reinforcement. Any reinforcements with non-historic materials, such as concrete blocks or cast-in place concrete, should be installed so that it is not visible on the building's exterior.

Foundation type should be factored in with the anticipated flooding type. Fast-moving flood waters do less damage to structurally support open pier foundations and solid masonry foundations with operable flood vents, both allow water to flow in and out while providing protection. On primary elevations, flood vents should be recessed within the foundation wall and should be similar in character to any existing foundation vents or screens. Pier foundations should include panels of pierced brick, wooden louvers, or lattice recessed between the piers to allow for passage of flood waters and ventilation. Wood panels may be painted in a darker color to minimize their visibility.

Where an existing foundation or piers can be adapted or replaced in kind, it is



important to approximate the appearance of the historic foundation in masonry size, color, texture, and bond pattern; mortar joint width, color, and profile; pier placement, width, and spacing; and other features and details—including foundation vents—especially on the primary elevation and other highly visible locations. Any non-historic materials necessary for reinforcement or stabilization should be veneered with the original foundation material so non-historic materials are not visible from the exterior.

The height of the new or adapted foundations can be mitigated by overlapping the bottom courses of exterior siding and trim or porch skirt boards to conceal the last few courses of the foundation, adding fill within the crawl space and the foundation perimeter, the addition of foundation plantings, fencing, or low retaining walls that meets the standards with this document.

5.7. Standards for Foundations and Foundation Vents

- 5.7.1. Identify, maintain, repair, and/or replace in-kind historic foundation materials and features, that are important in defining the overall historic character of the site and district—including foundations and foundation vents that may be impacted by elevating the historic building.
- 5.7.2. Design new foundations to be consistent with the design and materials of the original foundation, including masonry color, size, and bond pattern; joint width, color, and profile; and other visual qualities.
 - A. When possible, salvage and reuse historic materials and features including stone, brick, and decorative vents. Utilize salvaged materials on primary elevations when possible to lessen the visual impact of the increased elevation.
 - B. Construct foundations of traditional materials. The use of veneered material (typically brick) may be appropriate to conceal the use of non-traditional materials for the underlying structure. In those instances, the submission of drawings (elevations and large-scaled sections) is necessary to ensure compliance.
 - C. Ensure that masonry infill, when visible from the exterior, matches the original in size, shape, design, scale, color, and texture.

Must also meet Standards for Foundations, Exterior Wood Siding, Trim, and Ornamentation



- 5.7.3. Construct piers that match the width, number, and placement of historic piers, even if the new technology requires fewer supports.
- A. Foundation piers should align with any historic porch columns or piers above.
 - B. The exterior face of the piers and foundation should align with the exterior plane of the building framing. The porch skirt board and siding typically overlap the bottom of the sill by at least 1/2 inch.
 - C. In limited instances, where the foundation is elevated significantly, the width of the piers may be increased incrementally to maintain proper proportions, however floor plans and elevations must demonstrate that the historic integrity of the property will be maintained.
- 5.7.4. Maintain the visual appearance of historic piers by utilizing traditional infill materials of brick, louvers, lattice that are recessed between piers and are darker in color.
- A. Louvered and lattice panels should allow for the free-flow of water and should be designed to “break-away” in the case of flooding.
 - B. It is not appropriate to use vertical plastic, metal, or other non-traditional materials to infill between piers. When possible, screen elevated foundations or piers with appropriate foundation plantings or fences to mitigate their visual impact. Locate structural reinforcements in inconspicuous locations.
- 5.7.5. Install flood vents in locations where the result is minimal material loss and visual impact to the building foundation.
- A. Locate flood vents on secondary and rear elevations when possible.
 - B. Select a compatible design and traditional placement for new vents and/or paint them to match the foundation material.
 - C. When possible, retain historic foundation vents of either masonry or Metal on primary and secondary elevations. Consider adding flood vents behind historic foundation vents in order to minimize their visibility.



