

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE  
KINGSPORT HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION**

November 12, 2024

1:30 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Jewell McKinney  
Dineen West  
Jack Edwards  
Bob Grygotis  
Lindsey Nieuwland

**Members Absent:**

Chip Millican  
Joe Cross

**Staff Present:**

Lori Pyatte  
Ken Weems

**Visitors Present:**

Jay Foster    Liza Brown  
David Oaks    Laura Machado  
Nancy Ledford    David Machado  
Judith Grover    Marvin Egan  
Derek Miller    Melanie Hutchins  
David Hutchins

Chairman Jewell McKinney called the meeting to order at 1:28 p.m. She welcomed everyone in attendance and provided an opportunity for all present to introduce themselves.

The Chairman then called for approval of the agenda. Vice-Chairman West made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, which was seconded by Commissioner Jack Edwards. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4-0.

Next, the Chairman called for approval of the minutes from the following meetings: the regular meeting on June 10, 2024; the called meeting on July 16, 2024; the called meeting on August 22, 2024; and the called meeting on October 22, 2024. Commissioner Jack Edwards made a motion to approve all four sets of minutes together, which was seconded by Commissioner Bob Grygotis. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4-0.

**New Business:**

**1236 Watauga Street- Demolition and Addition to Primary Structure (HISTR24-0228)**

Marvin Egan of Egan Construction represented the applicant for this project. Mr. Egan explained that they are proposing to demolish the existing garage and replace it with a new three-car garage. The design will integrate the new structure with the house, ensuring a seamless addition that blends naturally with the existing architecture. The garage will be attached in a way that eliminates the appearance of it being an afterthought, Egan Construction's approach. Their goal is to enhance the property without compromising its aesthetic or devaluing the surrounding homes, while respecting the historical character of the property.

Mr. Egan inquired if there were any questions, to which Chairman McKinney responded that there were none at this time and invited him to continue with the construction details. Mr. Egan explained that the new garage will be built in a style consistent with the existing structure, with careful attention to detail to match the home's architectural features. He emphasized that the design

aims to integrate seamlessly with the house, highlighting the dormers and maintaining the same historical character and age as the original home.

He further noted that the materials will be selected to complement the current home, including concrete elements and shakes that will match the dormers. The roof will feature a single construction design with shingles that blend with the existing roofing. The goal is for the new structure to appear as though it was always part of the home, rather than a modern addition, ensuring continuity in style and character. This approach reflects Egan Construction's commitment to preserving the home's integrity, even while adding a new building.

Chairman McKinney inquired whether the garage would be connected by a breezeway, to which Mr. Egan confirmed it would be. He also provided additional details, explaining that, as shown in the proposed plans, they intend to extend the back of the house to create a covered patio area for the family's children and for entertaining. The breezeway will connect the patio to the new garage, creating a cohesive flow between the spaces.

Vice-Chairman West asked for clarification, noting that Mr. Egan had previously mentioned matching the shingle colors and other materials. Mr. Egan reiterated that everything will be carefully matched to the existing home. He emphasized that Egan Construction takes great pride in selecting materials as closely as possible to the original, ensuring a consistent look. The new construction will feature the same type of aluminum-clad windows, identical glazing and true divided light, and every effort will be made to maintain the home's historic character, matching the existing elements to the best of their ability.

Ms. Grover asked for clarification, inquiring if the dormers would feature shakes. Mr. Egan responded that they will match the existing material on the dormers as closely as possible. However, he explained that he doesn't have the exact details or portfolio with him at the moment, so he's unable to confirm the specific material used on the current dormers. He assured her that they will ensure the new shakes are consistent with the existing design to the best of his ability.

Commissioner Grygotis pointed out that, based on the photos, the house appears to have 6-pane double-hung windows, while the garage features 4-pane double-hung windows. Mr. Egan clarified that the garage actually has 8-pane double-hung windows, not 4. He further explained that while the garage windows will be divided into more panes, the goal is to maintain the historical character of the era, whether the windows are 8 or 10 panes.

