



CITY OF SOUTHPORT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Special Meeting Agenda

May 23, 2023

1:00 PM

Agenda

Please turn off all cell phones

Meetings are open to the public. Face masks and social distancing may be used at the discretion of each individual. Changes to this policy may occur, as needed to help prevent the spread of the Coronavirus.

The regular monthly meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission 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. May 3, 2023
- F. Public Comment**
- G. Old Business**
 - 1. Design Guideline Discussion and Drafting
- H. New Business**
- I. Other Business**
- J. Announcements**
- K. Member's Information**
 - 1. Member's Roster
 - 2. Attendance Record
- L. Adjourn**



**Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Indian Trail Meeting Hall
May 3, 2023
4:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Charles Drew, Rick Pukenas, Joanne Wesson, Tal West
Josh Cline McGee, Alexis-Gore Graves, and Bonnie Bray.

Members Absent: Jim McKee and Bonner Herring

Staff Present: Travis Henley, Director of Development Services
Maureen Meehan, City Planner
Tanya Shannon, Deputy Clerk

Board of Aldermen Robert Carroll
Liaison:

- A. Chairman Charles Drew called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
- B. The Invocation was given by Ms. Graves.
- C. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Drew.
- D. In the absence of Mr. Herring and Mr. McKee, a Motion was made to vote Ms. Bray and Mr. West in as voting members by Mr. Pukenas and seconded by Mr. McGee. ***Unanimous vote; Motion carried.***
- E. Mr. Pukenas Motioned to approve the Agenda, and was seconded by Mr. McGee. ***Unanimous vote; Motion carried.***
- F. A Motion was made to approve the April 5, 2023, Minutes by Mr. Pukenas and was seconded by Mr. McGee. ***Unanimous vote; Motion carried.***

G. Public Comment: None

H. Old Business:

1. **Inventory Discussion**

There was much discussion on the inventory taken at the location that each member was assigned to. Each Member discussed the condition of the structures and if there were any moderate changes or updates. It was the consensus of the Board that the majority of the homes were in good condition.

However, some structures have deteriorated over time and will most likely be unsalvageable. Ms. Bray said that around 85% of the houses in her inventory were in good condition. She said she was very impressed with the upkeep of the older homes and the pride people take in maintaining the property. Ms. Graves's noted that there is a cottage-style house at 314 Rhett Street, and the roof is caving in, but she believes it could be salvageable if the family heirs would contribute. Otherwise, she felt that the houses were in good condition. Mr. West said that he found a property in his inventory that was strange and that it had a tool shed on the front of the lot. He also stated that a few houses in his inventory appeared to be under construction or unlivable. For example, 320 College Street is in significant decline. Chair Drew said that this house has several heirs to the property, and getting the heirs to come to an agreement on how to proceed with the house becomes difficult.

Mr. McGee noted that the majority of the houses seemed to be in good condition. He said there were a variety of styles, such as the Victorian or Cottage look. Mr. McGee mentioned the old Church at 230 N. Caswell and W. West that has been renovated into a residential home. He hopes the owners will keep the structure close to its original construction. Chair Drew said that the bell on the church would be removed and that it is essential to establish guidelines as soon as possible to prevent the loss of other historical values. Ms. Bray asked how such things as this could be prevented. Director Henley explained that the State would have to become involved and that he is still determining if there is anything that can be done to defer this situation; he said he would look into it. He said that the Board would not have the discretion for a change of use to prevent a church from becoming a residence. Chair Drew asked if Churches are allowed in any District. Mr. Henley said that he believed so.

Mr. Pukenas stated that 85% of the houses in his inventory are structurally sound. There are specific differences in the styles, but they fit in with the general character. He was surprised at the number of additions that were made to the homes, but they blended into the structure and transitioned smoothly.

Ms. Wesson said that 90% of the houses in her inventory are in good condition. She said there was a house that was on Rhett across from the Cemetery that was about 15-20 years old that would not qualify for the historical distinction.

Alderman Carroll said that within his two blocks of inventory, one of the blocks was primarily commercial and very similar to what they were when first constructed. He said that on the other block 5 of 13 structures were no more than 15 years old. He said that there are a variety of Victorian, Bungalow, and Cottage style homes that make Southport unique. Overall, he said that the structures are in good condition and fit in well with the character of Southport.

City Planner Meehan observed 50% commercial and 50% residential structures in the Staff's inventory. She said that the majority appears to be the same as at least from the 80s, and even with some upgrades, all seem to be contributing. The inventory included some of Howe St, Moore St., and Davis Street.

Director Henley said it is important to note that he is not about the specifications of the structures but how they conform together. He said he hears the term "The Southport Look," but that is characterized by the uniqueness of the City and the ability to blend. The initial setup of the design guidelines is the most essential part of the process.