- 5.7.6. New foundations for mid-twentieth-century buildings constructed with slab-on-grade should match other foundations of the era, typically brick or concrete.
- 5.7.7. Extend the siding by a few board widths below the top of the foundation wall and/or reinstall skirt boards of a slightly wider width than was in place historically typically between 4"-12" in order to lower the visual transition between the building and foundation.

Porches and Entrances

Porches and exterior entrances are prominent features on many homes in Southport. These features are exposed to the elements and often need additional reinforcement to resist impact from storm events. Attention should be paid to reinforcing a historic building's structural connections, particularly the roof and rafters to the columns or post to the foundation or piers. Any hurricane connectors or other types of reinforcement and bracing should be placed in a location to minimize their visibility on the exterior.

If the historic building has been elevated more than 30 inches above grade, the addition of railing is necessary to meet building code requirements. New handrails and balusters should be compatible in material and detail with the architectural character of the building. The addition of steps to front porches can draw attention to the increased foundation height. It is important to retain the original stair location, width, and detailing for achieving a unified appearance. However, if a stair run is significantly long, creating a landing or change in stair materials, design, or orientation can visually break the stair length and may also cause site restraints. Where site restraints are challenging, relocation or reorientation may be necessary. To minimize the perceived height of elevated porches or entrances, the addition of site fill, the addition of foundation plantings, or the addition of a low retain wall or fencing that visually screens the additional height may be appropriate.

The challenge of providing handicap access to elevated porches or entrances may be addressed with the addition of a ramp, mechanical lift, or elevator following the standards for accessibility and life safety.

Must also meet Standards for Accessibility and Life Safety.

5.8. Standards for Porches and Entrances

- 5.8.1. Identify, maintain, repair, and replace in-kind historic materials and features of porches, porticos, balconies, and projecting building wings and bays following the Standards for Foundations and Walls and Porches and Entrances.



- 5.8.2. Install hurricane connectors in inconspicuous places, not visible from public view, to firmly tie porches, porticos, balconies, and other projections to the structure of the main building. Connect individual elements—including ridges, rafters, joists, top and bottom plates, beams, posts, sill, and foundations—of the porch, portico, balcony or projection to each other to increase stability. When visible, paint connectors to match the adjacent materials in order to minimize their visual impact.
- 5.8.3. Firmly anchor columns and posts to the floor of the porch or portico. If necessary, install post bases into the bottom of wood posts or the base of wood columns to elevate them off of the finished floor to allow water to move beneath them and minimize deterioration of historic features.
- 5.8.4. Introduce new handrails or guardrails to extend the height of existing balustrades or railings only if necessary as a response to the increased height of stairs and porches.
 - A. Consider adding fill soil, when appropriate, to keep the height above grade to less than 30", eliminating the need for a new railing or guardrail.
 - B. Introduce new handrails or guardrails that are consistent with the design, material, and color of existing handrails or are of a simple design, material, and color and do not detract from the historic character of the building.

Roofs and Chimneys

5.9. Standards for Roofs and Chimneys

Roofs are among some are among some of the most distinguishing characteristics for different styles of architecture. A well-maintained roof is a historic building's first line of defense in shedding rainwater, but roofs are also susceptible to damage from high winds that can cause significant structural damage. Any decorative feature such as, chimneys, skylights, dormers, cupolas, cornices, gutters, and downspouts must be securely attached to withstand strong winds with intact flashing to minimize water penetration.

Roofs and chimneys should be routinely inspected to ensure roofing materials are in good shape, nails and fasteners are secure, caulking and flashing have not deteriorated. Although some materials are more durable than others, such as standing seam metal roofs, severe weather events can take a toll on these roof



types. It is important to secure any loose units or replace any missing sections with in-kind materials. In addition to, keeping them painted if appropriate to prevent them from rusting. Elastomeric coatings can increase the resiliency of a standing seam metal roof by protecting them from deterioration due to corrosion.