Ms. Grover noted that the existing dormers feature 6-over-6 windows, and the windows below also follow the 6-over-6 pattern, but the proposed addition, which is 10 feet wide, has 4-over-4 windows. She expressed concern that the difference in window pane styles could be noticeable and might clash with the rest of the house. Ms. Grover then asked Mr. Egan if he understood what she meant by "6-over-6" and "4-over-4."

Mr. Egan responded, "Yes, ma'am, I understand. As a general contractor, I'm familiar with that terminology." He went on to reiterate his earlier point, explaining that the goal is not to replicate the house exactly but to create a design that fits within the same historical context. He explained that sometimes they choose to add more panes to the windows or use larger panes to reflect the style of the era, but they avoid making the addition look like a mere copy of the original house. If the homeowner or the board prefers, they are open to adjusting the window design—whether it's changing to 8-over-8 windows or another style—while still staying true to the architectural period of the home. The aim is to ensure that the new structure feels cohesive with the original, without simply duplicating it.

Mr. Egan added that when working on historical homes, particularly with restorations or historical registrations, it's not necessary to match the accessory structures exactly to the main house. Instead, the windows and design elements are adjusted—either simplified or enhanced—to make the addition appear consistent with the same time period, without trying to replicate the primary structure exactly. This approach ensures the garage complements the home while remaining clearly distinguishable as an accessory building.

Ms. Grover asked why this approach was being taken. Mr. Egan explained that because the property is under historical registration, they are careful not to replicate the exact design of the original home. He then asked Ms. Grover if she had taken any architectural classes. Ms. Grover responded that she had taken many classes. Mr. Egan continued, asking if, in those classes, they discussed the concept that "it's from the same nest, but not the same egg." He explained that when working with historic properties, the goal is not to create an exact replica ("the same egg"), but rather to ensure the new structure belongs to the same architectural "family" or "nest," so it all works cohesively together.

Mr. Machado interjected, expressing a different view. He shared that in his experience working on three historic tax credit projects, the historical review committees require a high level of precision in maintaining the original design, including moldings, window sizes, and other details. He emphasized that it can be a challenging process.

Mr. Egan respectfully disagreed, explaining that he has worked with the State of Virginia on national historic register projects and the approach there is different. He clarified that in Virginia, the focus is on ensuring that new additions are in the same "nest"—meaning they match the era and style of the original—but they don't require an exact replica of the original design. He noted that unless the project involved a house registration, which would require more stringent adherence to the original design, an accessory structure like this one is treated with more flexibility. He also pointed out that this project is privately funded, so it doesn't involve state or historical tax credits, which would have different requirements.

Chairman McKinney requested that the audience hold their comments until the commission has finished its discussion. While comments are welcome, she asked for everyone's cooperation in waiting until the commission has completed its review.

Vice-Chairman West began by expressing appreciation for the detailed work put into the drawings, noting that they are very well done and effectively convey the design. She acknowledged concerns from the neighborhood and summarized what she believed Mr. Egan was saying: that he intends to make a concerted effort to match the materials and character of the existing home. Before delving too deeply into specifics like the number of panes, Vice-Chairman West asked for confirmation that Mr. Egan would be open to making adjustments, within reason, based on suggestions from the commission or others involved.

Mr. Egan replied that he is willing to make reasonable adjustments, provided they are approved by the homeowner, who is ultimately responsible for the project and the bill.

Vice-Chairman West remarked that, while she didn't want to speak for him, it seems clear that Mr. Foster is open to making some moderate changes if necessary. Mr. Foster responded, saying, "Yes, I think so. My wife, unfortunately, isn't here today—she's much smarter than I am—but when we lived in Raleigh, NC, we worked on a project with pavers. Her approach is that she wants things to be beautiful, and she wants everything to look like it's always been there. Honestly, the difference between 6 panes and 4 panes doesn't even concern me; it's not a big issue. What matters to us is that the design is aesthetically pleasing, that it looks good, and that it feels like it's always been a part of the home."