Ms. Bray commented that the space between the houses is another unique part of Southport. She said the uniformity of the properties is aligned uniquely with the trees and landscape. And it all brings in the City's Historical nature. Ms. Bray said that her inventory included parts of Moore St, Caswell Ave., W. West St., and the Yacht Basin. Alderman Carroll noted that the areas that he was designated to take inventory of were different. He said that some of the lots were close together, and others were spaced apart. He explained that there were some original 33' lots, and then there were flag lots with another house basically in the front yard that was moved and put there. But also, on N. Atlantic Avenue, some homes are very close.

Director Henley explained how Wilmington addresses its Historic District with a different residential zoning than the rest of the City. It has its own unique zoning district that only applies in the downtown corridor. Ms. Bray asked if that happened initially or if it evolved over time. Mr. Henley said that this has been growing over time and recommended that Southport consider this as well. Mr. Henley noted that all the residential areas in downtown Southport are zoned R-10, and there is nothing about R-10 about any of that. He says that is why the UDO is written to provide carve-outs and exceptions for non-conforming R-10 lots. He said creating a Zoning District would help redesign the district and make the lots conforming. "Let the built-in environment dictate the zoning versus letting the zoning dictate the built-in environment". Mr. Henley said that first would have to come the design standards, and from those design standards will come potentially looking at different setbacks. He noted the Commission could make that recommendation and then bring a proposed text amendment to the Planning Board and Board of Aldermen for approval.

Mr. McGee agreed with reforming the setbacks and bringing everything closer to the sidewalk for uniformity. He noted another thing to consider is, for example, the new house at the corner of Caswell and Nash St is very large and tall. He said that back in the day, the houses were not that tall and did not tower over the neighbors. He recommended including language in the design standards that would prevent the establishment of larger and taller homes from overshadowing the adjacent property. Ms. Meehan confirmed that in the modification of the Historic District and creation of the design standards and guidelines, the setback requirements could be changed for future development or modifications.

I. New Business:

1. Discussion of Guidelines

Director Henley said this was discussed at the last meeting, along with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation Presentation by Jeff Adolphsen, Senior Restoration Specialist, NC State Historic Preservation Office. Director Henley went over the ten basic principles created to help preserve the distinctive character of a historic building and its site while allowing for reasonable change to meet user needs.

The Standards apply to historic buildings of all periods, styles, types, materials, and sizes. They apply to both the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. The Standards also encompass related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall 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 architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historical integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment will be unimpaired.

In looking for feedback from the Commission, Director Henley recommended reviewing other cities/towns comparable to Southport and starting with implementing some of those standards. He explained that taking into account the inventory of each section and the Historic District as a whole, the Commission will need to have many discussions on how to effectively proceed with applying those standards. He said an alternative would be to budget for a consultant to do a long study and review that may not work for Southport.

There was discussion on similar areas that have a Historical Commission. Chair Drew said that he would like to review Beaufort and New Bern to see what their standards are. Mr. McGee suggested looking at other Coastal Historical areas that are similar to Southport or possibly Edenton.

Kristi Brantley from the State Historic Preservation Office had previously recommended reviewing Asheville's standards because it is simple and easy to follow. She said that it should not be complicated

and difficult for people to understand and apply for. Director Henley said that the goal is to encourage people to comply rather than to enforce.

Alderman Carroll asked what is the timeline before being presented to the Board of Aldermen. He said he is concerned about the rapid changes and the need to establish standards and guidelines before valuable history is lost. Director Henley said that it would take several special meetings and hours to go through the language and establish a process that works for Southport. He said it is possible to have it come before the Aldermen by the end of the Summer. Chair Drew suggested possibly having 2 meetings a month to speed up the process. Mr. McGee asked if the initiation of updating the Historic District could be done now. Mr. Henley said that it could. Ms. Bray said that she did not think designating new districts now would be a good idea. She said many people fear that they are going to be told what color to paint their house, etc. She recommended having the standards in place before changing the zoning.

The Commission discussed options to engage the Public more. It was suggested to have Public Hearings to inform the Public of what the Historic Preservation Commission is about and what the plans are for protection and preservation. Alderman Carroll suggested a live broadcast Symposium that people can attend or watch online. Ms. Graves noted that the Meetings are always open to the Public. She said that a lot of times, people have no interest until there is something contentious. She recommends perhaps advertising the meetings more. Mr. Pukenas asked if the Commission could get on the Board of Aldermen's Agenda for the next meeting. Chair Drew said that Commission Liaison Alderman Carroll always provides updates to everyone at the Meetings. Alderman Carroll said that he has always received positive feedback from the Board and the Public.

