



**Historic Preservation Commission Special Meeting Minutes**  
**Indian Trail Meeting Hall**  
**July 19, 2023**  
**1:00 P.M.**

**Members Present:** Rick Pukenas, Josh Cline McGee, Alexis Gore-Graves, Bonnie Bray, Jim McKee, and Joanne Wesson

**Members Absent:** Charles Drew, Bonner Herring, and Tal West

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

**Board of Aldermen** Robert Carroll  
**Liaison:**

- A. Vice-Chairman Rick Pukenas called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.
- B. The Invocation was given by Ms. Alexis Gore-Graves
- C. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice-Chairman Pukenas.
- D. Mr. Jim McKee Motioned to approve the Agenda and was seconded by Mr. McGee.  
***Unanimous vote; Motion carried.***
- E. A Motion was made to approve the July 5, 2023, Meeting Minutes by Mr. McKee and was seconded by Ms. Graves. ***Unanimous vote; Motion carried.***

**F. Public Comment:**

- 1. Mr. Tom Steadman, 5981 Dutchman Creek Rd. is concerned about the tree and landscape plan for the proposed guidelines for the Historic District. He explained that there may be contention with disallowing palms to be planted in the district. He feels like the palms, such as the sabal palm, can be considered native species to the area. In his opinion, the tree and landscape plan should follow the same guidelines that are in accordance with the UDO. Mr. McKee thanked him for his comments and agreed that some palms are native to the area. He said that his comments would be taken seriously and that the discussion on these standards and guidelines is not set in stone.
- 2. Mr. Gerald Donaldson, Ph.D. 5990 Dutchman Creek Rd submitted a comment that was read by the Deputy Clerk. He, too, is concerned about eliminating sabal palms from the Historic District. He stated that this area already has numerous non-native trees, shrubs, crape myrtles, Asian azaleas, etc. He said sabal palms are native to the area and should not be eradicated.

In the absence of several member members, a Motion was made by Ms. Wesson to bring Ms. Bray into a voting position and seconded by Mr. McKee. *The unanimous vote, Motion carried.*

## **G. Old Business: Review of Design Guidelines**

Mr. Scott Len, Chairman of the Forestry Committee, spoke on the proposed guidelines for trees in the Historic District. He recommended not reinventing the wheel and aligning things with the tree standards already imposed in the UDO. He feels these species would be appropriate, and changing just in one district would be difficult. The UDO outlines approved overstory and understory trees.

### Demolition

Director Henley reviewed the guidelines in Chapter 10 on the demolition of a historic building. The guidelines state that demolition erodes the architectural integrity of the historic district versus moving that building to another location. Property owners contemplating the destruction of a building are encouraged to explore alternatives that allow the property to remain intact and meet current needs. Ms. Bray asked how common is it to see demolitions in the historic district. Mr. Henley said that he has yet to learn of any since he has been Director. He said that he does get a lot of questions about renovations of old homes. Mr. McKee said that he would rather see the home relocated instead of demolished. He asked what would constitute demolishing. Would it be the total destruction of the building, removing part of the structure, or stripping everything down to just the floors? He said there would need to be clarification on what is considered demolished. Mr. McGee said that if someone is determined to demolish the structure, there should be an incentive and offer options to preserve as much as possible and protect the structure's core. Mr. McGee recommended providing a referral list to people that request demolitions. This list would give people contact information on experienced services in the reconstruction of historical buildings or the relocation of buildings. Mr. McGee said there is a restoration branch for technical assistance for building owners who may request free advice and consultation from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Director Henley said this points to the order of the delay of demolitions and denial of demolitions in chapter 10.

### Delay of Demolition

The North Carolina General Statutes gives Historic Preservation Commissions the authority to delay the demolition of a building, structure, or site in a locally designated historic district for a period not to exceed 365 days (one year) from the date of approval. This delay may also be imposed in situations where a commission has voted to recommend the designation of a property as a landmark or historic district, but no final action on designation has been sanctioned by the local governing body. In either case, the purpose of the delay is to give the commission an opportunity to work with the property owner and other interested parties to identify alternatives to demolition. The Beaufort Historic Preservation Commission may waive all or part of the delay period if it finds that the structure has little historic or architectural value. The delay period may also be reduced under circumstances in which the owner would suffer extreme hardship or be permanently deprived of all beneficial use or return from the property due to the delay or if the property has been severely damaged by fire, flood, or weather.

### Denial of Demolition

The HPC may permanently deny authorization for the demolition of a building, structure, or site in the locally designated Beaufort Historic District if it is determined by the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) that the property has statewide significance as defined by the criteria of

the National Register of Historic Places. Denial of demolition of buildings with statewide significance may be waived if:

- The HPC finds that the owner would suffer extreme hardship or be permanently deprived of all beneficial use of or return from the property by reason of the denial; or
- The town has adopted a demolition ordinance for the property under the Minimum Housing Code.

#### Demolition Guidelines

Director Henley went over the six guidelines.

Guideline 10.1.4 *Minimize ground-disturbing activities during demolition to avoid damage to potential unknown archaeological resources.* Mr. McGee recommended adding neighboring historic properties to the guidelines as well.

Mr. McKee said that guideline 10.1.4 may be in conflict with 10.1.6 and to add language that coincides with each other.

10.1.6. *Clean the site thoroughly of all building debris and leave the lot properly graded and seeded.*

There was a discussion on grading and seeding the site. Ensure that grading protects the critical root zones for trees that are being kept, and also, if trees and plants are being replanted, they do not need to be seeded. The language must be drafted that includes protection from flooding and erosion.

Mr. Henley said that now that the review of the standards and guidelines has been completed, staff will work on the draft and bring it back to the Commission for discussion. He said this would be a rough draft and probably only part. He understands that it is important to confirm the process as soon as possible. After the draft is completed and the Commission has agreed on its approval, it will be presented to the Board of Aldermen for final approval.

I. **New Business:** None

J. **Other Business:** None

K. **Announcements:**

Vice-Chairman reminded everyone that the next meeting will be on August 2nd at 4:00 PM.

Ms. Gore-Graves made a Motion to return Ms. Bray back to an alternate position and seconded by Mr. McKee. Unanimous Vote; Motion Carried.

There was no further business. Mr. McGee made a Motion to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Mr. McKee. ***Unanimous Vote; Motion carried.***

**Adjournment: 2:10 p.m.**

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Vice-Chairman, Rick Pukenas

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Deputy Clerk, Tanya Shannon