Mr. Foster added that he is eager to hear feedback from others and is more than willing to collaborate and make adjustments based on their comments.

Vice-Chairman West pointed out that the proposed garage faces the street with its doors also oriented toward the street, and that the new garage would be significantly larger than the existing one. She suggested exploring whether it might be possible to reposition the garage or perhaps reduce its size to a two-car garage instead of the proposed three-car design. Her goal was to gather feedback on possible solutions that might be more agreeable to everyone, or at least to a majority.

She also mentioned that, in addition to the historical review, the project will need to go through zoning approval due to its proximity to the property line. Vice-Chairman West clarified that while the commission's role is to focus on the historical aspects, zoning issues are outside their scope. Even if the historical aspects are approved today, the zoning requirements must still be addressed separately, and that hurdle remains a factor in the process.

Chairman McKinney announced that the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting has been rescheduled to December 5, 2024.

Vice-Chairman West then clarified, stating, "First, just to confirm, aside from a few minor details that can be addressed, am I correct in understanding that Mr. Foster is hoping for a three-car garage, if possible? I don't want to put words in his mouth, but that seems to be the intent."

Mr. Foster explained that his main concern is the orientation of the garage. He emphasized that changing the orientation wouldn't work for them, as they had three key goals for the project. First, they need a new garage because the existing one is not functional—it's difficult to park in and is in poor condition. Second, they wanted the garage to be positioned so that it backs up to the pool, allowing for an overhanging roofline to create an outdoor seating area. Third, they were hoping to incorporate a bathroom for the pool area.

Mr. Foster noted that altering the orientation would undermine the design's intent, particularly the connection to the pool, which was one of the primary reasons for the project. While he is open to discussion and willing to consider other options, he feels that maintaining the current orientation is a more important consideration than the size of the garage. In his view, the orientation is the most critical issue for them.

Vice-Chairman West anticipated Mr. Foster's concerns and presented a sketch she had prepared before the meeting. The sketch showed the garage turned 90 degrees, maintaining the same dimensions as the original design while preserving the patio at the back. She asked if he would be open to considering this alternative. Vice-Chairman West explained that this orientation would address one of the neighbors' concerns—having the garage doors face the street—by positioning the garage in a way that aligns

better with the character of the house. Whether the garage is a three-bay or two-bay design, there would still be nearly 30 feet of space, and the garage would be less prominent from the street.

Mr. Foster responded that he didn't mind the proposal, but two immediate concerns came to mind. First, he drives a Suburban SUV, which can be difficult to maneuver in a tighter space. Second, he wanted to hear feedback from Judith Grover, as she would be most directly impacted by any changes to the structure. He noted that, from her perspective, the garage would now be oriented almost the same as it is currently, so she would likely be the homeowner most affected by the change.

Vice-Chairman West clarified that the garage would remain in the same location, but Mr. Foster noted that it might need to be slightly wider to accommodate his Suburban, as the current space is too small. Vice-Chairman West acknowledged that she wasn't sure if that adjustment would work perfectly in terms of space.

Chairman McKinney then asked if Commissioner Edwards had any thoughts on the issue of the garage doors facing the street. Commissioner Edwards responded that he had no issue with the garage doors facing Watauga Street. He shared that he had lived in a house on Watauga for six years, where the garage faced the street just two houses down from the proposed site, and another home further down the street had a one-car garage facing the street as well. Commissioner Edwards added that, based on the design he had seen, if the project turns out as planned, he views it as a positive addition to both the house and the neighborhood.

Mr. Egan agreed with Commissioner Edwards, noting that this approach would enhance the overall aesthetic of the property. He emphasized that this design is part of the beauty of the project.

Commissioner Nieuwland shared that she has actually been inside the home and agrees with the goal of improving its functionality, particularly with the addition of a bathroom for the pool area. She mentioned that her own family had discussed similar improvements when considering the house for purchase. Commissioner Nieuwland expressed that while preserving the historical integrity of the home is important, it is also essential to make these homes appealing and functional for modern families for many years to come.