Chair Drew asked what is the next step after the design standards are completed. Director Henley said it would be reviewed by the Planning Board, and they will have the discretion to have a Public Hearing, and then move to the Board of Aldermen. He also said that it is possible to have an open joint meeting with the Aldermen and the Planning Board for everything to be presented to both Boards at one time. Mr. Henley said that he would be working on revising the downtown R-10 district into a Historic District.

Mr. West said that at some point, signage will need to be posted around the Historical Districts so that people can identify the areas.

City Planner Meehan will send out links to Design Standards from other Municipalities that were requested and similar to the characteristics of Southport.

J. Other Business:

Chair Drew asked if it was the consensus of the Board to schedule another meeting before the end of the month. The Board agreed that another meeting would be necessary. It was confirmed that on May 23rd, there will be a Special Meeting beginning at 1 pm. The regular meeting will be on June 7th.

K. Announcements:

Director Henley announced that there are some proposed Legislative Land Use Bills that are trying to regulate certain Planning and Zoning Requirements in NC. This could have major implications for the City. He said he would keep everyone updated and call or email him with any questions.

There was no further business. A Motion was made to return Ms. Bary and Mr. West back to their alternate positions by Mr. Pukenas and seconded by Ms. Wesson. ***Unanimous vote; Motion carried.***

A Motion was made by Mr. Pukenas to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Mr. McGee. ***Unanimous vote; Motion carried.***

Adjournment: 5:28 p.m.

Tanya Shannon, Deputy Clerk

Charles Drew, Chairman

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION SPRING 2023

MEMBER	Address	Phone Number	Appointment	Expiration
Charles Drew, Chair cdrew@cityofsouthport.com	112 Park Ave	(910) 477-2365	Oct 2022	2024
Rick Pukenas, Vice-Chair rick.pukenas@southportnc.org	119 N. Lord St	(910) 750-1951	Oct 2022	2024
Bonnie Bray, Alternate bonnie.bray@southportnc.org	515 Quarter Master Dr	(301) 741-6698	Oct 2022	2025
Josh Cline McGee joshcline.mcgee@southportnc.org	195 Gentle Breeze Ct	(704) 614-2956	Oct 2022	2025
Alexis Gore Graves alexis.goregraves@southportnc.org	510 N. Lord St	(256) 653-1854	Oct 2022	2024
Bonner Herring bonner.herring@southportnc.org	112 W. Bay St	(772) 263-1417	Oct 2022	2023
Jim McKee Jim.mckee@southportnc.org	114 S. Davis St	(910) 470-0529	Oct 2022	2025
Joanne Wesson joanne.wesson@southportnc.org	107 River Watch Ln	(910) 264-4009	Oct 2022	2023
Lewis "Tal" West, Alternate tal.west@southportnc.org	6159 River Sound Cir	(704) 575-6048	Oct 2022	2025
Travis Henley thenley@cityofsouthport.com	1029 N. Howe St. Southport, NC 28461	(910) 457-7900 Ext 1008	Staff Development Services Director	
Maureen Meehan (Mo) mmeehan@cityofsouthport.com	1029 N. Howe St. Southport, NC 28461	(910) 457-7900 Ext 1043	Staff City Planner	
Tanya Shannon tshannon@cityofsouthport.com	1029 N. Howe St. Southport, NC 28461	(910) 457-7929	Staff Deputy City Clerk	
Dorothy Dutton (Dorrie) ddutton@cityofsouthport.com	1029 N. Howe St. Southport, NC 28461	(910) 457-7900 Ext 1010	Staff Assistant City Manager/City Clerk	
Kiley Barefoot kbarefoot@cityofsouthport.com	1029 N. Howe St. Southport, NC 28461	457-7925 (910) 368-5710C	Staff Building Inspector	
Robert Carroll rcarroll@cityofsouthport.com	307 E. Nash St	(910) 465-2717	Board of Aldermen Liaison	

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION 2022-2023 ATTENDANCE RECORD

MEETING DATE	Dec. 2022	Jan. 4th	Jan. 23rd	Feb. 1st	Mar.	Apr.	May	May 23 Special	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
<u>NAME</u>																Total Absences
Charles Drew Chair	P	P	P	A	P	P	P									1
Rick Pukenas Vice-Chair	P	A	P	A	P	P	P									2
Alexis Gore Graves	A	P	P	P	P	A	P									2
Jim McKee	P	P	P	P	P	P	A									1
Josh Cline McGee	P	P	P	P	P	P	P									
Bonner Herring	P	P	P	A	P	P	A									2
Joanne Wesson	A	P	P	P	P	P	P									1
Bonnie Bray	P	P	P	P	P	P	P									
Lewis 'Tal' West	P	P	P	P	P	A	P									1

P = Present

A= Absent

December 7, 2022

P = Present
A= Absent

December 7, 2022