

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SECHEDULED MEETING OF THE
KINGSPORT HISTROIC ZONING COMMISSION

July 14th, 2025

1:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Jewell McKinney
Lindsey Nieuwland
Bob Grygotis
Chip Millican

Members Absent:

Dineen West
Jack Edwards
Joe Cross

Staff Present:

Lori Pyatte
Ken Weems
Bart Rowlett

Visitors Present:

Martin Bagwell
Lai Benson

Chairman Jewell McKinney called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. She welcomed everyone in attendance and provided an opportunity for all Historic Commissioners to introduce themselves and visitors.

The Chairman called for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Lindsey Nieuwland made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, which was seconded. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4 - 0.

Next, the Chairman called for approval of the minutes from the regular meeting on April 14th, 2025. Commissioner Lindsey Nieuwland made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 4-0.

Old Business:

217 W. Wanola Ave- Demolition by Neglect (HISTR25-0082)

Chairman McKinney reminded the Commission that the property at 217 W. Wanola Ave had previously been reviewed and referred to the City Building Department. She noted that the packet included several photographs that clearly illustrate the current condition of the property. Based on her discussions with staff, Chairman McKinney explained that the purpose of this agenda item was simply to vote on whether to continue the process and move the matter forward.

Staff confirmed that the City Building Department has scheduled a hearing for this property on August 21, 2025.

Chairman McKinney then asked City Attorney Mr. Rowlett what would occur if the property owner failed to attend the scheduled hearing. Mr. Rowlett explained that as long as the owner has been properly served with notice of the hearing, the Building Official may proceed in their absence. Evidence regarding the condition of the structure would still be presented, and a determination could be made based on whether the structure meets the criteria for action. Mr. Rowlett added that even if the owner does not attend, they retain the right to appeal any decision made by the Building Official.

He also clarified that if the owner fails to make the necessary repairs, the City has the authority to perform the repairs and place a lien on the property to recover the costs.

Chairman McKinney then opened the floor for questions.

Commissioner Millican asked for clarification on the Commission's role in the matter. Mr. Rowlett responded that the Commission's responsibility is to make a recommendation to the Building Official to proceed with a determination of Demolition by Neglect.

Commissioner Millican then made a motion to proceed with the recommendation, which was seconded and approved unanimously by a vote of 4-0.

New Business:

242 E. Main Street- Window Replacement and Sign Placement on Building (HISTR25-0162)

Martin Bagwell addressed the Commission regarding the project at 242 E. Main Street, formerly the location of Main Street Pizza. He explained that the building had experienced water damage at the front and that necessary repairs had been made.

Mr. Bagwell stated that he was appearing before the Commission to seek approval for updates to the second-story windows and for new signage on the front of the building. He proposed installing a 6-square-foot sign.

Regarding the windows, Mr. Bagwell explained that the existing second-story wood-framed windows, currently painted black, would be removed and replaced. The new windows would be double-pane, fixed (non-operable), and framed in wood, offering improved energy efficiency.

As for the signage, Mr. Bagwell indicated plans for a flag-mounted, backlit sign to be installed between the two awnings on the front façade.

Chairman McKinney then opened the floor for questions.

Following discussion, Commissioner Lindsey Nieuwland made a motion to approve the project as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously with a vote of 4-0.

209/213 W. Sullivan Street- Window Replacement (HISTR25-0164)

Lai Benson appeared before the Commission to present a proposal for the remodeling project at 213/209 W. Sullivan Street. Mr. Benson stated that the project involves both interior renovations and the replacement of all windows, totaling 40 new windows.

Chairman McKinney confirmed with Mr. Benson that the proposed replacement windows would match the pattern of the existing windows. Mr. Benson further clarified that the new windows would be similar in style to those at 414 and 418 W. Sullivan Street in the Park Hill Historic District—featuring white gridded vinyl windows, wrapped in maroon-colored metal.

Commissioner Millican inquired about the design of the proposed windows, specifically the white grid detail, and how it compares to the existing windows on the property.

Chairman McKinney then asked Mr. Benson whether there were any plans to address surface issues on the building's exterior, including potential future painting. Mr. Benson did not indicate any immediate plans for exterior painting.

Chairman McKinney opened the floor for further questions. Commissioner Millican asked whether there were any design guidelines for color applicable to Tudor-style buildings. Staff clarified that although the property shares visual similarities with those in the Park Hill Historic District, it is located within the Church Circle District, which currently has no color guidelines.