She then asked about the proposed garage doors, inquiring whether the design shown would be the final choice. Mr. Egan responded that the doors shown in the design are just a starting point. He explained that their primary concern is functionality—pointing out that when the house was originally built, there were no 22-foot Suburban to accommodate. The challenge, he said, is to integrate a modern family's needs into a historic home.

Mr. Egan continued, saying that, with input from their designer and drafting team, they have developed a design that maintains the home's historical character while updating it to meet modern living requirements. As for the carriage house doors, he noted that there are many different styles to choose from, so that would not be an issue. However, he emphasized that their intention is not to create a drastic departure from the original style. If the committee prefers a different approach, they are open to suggestions, but they are trying to stay true to the same architectural "nest" without replicating every detail exactly—what he referred to as staying "in the same nest, not the same egg."

Mr. Foster explained that while the garage size isn't a major concern for him, his wife does currently park in the garage, although she drives a Mini Cooper, which is on the opposite end of the size spectrum from his Suburban. He noted that it's already somewhat difficult to park the Mini in the far bay, so fitting a larger vehicle like a Suburban would likely be even more challenging. Mr. Foster reiterated that he wants to be open-minded and work with the neighbors, but he's not sure if a Suburban could be comfortably maneuvered in the space as currently planned.

Commissioner Grygotis asked if the garage doors were 8 feet wide. Mr. Egan clarified that the doors are actually 10 feet wide, which would accommodate a Suburban or a three-quarter-ton pickup truck. He added that if the primary concerns are the panes and the doors, they are open to making adjustments to address those issues.

Mr. Foster stated that, as he mentioned earlier, he doesn't have a strong preference for a three-bay garage; his priority is having space for a small shop. He expressed satisfaction with the design and the flow of the space. However, he said that if they lose 8 feet due to zoning adjustments, they would need to make some modifications. Ultimately, he emphasized that the number of bays is less important than maintaining the overall footprint and design.

Mr. Egan then weighed in, explaining that if the garage were turned to the side, it would not only complicate the process of getting a vehicle into the space, but it would also interfere with the design of the covered area around the pool. He pointed out that doing so would create significant aesthetic challenges, particularly in terms of making the design look harmonious with the surrounding neighborhood. The flat roofs required to accommodate that design would likely create a visual imbalance, and it would not align

well with the historical character of the home. He stressed that they have worked hard to create an aesthetically pleasing design that fits the era, and turning the garage could disrupt that cohesion.

Commissioner Grygotis asked whether, based on the photos, the new garage would be the same height as the existing garage or if it would extend forward. He noted that, according to the numbers provided, both the house and the garage were listed at 21 feet high. Mr. Egan clarified that the new garage would be slightly shorter, but it would still be within the same general perspective. He explained that while the existing garage was simply a garage, the new design includes a pool house area above it, which is intended as a space for recreation. The ceiling in that area would be 8 feet high, and with a 10-foot door and the necessary headers, the overall height would be close to 21 feet.

Ms. Grover then noted that her measurements showed a height of 23 feet, while Derek Miller provided a height of approximately 21.9 feet, factoring in the pavement and the build.

Commissioner Nieuwland then asked about the garage's setback from the street, confirming that the front wall of the new garage would be positioned where the existing garage currently stands. Mr. Egan confirmed this, though he added that the exact positioning would depend on the survey once it is approved. He explained that once the project moves forward, they will hire a surveyor to plot and stake the garage's precise location. Mr. Foster added that the new garage would likely be relatively close to the current location, as they were aiming to keep it aligned with the pool.

Chairman McKinney asked Mr. Egan to clarify whether the front line of the garage would be the same as the house. Mr. Egan responded, "No, it will sit further back." Mr. Foster confirmed that, at present, the garage is positioned behind the house, and Mr. Egan agreed, noting that they were fully aware that having the garage further behind the house was an important consideration.

Chairman McKinney then opened the floor to comments from the audience.

