



**City of Southport
Historic Preservation Commission
Minutes December 6, 2023
Indian Trail Meeting Hall, 113 W. Moore St.**

Member's Present: Charles Drew, Alexis-Gore Graves (remote), Josh Cline McGee, Jim McKee, Bonnie Bray, Rick Pukenas, Tal West, Bonner Herring and Joanne Wesson.

Member's Absent: None

Staff Present: City Planner Mo Meehan and Deputy Clerk Tanya Shannon

Aldermen Liaison: Robert Carroll

Others: Mayor Pro Tem Mosteller

- A. Chairman Drew called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.
- B. Chairman Drew gave the Invocation.
- C. Chairman Drew led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- D. Motion to approve the Agenda by Mr. McGee and seconded by Ms. Wesson. **Unanimous Vote; Motion Carried.**
- E. Motion to approve the November 4, 2023, Minutes by Mr. Pukenas and seconded by Mr. Herring. **Unanimous Vote; Motion Carried.**
- F. **Public Comment:** None
- G. **Old Business**

1. Final Discussion and Review of Draft Standards

Chairman Drew reviewed the comments from the October 16th Public Forum Meeting and confirmed that no recommendations or comments were made that required modification to the draft. Ms. Bray commented on the proposal by Ms. Vargo to have a certain number of commissioners on the Board that live in the district, but Chairman Drew believed that the Aldermen would have to make the decision. Mr. Herring has heard comments from other people about more commissioners on the Board who live in the historic district. At the same time, Ms. Graves emphasized the need for a balanced representation of people living in the city and the district. Mr. McGee stated that in other municipalities, Historic Preservation Commission members have a Board that includes around 15% of the people who live in the district. Ms. Bray advocated for a Board of Commissioners representing the entire city instead of just those who resided in the historic district. This will ensure that all the commissioners work towards the betterment of the city and contribute to its overall preservation, especially since the historic district is likely to expand in the future. Mr. McKee expressed his happiness that the commission had come to fruition after 24 years.

Chairman Drew proposed a scenario where a lot in the historic district with a 900 ft cinder block house with no historical significance is brought to the commission for demolition. They would not be required to build in the same footprint, and Ms. Meehan said they would not and would have to meet the setback requirements in the current UDO. She said that if it is a non-conforming lot and the house cannot be built with the required setbacks, it must remain in the original footprint. Ms. Meehan said the setbacks have already been set with smaller lots, and she suggested considering revising the setbacks in the district for new construction or rebuilds

to meet consistency and match the adjacent structures. Chairman Drew also noted that Mr. Potter had brought up the designated areas of the Historic District, such as the Yacht Basin, at the Forum. Ms. Meehan replied that it was discussed to set aside the review on how this area will be designated and then design standards for those specific uses. She said it is unique due to the commercial properties with waterfront vistas and managing CAMA requirements. She noted that if the standards were applied differently to this location and used, they would need to be included as separate standards. It was recommended to keep them designated in the Historical District until a further review could be completed on specific standards for the Yacht Basin to keep the protection of being included in the Historic District for FEMA assistance.

Chairman Drew was approached by someone who asked him about the guidelines that prevent the city from being sued if a COA (Certificate of Approval) was denied. In response, Chairman Drew explained that no measures can stop people from taking legal action. He clarified that this is a quasi-judicial process, and the applicants are entitled to appeal the Commission's decision. Ms. Meehan added that the draft included policies, procedures, and statutes outlining the denials and appeals process. She stated that if the HPC denies an applicant a COA, they may appeal to the Board of Adjustment, and then if the request is still denied, it may be challenged in court.

Ms. Meehan confirmed that the draft standards on the website are current and up to date.

H. New Business: Mr. McGee suggested sketching historical homes with vistas for the HPC design of the logo/seal. The Commission agreed, thinking it would capture the city's historical beauty.

I. Other Business: Discussion on Forwarding Draft to the Planning Board for Review

Ms. Meehan informed the Commission that the State Historic Preservation Office is currently reviewing the draft standards. Depending on the feedback and recommendations for changes, the draft standards will be presented before the Planning Board in January. Chairman Drew asked the Commission how they would like to present to the Planning Board. The Commission agreed to have a joint meeting with the Planning Board for presentation and discussion. Ms. Meehan offered to contact Ms. Brinkley with the State to seek recommendations on how to present and potentially have her attend the meeting as well. Ms. Meehan will inform the Planning Board of the special joint meeting and proceed accordingly.

J. Announcements: Ms. Graves announced that there will be a Christmas Special at the Amuzu on December 20th at 6 p.m. and that tickets are available. Chairman Drew reminded everyone of the Historic Preservation Commission's regular meeting on January 3, 2024.

K. Member's Information in Packets

F. Adjourn

Since there were no further comments, Chairman Drew requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Pukenas made a Motion to adjourn, and Mr. McKee seconded. ***Unanimous Vote; Motion Carried—4:33 p.m.***

Chairman, Charles Drew

Deputy Clerk, Tanya Shannon