At times, there are concerns about the capability about a building's roof to withstand hurricane strengthen winds. In these cases, a structural engineer can assist with identifying the structural integrity of a historic building's roof. Any additional bracing or tie-down hurricane fasteners should be located in inconspicuous locations or attics.

In addition to roofs, masonry chimneys are other distinctive features of many historic buildings and are at high risk of damage or collapse when exposed to severe wind. Moisture from heavy rains overtime can cause the masonry units of the chimney to deteriorate due to loss of mortar and spalling of brick. Metal chimney caps prevent moisture entry through the flue and should be tightly secured and anchored down using stainless steel cables and weights to resist high winds.

When a historic building is elevated, chimneys must also be elevated proportionally to retain their relationship to the building's exterior. The new foundation should be consistent with the shape and dimensions of the historic chimney and match the original masonry work in materials and appearance. If the chimney is not structurally stable to repair or elevate, it should be replaced with a new chimney that matches the size, configuration, materials, and appearance of the original chimney.

- 5.9.1. Identify, maintain, repair, and replace in-kind historic materials and features of roofs and chimneys.
- 5.9.2. When installing new standing-seam metal roofing, consider doubling the number of cleats/fasteners on the lower few feet of the roof (along the fascia) and utilizing screws instead of nails along the eave line and rake (gable end).
- 5.9.3. For elevated buildings, evaluate existing chimneys to ensure that they have the structural capacity to be elevated along with the house.
 - A. If so, ensure that the new masonry base supporting the chimney matches the original chimney base in size and design; masonry size, shape, color, and texture; and mortar color, width, texture, and tooling profile; and bond pattern.

Must also meet standards for roofs and masonry.



- B. If not, construct new chimneys that match the original in size and design; masonry size, shape, color, and texture; and mortar color, width, texture, and tooling profile; and bond pattern.

5.9.4. It is not appropriate to install metal flashing on chimneys or parapets on primary or secondary elevations of if it would compromise the design or materials of the historic building or the character of the district.

Windows, Doors, and Shutters

5.10. Standards for Windows, Doors, and Shutters

Windows and doors are two of the most distinctive character-defining features of historic buildings. While traditionally designed and constructed to be resilient against water and preventing air infiltration, they are vulnerable to damage from high-wind and flooding. Keeping windows and doors well maintained, weather-stripped, and caulked contributes to building efficiency and resiliency by ensuring weathertight seals prevent water and air infiltration around window and door openings.

Operable louvered or paneled shutters are an effective way to provide protection for historic windows against high-winds. Many historic homes in Southport have operable shutters. Shutters should fill the window opening, with each leaf covering the full height and width of the window. Traditionally, shutters are constructed of wood, but in some situations, the use of period-appropriate operable shutters constructed of a proven damage-resistant substitute material (such as synthetic wood) that meets design standards for substitute materials and matches the configuration and texture of traditional wood shutters may be an appropriate substitution. In addition to operable shutters, the installation of impact-resistant acrylic panels on the reverse face of the shutters adds additional protection that is only visible when the shutters are closed.

Storm windows and doors add a layer of protection while increasing energy efficiency. Storm windows can also be paired with operable shutters to provide a double defense for historic windows. Narrow-profile storm windows should be compatible in color with the window sash or exterior trim to minimize their appearance. Storm window dividers should align with the meeting rail of existing double-hung window sashes.



Commercial buildings in Southport, typically have large storefront windows. Existing or replacement windows may use a wind-resistant film that does not alter the appearance of glass but offers protection against storms. When replacing damaged glazing, impact-resistant laminated glass is a good option that offers significant protection from severe storms and airborne or waterborne debris that could shatter glass.

In addition to permanent solutions, temporary panels and hurricane shields offer protection for historic windows and doors. When installing and removing temporary solutions, it is important to minimize damage to historic materials and surfaces.