The first audience member to speak was David Machado. Mr. Machado began by addressing a couple of questions to the staff. He asked why this meeting had not been postponed, given that if the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) does not approve the request, there would be no point in holding this meeting. Staff responded by explaining that the meeting was scheduled for the next available time slot, and the same principle applied to the BZA—if this project is not approved here, their decision would be moot as well.

Mr. Machado continued by pointing out that while it's possible the project could be approved today and then sent to the BZA for approval, had it gone to zoning first and been rejected, there would be no project to discuss. He expressed concern that the process seemed to be "putting the cart before the horse."

Mr. Egan responded, clarifying that the situation was not necessarily as Mr. Machado described. He explained that even if the garage had to be shifted slightly to meet zoning requirements, that wouldn't mean the project would fail—it could still proceed with the necessary adjustments. Mr. Machado countered, saying that if the garage had to be shifted, it could fundamentally change the project. Mr. Egan disagreed, maintaining that the project could still work with the adjustments. Mr. Machado then pointed out that fitting a three-car garage would likely require a variance, to which Mr. Egan affirmed that it could still be done without one, prompting Mr. Machado to suggest they should discuss that further.

Mr. Machado then shifted focus, stating that the application before them was for a three-bay garage with a granny flat above. He acknowledged that the design includes an office, media storage, kitchen, and bathroom, but from his perspective as a 30-year builder and investor in properties, this essentially constitutes a granny flat. He noted that the neighbors were likely concerned about the potential for an Airbnb or rental unit in the space, which was not something they wanted. He asked the staff if the commission could place any conditions on the project to eliminate the possibility of the space being used as a rental unit.

Staff responded that, based on zoning requirements, no conditions could be imposed to prevent potential residential use of the space. Mr. Foster then addressed the concern, stating that they had no intention of renting out the space. He even offered to put that in writing to reassure everyone, emphasizing that their goal was simply to provide a comfortable guest room for visitors.

Mr. Machado pointed out that the design includes a kitchenette, a full bathroom, and a room with a closet, which are typical features of a self-contained living unit. Mr. Foster acknowledged this but reiterated that his wife simply wanted a nice guest room where their visitors could have a comfortable place to stay.

Vice-Chairman West interjected, reminding Mr. Machado that, as previously discussed, the role of this committee is solely to address historic zoning issues. The commission does not regulate the interior use of a building or property—that falls under a different committee and a different process. She asked that Mr. Machado keep his comments focused on the historic aspects of the project.

Mr. Machado continued, refocusing on the project details. He noted that the building footprint is 40 feet wide by 26 feet deep on both the ground and second floors, totaling 1,040 square feet per level. Additionally, the proposed patio cover is 12 feet by 40 feet, adding another 480 square feet, bringing the total project size to 2,560 square feet—larger than his own house. He pointed out that the garage will feature three 10-foot-wide doors, which he believes will have a significant impact on Watauga Street.

Shifting to a topic the committee could address, Mr. Machado moved on to the issue of demolition. He referenced the historic guidelines on demolition, noting that the proposed project is 21 feet 6 inches in height and 40 feet wide, making it a massive structure. In his opinion, this would overpower the adjacent homes. He asked if a structural engineer's or architect's report had been submitted to the Historic Commission regarding the condition of the existing garage.

Chairman McKinney responded that no such report had been presented, but that photos showing the deterioration of the structure had been provided. Mr. Machado noted that he had not seen those photos and that they were not included in the staff report. At this point, Commissioner Nieuwland showed Mr. Machado the photos in the staff report that had been taken during an on-site visit. Mr. Machado disagreed, stating that while there might be some dry rot, the garage was not falling apart.

Chairman McKinney acknowledged Mr. Machado's concerns and stated that if the committee feels a structural engineer's report is necessary to move forward, they could certainly request one.