Commissioner Nieuwland added that on the street where her business is located within Church Circle, there is a mix of different window styles.

After discussion, Commissioner Gryotis made a motion to approve the project as presented. The motion was seconded and passed with a vote of 3-1.

Other Business:

In-House Approvals:

Staff reported that since last meeting the following seven projects approved through in-house review:

1. **410 W. Sullivan Street (HISTR25-0103)**
Approved to repaint the exterior of the home using the approved Park Hill color palette.
2. **200 W. Church Circle (HISTR25-01015)**
Approved to replace the gym roof with shingles matching the current ones in both color and style.
3. **1302 Watauga Street (HISTR25-0112)**
Approved gutter replacement and removal of existing landscaping for installation of new landscaping.
(Note: This was an after-the-fact review.)
4. **152–158 Broad Street (HISTR25-0145)**
Approved removal of paint from the building, necessary tuckpointing of the brick, and removal of pink, purple, yellow, and blue siding on the front façade.
5. **242 E. Main Street (HISTR25-0160)**
Approved replacement of rotten wood in the window, repainting of the exterior storefront, and removal/replacement of the awning with a new one matching the current style.
6. **240 E. Main Street (HISTR25-0161)**
Approved removal of existing mulch and replacement with pea gravel.

7. 116 W. Main Street (HISTR25-0178)

Approved removal and replacement of the existing awning with a new awning of the same style.

Officer Elections:

Staff informed the Commission that it is time to hold elections for the positions of Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Currently, Chairman McKinney and Vice-Chairman West are serving in those roles. Staff noted that both individuals have expressed a willingness to continue serving if that is the desire of the Commission.

Given that only four members were present at the meeting, staff advised that a vote was not required at this time and could be postponed until the regular meeting in August.

Commissioner Millican stated his support for re-nominating the current officers and suggested that the Commission proceed with a formal vote at the August meeting.

Staff acknowledged the recommendation and confirmed that a final vote will be held at the August regular meeting.

Member Terms/ Selection Process:

Staff informed the Commission that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen has approved a term realignment for all city commissions. Under the new structure, the terms of current commission members will be extended to the following April after their original expiration date.

For example, Commissioner Nieuwland, whose term was originally set to expire on June 30, 2025 (as she had filled an unexpired term), will now have a new expiration date of April 30, 2026.

Staff also noted that when a member's term is approaching expiration, they will be required to submit a new application during the open application period, which begins 45 days prior to the month of consideration. For this Commission, applications will typically be accepted from February through mid-March.

Staff stated that this information will be reviewed again in August for the benefit of any members not present at this meeting.

Staff Reports:

Staff reported that the department has recently received an increasing number of sidewalk dining applications, particularly along Broad Street, and anticipates similar interest along Main Street as new businesses continue to open. In response to this trend, Chairman McKinney requested that staff consult with the City Attorney to determine the extent of the Historic Zoning Commission's authority in such matters.

Staff introduced the City Attorney, who was present to provide clarification.

The City Attorney explained that, under the current historic zoning regulations, the Historic Zoning Commission does not have authority to regulate sidewalk dining. The City of Kingsport already has established procedures in place for sidewalk dining, which fall under the jurisdiction of the Right-of-Way Superintendent and the Public Works Director.

Additionally, the City Attorney noted that if an establishment plans to sell beer in a sidewalk dining area, they must also appear before the Beer Permit Board and comply with the associated requirements.

He further clarified that for the Historic Zoning Commission to have regulatory authority over sidewalk dining, changes would need to be made to the City Code. Even then, the scope of regulation by the Commission might be limited, as the Commission primarily oversees private property and building premises, whereas the downtown sidewalks are owned outright by the City of Kingsport—not simply managed as right-of-way.

The City Attorney commented that perhaps the only aspect the Commission might regulate, if permitted, would be the appearance of tables and chairs, though he questioned whether the Commission would want to become involved in regulating patio furniture design.

Chairman McKinney inquired whether the design guidelines currently require any type of shield or barrier for sidewalk dining areas. The City Attorney responded that such requirements fall under City Code Chapter 6, which governs the sale of beer. According to that ordinance, no barrier is required for general sidewalk dining, but if the dining area is designated as a beer service area, then a 48-inch-high barrier is mandatory.

Staff added that when applications are reviewed, they accompany the Right-of-Way Superintendent on-site to ensure that ADA compliance is met.

With no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jewell McKinney, Chairman