- 5.10.1. Identify, maintain, repair, and replace in-kind historic materials and features of historic doors, windows, shutters, and their associated hardware.
- 5.10.2. Maintain all windows, doors, shutters, and associated hardware in good working condition to allow access to all openings so that they may be secured and/or protected with a covering. Verify locks, fasteners, and tiebacks are well anchored into the wall or frame. Install interior, long-throw, slide bolts at the top and bottom of each double-leaf door.
- 5.10.3. Consider the installation of operable wood shutters to protect historic windows from high winds and airborne debris.
 - A. Install shutters only if they are compatible with the architectural style of the house and scale of the windows.
 - B. Consider replacing existing, non-historic, fixed shutters with operable shutters that are appropriately sized to the window or door opening.
 - C. Consider installing acrylic to the reverse side of operable shutters to provide additional protection.
 - D. It may be appropriate to consider a proven damage-resistant substitute material that matches the original in size, shape, design, profile, scale, color, and texture and meets the Standards for Substitute Materials.
- 5.10.4. Consider introducing narrow-profile exterior storm windows that do not obscure or damage a historic building's existing sashes and frames to protect existing windows from water and wind infiltration.
 - A. Select storm windows with a painted or factory-finish compatible with the existing sash or exterior trim color.

See Standards for Exterior Wood Siding, Trim, Ornament, and Windows, Doors, and Shutters.

Must meet Standards for Substitute Materials.



- B. Align operable storm window dividers for double-hung windows with the meeting rail of existing sashes.

5.10.5. Consider installing clips, fasteners, or brass “cups” to existing storefronts and window trim to allow pre-cut plywood panels, fabric storm panels, or other hurricane protection to be installed quickly in the event of a storm and without repeated nailing and screwing into historic wooden surfaces and features.

- A. Panels should fit within the opening (as opposed to on the face of the adjacent wall surface) if at all possible and attach to existing trim, such as blind stops at the window.
- B. Clips and fasteners of stainless steel or other rust- or corrosion-resistant metal should be preinstalled and painted to match the trim.
- C. To minimize damage to historic woodwork, utilize reusable, countersunk brass bolts with receiving cups that can be sealed with rubber caps when panels are not installed.
- D. The number of clips, fasteners, and cups should be as few as possible to meet the manufacturer's recommendations and, when possible, should be installed in locations that are minimally visible.
- E. Fasteners should be set in a sealant to minimize water intrusion and potential deterioration of historic material.
- F. If it is necessary to attach fasteners to a masonry surface, they must be installed within mortar joints to prevent damage to the masonry units.
- G. Install fabric, plywood, or acrylic panels only in the event of an approaching storm and remove within fourteen days of the threat passing.

5.10.6. For new windows or replacement glazing, consider installing laminated impact-resistant glass or applying wind resistant films, which do not alter the appearance of windows.

5.10.7. Permanently installed track systems, panels, roll-up or accordion shutters are not appropriate on residential buildings.

See Standards for Windows, Doors, and Shutters



Utilities and Systems

Utilities and mechanical systems are typically installed at the first floor of a building, at grade on a building's exterior, or in crawl spaces—all locations make them especially vulnerable to damage from flood waters. Due to its coastal location, Southport is prone to high winds, tidal flooding, and flooding from minor and major storm events. Flooding can cause significant damage to mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems. Southport's Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance helps protect buildings in special flood hazard areas but most historic buildings and structures were built before this regulation was in place and are not located in a regulatory floodplain. Fully operating systems are essential after a storm event. Properly operating systems circulate air and remove moisture from the air, which is essential especially after flooding occurs because mold can form within twenty-four hours.