Ms. Grover expressed concern, emphasizing that any report on the garage's condition would need to be unbiased. She shared that many of them, like herself, have old, largely unusable garages that they've diligently maintained and restored over the years. While these garages may no longer accommodate modern vehicles or offer space for larger items like boats, they are an important part of the property's history. The current garage, though small, holds sentimental value. Ms. Grover acknowledged that, although she understands the need to move forward with the project, it's difficult to see the loss of these outbuildings, which are vital pieces of the area's heritage.

She went on to say that while she recognizes the need for practicality—such as accommodating larger vehicles—she urged the committee to consider the impact of such a large structure on the neighborhood. She noted that on Watauga Street, there aren't any three-car garages, and the proposed 2,560-square-foot structure in her backyard would feel overwhelmingly large in relation to her house. She just wanted to ensure that the project remains sensitive to the scale and character of the existing home.

Ms. Brown responded to Ms. Grover, offering a different perspective. She acknowledged the concerns raised but pointed out that, from the street, what is currently visible is an unattractive plastic white fence surrounding the pool area. While the fence serves practical purposes like privacy and safety, it does little to enhance the historic character of the property. In contrast, a garage designed to match the house would add to the property's historical integrity and offer a more aesthetically pleasing solution. She suggested that the presence of vehicles parked inside the garage, rather than outside in the driveway, would also improve the overall appearance of the house.

Chairman McKinney then asked if anyone else had any comments. Commissioner Nieuwland inquired whether the current garage was original to the house or built at a later time. Ms. Grover responded, explaining that the garage was constructed in the 1960s.

Ms. Ledford raised a question about the historic guidelines regarding additions to primary dwellings, referencing one of the guidelines for clarity. Chairman McKinney responded, explaining that the new structure would be positioned further back from the house, rather than being aligned with it.

Ms. Ledford then inquired whether Mr. Foster planned to reduce the side porch. Mr. Foster asked for clarification on which side porch she was referring to, and then confirmed that the side porch would not be reduced, as the garage would be set further back. Mr. Egan added that, if zoning raised concerns, they could adjust by shifting the garage slightly and reducing the covered walkway to comply with zoning requirements. However, he emphasized that their main goal was to ensure the structure was aesthetically pleasing to the neighborhood and did not detract from the value of nearby homes. The intention was for passersby to see the home and think, "Wow, that's a beautiful house."

Ms. Ledford expressed her agreement with Ms. Grover, noting that the proposed structure felt overwhelming in relation to the house. She suggested that some adjustments should be made to ensure the addition doesn't dominate the streetscape.

Chairman McKinney then asked if there were any further comments from the commission or the audience. Hearing none, he called for a motion.

Vice-Chairman West noted that there were several differing opinions expressed during the meeting, and while the homeowner is willing to consider revisiting some aspects of the project, it seems there is room for further discussion. She proposed that the commission table the item until after the zoning meeting on December 5th. In the meantime, she suggested exploring options such

as reducing the size of the garage and revisiting details like window panes and garage doors to better align the project with the scale and character of the home. Vice-Chairman West also commended the effort and thought put into the design, though she acknowledged that, based on the comments made, the proposed structure felt somewhat overpowering.

Chairman McKinney asked if this suggestion was in the form of a motion. Vice-Chairman West confirmed that it was. Commissioner Nieuwland seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-1 – The item was tabled.

Mr. Egan, following the motion, remarked that there would be little point in proceeding to the zoning board if a redesign was necessary. He stated that if the historic commission had concerns about the size of the garage, there might be no need to go forward with zoning approval. He mentioned that he would need to discuss the next steps with Mr. Foster.

Ms. Ledford then raised a point about the historic guidelines, particularly in regard to the location of the proposed structure. Mr. Egan clarified that the project was not considered an accessory structure because it was tied into the existing home via the breezeway. Ms. Ledford responded by saying that, in her view, it was still an addition. Mr. Egan explained that because the structure was connected to the home, it no longer qualified as an accessory structure—accessory structures have size limitations that this project would exceed, which is why they connected it to the main house.

