



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

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

Members Absent: Jim McKee

Staff Present: Maureen Meehan, City Planner
Tanya Shannon, Deputy Clerk

Alderman Liaison: Alderman Carroll

- A. Chairman Charles Drew called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.
- B. The Invocation was given by Ms. Alexis-Gore Graves
- C. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Drew.

Alternate Member Ms. Bray was appointed as a voting member in the absence of Mr. McKee.

- D. Mr. Pukenas made a Motion to approve the Agenda with the amendment to put New Business: New Sign Plan (Randy Jones) before Old Business: Public Input Meeting-Format Planning, seconded by Mr. Herring. ***Unanimous vote; Motion carried.***
- E. Mr. Herring Motioned to approve the September 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes, seconded by Mr. Pukenas. ***Unanimous vote; Motion carried.***
- F. **Public Comment:** Adam Stedman of 5868 Dutchman Creek suggested revising Section 8.1.4. He felt that while the spirit of the standards was good, the messaging may be discouraging. As such, he drafted a proposal for consideration. The proposal read as follows:

8.1.4 as currently drafted:

Palms, banana trees, and other tropical-type landscape materials should not dominate the landscape palette. Sabal palms may be used as a minor landscape element. Likewise, any use of other tropical-style plant materials that can be viewed from the public property should be limited to a minor complementary presence. Traditional plant materials, including live oak trees, deciduous shade and understory trees (serviceberry or dogwood), and broadleaf evergreen and deciduous shrubs, should dominate the landscape.

Proposed 8.1.4:

Planting of non-native trees not historically associated with Southport, such as banana trees, is discouraged. Any use of non-native plant materials not historically associated with Southport that can be viewed from public property should be limited to a minor complementary presence. Replanting of any native tree damaged by storm activity or other natural factors is encouraged. As property size permits, planting of a variety of native trees and shrubs is encouraged. As property size permits, planting of native understory trees should be undertaken in concert with planting of native overstory trees, such as live oak trees.

Mr. McGee asked Mr. Steadman if he would like to include sabal palms and other native plants. Mr. Steadman agreed and said adding them back would be a good idea. Ms. Bray suggested a reference to the Tree and Landscape Table in the UDO could also be included. Mr. Steadman said he would work on another draft to consider these suggestions.

A. New Business: New Sign Plan for City Buildings

Community Relations Director Randy Jones gave a presentation on developing a unified brand for the city buildings. He showed options for different types of designs for signs. The Aldermen can vote on the final design if it is ready at the November Meeting. Mr. Jones is also applying for a grant from Electricities to fund the project. Ms. Bray suggested that having the date centered would make the "City of Southport" more balanced on the illustrated sign. Mr. McGee asked how big the sign would be, and Mr. Jones replied that it would be approximately 10ft wide x 7ft long. Mr. McGee recommended that if a smaller sign had to be made, the fonts would have to be smaller. Signs of Distinction will handle the project. Planner Meehan suggested getting a second opinion. Chair Drew requested to work with Duke Energy to create a sign for each direction with a "Welcome to the City of Southport" message. Mr. Jones clarified that he was only presenting for city buildings. Alderman Carroll suggested focusing on the idea of the entry corridor. Mr. Jones replied that the ongoing road construction was preventing it. Alderman Carroll suggested working on the scale of the design. Mr. McGee liked the design of the Public Services city sign with the arc cut out. Mr. Jones said he could provide the Board of Aldermen with options.

B. Old Business: Public Input Meeting-Format Planning

The Public Input Forum Meeting is scheduled for October 16th at 6:00 p.m. Mr. McGee received a list of concerns from citizens regarding the HPC standards when he was at the Municipal Candidates Forum. Here are some of the concerns that were noted:

- The emphasis should be on historical character preservation, not historical restoration. Alternative building materials should be allowed if they reflect the character and style.
- Windows could be vinyl with core text grille patterns and SDL profiles. There are very few choices of manufacturers that make wood Windows today.
- Hardi siding should be allowed. Proper reveals should be required. 5" or, if known, the original reveal? Based on what's generally available, it is hard to find wood siding and trim made from quality lumber.
- Appropriate historical character to be added to architectural design should be allowed. A gable vent, for example.
- Eliminate paint guidelines.

- We want to encourage keeping historical homes versus knocking them down or moving them out.
- New architectural designs should be appropriate to blend into the historical fabric of existing homes.
- Metal roofs should be allowed.
- We are not a prime example of a historically preserved town. We have character we need to preserve and promote.

Chair Drew expressed his belief that the Board's approach has been fair and open to compromise.

Regarding the meeting's organization, the Board suggested having a map of the district and break tables. Ms. Bray offered to provide easels and open the floor for people to ask questions and discuss. The meeting will cover the following topics:

- A brief history of the project
- The goals of the project
- The standards to be followed
- Things they are not going to do
- The introduction of the members and their respective locations

Ms. Graves proposed going through the draft so that people who have not read it can see it and understand it. Ms. Bray suggested addressing the things that will not happen and having a question or suggestion box. Another suggestion was to have a large district map and copies of the design standards with a QR code.

Alderman Carroll raised a question about why the windows cannot be vinyl and suggested exploring other options. He emphasized the importance of explaining the materials' reasons and ensuring that the proportions are more accurate than the materials. He commented about the materials used in the construction. He suggested that with the new construction, it could be feasible to have a metal roof or other characteristics that fit within the character and design guidelines.

Mr. Pukenas said to remind everyone that it will be on a case-by-case basis. It was asked about how many structures were in the Historic District. Chair Drew said approximately 300 lots.

Mr. Pukenas wants to make it clear to the Public that the board is not a regulatory one. To help with this, Mr. McGee suggested presenting a summary with bullet points during the meeting. Ms. Bray suggested creating a mission statement with a vision. Mr. McGee is currently working on a design symbol representing the Historic Preservation Commission, and he would like input from the Board to ensure it captures the look and feel of Southport. Ms. Meehan asked if there should be a moderator for the Town Hall or if they would prefer to bring up the hot topics themselves. Chair Drew suggested having a presentation first, followed by an open Q&A session, and noting that most of the Board Members live in the historic district. Ms. Wesson suggested that the presentation be flexible and focused on preservation, not prevention.

Ms. Meehan reminded everyone that the meeting on November 16th at 6 p.m. would be held at the community building. They also planned to try to livestream the meeting on Monday the 16th at 6 p.m.

Mr. Steadman asked about the procedure for voting. Chair Drew said it would go to the Planning Board for review, and then a recommendation would be made to the Alderman, and they will request any amendments before a final vote. He said the Public will have a lot of opportunities to be involved with the process.

C. In other business, Chair Drew reminded everyone that appointments were expiring and that they needed to check for any appointment changes.

D. There were no announcements.

Ms. Bray was appointed back to an alternate position.

E. Mr. Pukenas made a Motion to Adjourn, seconded by Ms. Wesson. Unanimous Vote; Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:16 PM.

Chairman, Charles Drew

Deputy Clerk, Tanya Shannon