A building's exterior mechanical systems can often be elevated using platforms or raised bases above the flood risk level with minimum visual impact if they are located on a secondary or rear elevation. Because these units will remain subject to severe weather, it is important to ensure they are adequately supported and secured against high-velocity winds and their connections are waterproofed. For instances when mechanical systems can be moved indoors, they should be located where they are least susceptible to flooding. The relocation of mechanical systems to the indoors may result in an exterior alteration. Any such alteration should be located to the rear elevation when possible or a side elevation that is not visible from the street.

5.11. Standards for Utility and System

- 5.11.1. Relocate utility equipment and components—including, but not limited to compressors, air handlers, ductwork, generators, elevator equipment, electrical outlets and panels, water heaters, and communication service—above the Regulatory Flood Protection Elevation.
- 5.11.2. Locate utility equipment and components, especially elevated utilities, on secondary or rear elevations and screen elevated building systems with vegetation, fencing, low walls, or wood lattice to reduce their visibility.
- 5.11.3. Ensure that relocated utilities, as well as oil and natural gas tanks, are securely anchored to meet wind- and floodwater-resistant requirements, retain the necessary space and ventilation, and are accessible for service and inspection.

Alterations to the site must also meet the Standards for Site Features and Plantings.



- 5.11.4. After elevating a building, or elevating or relocating utilities, remove any abandoned equipment or hazardous materials from the site, building, or former crawlspaces and dispose of appropriately.
- 5.11.5. Consider installing back-up generators above the Regulatory Flood Protection Elevation.
- 5.11.6. Consider installing a backflow valve to prevent sewer and drain back-ups.
- 5.11.7. Consider installing a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) to protect the electrical system and reduce the potential for fire.

Commercial Buildings

5.12. Standards for Commercial Buildings

- 5.12.1. Install flood barriers, walls, or panels on secondary or rear building elevations only if the loss or alteration of historic building materials can be minimized.
- 5.12.2. Install temporary flood panels on primary elevations only if their installation does not result in a loss of historic building material and if the fasteners can be largely inconspicuous when the panels are not installed.
 - A. Avoid installing fasteners to hollow metal or early rolled storefronts, but instead install them to the inside jamb of the opening.
 - B. Fasteners of stainless steel or other rust- or corrosion-resistant metal should be installed through the mortar joints of any masonry surfaces, rather than through the brick.
- 5.12.3. Consider installing clips, fasteners, or brass “cups” to existing storefronts and window trim to allow pre-cut plywood panels, fabric storm panels, or other hurricane protection to be installed quickly in the event of a storm and without repeated nailing and screwing into historic wooden surfaces and features.
 - A. Panels should fit within the opening (as opposed to on the face of the adjacent wall surface) if at all possible and attached to existing trim, such as blind stops at the window.
 - B. Clips and fasteners of stainless steel or other rust- or corrosion-resistant metal should be preinstalled and painted to match the trim.



- C. To minimize damage to historic woodwork, utilize reusable, countersunk brass bolts with receiving cups that can be sealed with rubber caps when panels are not installed.
- D. The number of clips, fasteners, and cups should be as few as possible to meet the manufacturer's recommendations and, when possible, should be installed in locations that are minimally visible.
- E. Fasteners should be set in a sealant to minimize water intrusion and potential deterioration of historic material.
- F. If it is necessary to attach fasteners to a masonry surface, they must be installed within mortar joints to prevent damage to the masonry units.

- 5.12.4. Where bulkheads (the wall beneath display windows) have already been altered with replacement materials or finishes, consider installing waterproof finishes or materials to further "harden" the bulkheads to withstand flooding. Replacement finishes or materials should replicate historic finishes and materials in scale, pattern, and texture.
- 5.12.5. Consider the installation of water-resistant interior and exterior materials and finishes only if historic materials have already been lost, and if the replacement materials replicate historic materials and finishes in scale, pattern, and texture.
- 5.12.6. Permanently installed track systems, panels, roll-up or accordion shutters may be considered on commercial buildings only if the tracks can be fully concealed.



City of Southport Historic Preservation Commission

Southport Local Historic District Design Standards 2026

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