Ms. Ledford asked if the breezeway allowed the structure to be larger, and Mr. Egan confirmed that it did, but emphasized that they were not intending to make it larger beyond the scope of what was already proposed. Ms. Ledford pressed further, asking if the breezeway was essentially a way to avoid calling it an addition, to which Mr. Egan replied that it was meant to avoid classifying it as an accessory structure, not to circumvent the addition classification. Commissioner Nieuwland added that the breezeway does, in fact, make it an addition because it attaches the garage to the main house.

The discussion continued with clarification on the specifics of the structure's classification, but the commission ultimately decided to table the matter for further review.

### **1236 Watauga Street- Privacy Fence (HISTR24-0246)**

Chairman McKinney asked Mr. Foster whether he wished to table the fence project or proceed with it. Mr. Foster confirmed he wanted to move forward with the project.

Chairman McKinney then provided an overview of the request, noting that the property owner is seeking approval to install a privacy fence consisting of two styles and two heights: one section will be 6 feet tall, and another will be 4 feet tall. The proposed fence will be made of wood and finished in white paint. He also pointed out that, as referenced in the report, a similar fence at 1154 Watauga Street has already been approved by the Commission.

Mr. Foster explained that while the long-term plan is to replace all the fencing on the property, he does not wish to replace the fence around the pool just yet, pending a decision on the garage. For now, he intends to install a new fence along the west side of the property, replacing the current arbor fence, and along the back of the property, connecting to the existing fence near the pool. He added that, eventually, all the fencing around the pool would be updated to match the new style.

The proposed 4-foot section of fence will be placed along the backyard.

Chairman McKinney asked if there were any comments. Hearing none, Commissioner Edwards made a motion to approve the request, which was seconded by Commissioner Nieuwland.

Vice-Chairman West inquired whether the fence would be placed one-third of the way back from the house. Mr. Foster confirmed that the fence would start at the back edge of the house, as indicated in the plans.

The motion was put to a vote and passed with a 4-0 approval

## **217 Hammond Ave- Screened in back porch; designed as a deck-home addition above living space (HISTR24-0232)**

Chairman McKinney began by summarizing the request, explaining that the property owner, Ms. Hutchins, is proposing to build a screened-in back porch with dimensions of 18 feet by 30 feet and a height of 9 feet, which will be constructed over her existing deck on top of an existing living space.

Chairman McKinney clarified the proposal by asking Ms. Hutchins if she intended to build the porch on top of her current deck. Ms. Hutchins confirmed, explaining that the deck previously had a smaller screened-in porch. She added that after experiencing severe damage from a storm in April 2023, she wanted to rebuild and improve the space, as they had been dealing with excessive heat, wind, and water leaks affecting the room below. Due to medical issues, the project had been delayed, but they were doing the work themselves.

Chairman McKinney asked for clarification about the ongoing construction. Ms. Hutchins mentioned that she had assumed the project was "grandfathered in" since she was replacing an existing structure. Chairman McKinney inquired further, asking if she believed the structure was grandfathered because something had already been there. Ms. Hutchins confirmed, explaining that she was replacing the old porch. Chairman McKinney clarified that she was enlarging the porch, to which Ms. Hutchins affirmed, noting she had also altered the roof design to better align with the home's architecture, including a pitched roof.

Chairman McKinney confirmed that the proposed roof would indeed have a pitch. He then asked if the colors for the project were within Park Hill's approved color scheme. Ms. Hutchins confirmed that the colors she planned to use were consistent with those on the house since the 1980s.

Ms. Hutchins explained that the damage to the porch had caused leaks into the room below, which she was trying to address with the new design.

Chairman McKinney then opened the floor to questions from the Commission. Vice-Chairman West raised a concern about the color, noting a slight difference between the proposed color and the approved color for Park Hill. Ms. Hutchins responded that she would not repaint the entire house but pointed out that there were houses in the neighborhood painted in non-approved colors, such as blue and green. Chairman McKinney asked when the house was last painted, to which Ms. Hutchins replied it had been some time. Chairman McKinney clarified that repainting the house wasn't being suggested at this time, but in the future, the homeowner may want to consider using the approved Park Hill colors.

Chairman McKinney also noted that the approved color is darker than the one Ms. Hutchins was proposing. Commissioner Edwards asked for clarification from staff regarding the guidelines, particularly the items that did not comply with the historic guidelines. Staff clarified that the issues identified included the paint colors, which did not align with the guidelines for preserving the original character of the home, and the proposed addition's visibility from multiple locations (Hammond Avenue, Compton Terrace, West Sullivan Street, Town Park Loft parking lot, and Press Street). Ms. Hutchins suggested that once the project was completed and painted, it would blend in better, especially after removing some trees. She noted that the raw wood currently made it stand out more.

Staff also pointed out that the proposed roof pitch of 6:12 did not meet the Park Hill guidelines, which recommend a pitch of 8:12. Commissioner Edwards acknowledged the difference.

Vice-Chairman West noted that the packet did not include a visual representation of the finished project. Staff confirmed that no detailed drawings had been submitted, only a hand-drawn sketch by the homeowner. Chairman McKinney asked if the rafters had been installed. Ms. Hutchins confirmed that there would be three beams: one in the middle and one on each end. Chairman McKinney inquired if it was too late to change the roof pitch. Ms. Hutchins replied that it would be difficult at this stage.

Commissioner Guygotis asked if the original roof was flat. Ms. Hutchins clarified that it was not completely flat, but had a lower slope. Chairman McKinney asked if the rafters had been installed, and Ms. Hutchins confirmed that they were being assisted by a family friend.

Mr. Hutchins also mentioned that they own three properties in Park Hill: 217, 209, and 213 Hammond Avenue. Staff referenced page 73 of the packet, which discussed the character of the house. The addition's flat roof would contrast with the pitched roof of the new structure, creating a mix of flat and sloped areas. Ms. Hutchins disagreed, stating that from the back of the house, the flat section wouldn't be visible, only the sloped roof.

Chairman McKinney expressed regret that the homeowner had not come to the Commission sooner, as this made the approval process more difficult. Ms. Hutchins reiterated that the project was just a screened-in porch, not a living space.



Commissioner Edwards voiced concerns that the proposed colors would stand out, and Chairman McKinney confirmed that the homeowner intended to keep the current color, not use the approved color for Park Hill.

Chairman McKinney asked for a motion. Commissioner Nieuwland sought clarification on the board-and-batten design. Ms. Hutchins confirmed it would match the board-and-batten style already on the side of the house and that no white would be used on the porch, only brown.

Chairman McKinney reiterated the difficulty the committee had in approving the project, citing concerns about the roof pitch. Ms. Hutchins asked if the issue was that the roof needed to be taller. Chairman McKinney confirmed that the guidelines require a steeper pitch.

Chairman McKinney then asked Commissioner Edwards for his opinion. Commissioner Edwards explained that he always emphasizes the importance of following the guidelines to avoid setting a precedent that could affect future requests in the neighborhood. He expressed his regret, but emphasized the long-term impact of not adhering to the guidelines.

Chairman McKinney again asked for a motion. Vice-Chairman West moved to deny the project due to non-compliance with the guidelines, particularly regarding the roof pitch. Chairman McKinney asked for a second, and Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion.

Commissioner Nieuwland asked whether the roof could be made flat to comply with the guidelines. Chairman McKinney confirmed that a flat roof would not violate the guidelines, as the original house had a flat roof. If the roof were pitched, however, it would need to meet the 8:12 pitch requirement as per the guidelines.

The motion was put to a vote and denied 4-0.

Chairman McKinney informed Ms. Hutchins that she could submit a letter to staff outlining her intention to modify the roof pitch to 8:12, at which point the project could be approved

The Commissioners reviewed and approved a draft letter to be sent to homeowners, reminding them that they live in a historic district and encouraging them to contact the Commission before making any changes to their property. The letter was approved for distribution to homeowners.

With no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Jewell McKinney, Chairman