

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

January 13, 2025

1:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Jewell McKinney

Dineen West

Chip Millican

Joe Cross

Bob Grygotis

Members Absent:

Lindsey Nieuwland

Jack Edwards

Staff Present:

Lori Pyatte

Ken Weems

Samuel Cooper

Mary Thomas

Visitors Present:

Ally Van Den Herik

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

The Chairman called for approval of the agenda. Vice-Chairman West made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, which was seconded by Commissioner Bob Grygotis. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 5-0.

Next, the Chairman called for approval of the minutes from regular meeting on November 12, 2025. Commissioner Bob Grygotis made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Joe Cross. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 5-0.

New Business:

438 W. Sullivan Street- Detached Deck (HISTR24-0305)

Chairman McKinney noted that staff had included the relevant information for this new business item in the meeting packet. Chairman McKinney asked if any commissioners had questions. Vice-Chairman West commented that the proposed structure appeared to be well concealed from the street. Chairman

McKinney agreed, adding that only a small section might be visible from the road. Staff clarified that the deck would not be particularly noticeable unless someone was actively looking for it while driving past. Chairman McKinney asked about the color of the material. Staff reported that they had discussed the issue with the applicant, who indicated she would be willing to paint the deck if the proposed color, "Toasted Sand," did not meet Park Hill's historic guidelines. However, Chairman McKinney noted that painting a Trex deck may not be feasible. Vice-Chairman West added that painting the material could lead to peeling. Staff informed the commissioners that the applicant had already purchased the Trex decking, which was currently stored on her property. Ally Van Den Herik, the applicant, explained that there was a significant price difference between the color she wanted, which matched her house, and the color she ultimately selected. She also mentioned her plan to use rugs on the deck, which would cover much of the visible surface. Chairman McKinney confirmed with Ms. Van Den Herik that the deck was intended as a space for entertainment and relaxation, to which Ms. Van Den Herik agreed. Chairman McKinney observed that Ms. Van Den Herik had put into application that the front of the deck would require a slight elevation, approximately two inches, to ensure it was level. Ms. Van Den Herik stated the elevation might exceed two inches depending on the slope at the back, emphasizing her intent to create a level surface suitable for placing a table. Chairman McKinney also noted that because the deck would be close to the ground, handrails would not be necessary. A motion was made by Vice-Chairman West moved to approve the detached deck as submitted, and the motion was seconded by Bob Grygotis. The motion passed unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

Ms. Van Den Herik said that one of the reasons she moved to Kingsport because of beauty she absolutely loves it and she will continue to do her best to keep her location up to historic guidelines.

400 Broad Street- ADA Ramps, Parking Lot, Transformer Box Location, Landscaping
(HISTR24-0310)

The commission reviewed the proposal, which included the installation of a new ADA ramp on the side facing Glen Bruce Park, repairs to the existing ADA ramp and stairs at the rear of the building, a complete reconstruction of the parking lot, and the installation of a transformer box in a designated parking spot on the west side of the building within New Street's right-of-way. Commissioner Millican inquired about which Historic District this project fell into, and staff confirmed it to be Church Circle. Commissioner Grygotis asked whether the transformer box would be new, and both staff and Chairman McKinney confirmed that it would. Representative Mary Thomas explained that the location of the transformer box was determined by AEP, and they were given limited options. Commissioner Millican sought clarification, asking if AEP had mandated the location. Both Ms. Thomas and Chairman McKinney confirmed that AEP had specified the placement. Commissioner Grygotis asked whether the transformer box would be aesthetically covered. Ms. Thomas stated that the box would be enclosed with fencing, surrounded by shrubs and an ornamental gate facing the library. Staff added that three sides of the enclosure would be constructed of brick, with a gate opening towards the library. From street level, the enclosure would primarily be concealed by the landscaping. Commissioner Grygotis also questioned whether the new ADA ramp facing Glen Bruce Park was required by law, given the existing ramp at the rear of the building. Ms. Thomas explained that the rear ramp was deteriorating and would be repaired as part of the project. She added that the new ramp would provide an accessible entrance through Glen Bruce Park, with access primarily routed through the library for most of the year. Chairman McKinney inquired about the proposed fence surrounding the area, noting that it would be 7 feet tall and designed in a "majestic" style. Staff indicated that the fence would feature a

butterfly motif. Ms. Thomas confirmed that the project would result in two ADA-accessible entrances to the library—one at the rear and one via Glen Bruce Park.

A motion was made by Commissioner Millican moved to approve the everything as submitted, and the motion was seconded by Bob Grygotis. The motion passed unanimously with a 4-0-1 vote. Vice-Chairman West abstained from voting due to her company's involvement in providing the site plans and designs for the project.

Other Business:

Review of Notification Letter:

Staff noted that this letter differs from the previously approved version. The purpose of this letter is to notify homeowners that they have performed work on their property without obtaining the required approval. Vice-Chairman West asked if there was a timeline in place for addressing such cases. Staff responded that determining a timeline and establishing a process for handling these situations would be key topics for discussion. Commissioner Millican inquired about the consequences for homeowners who fail to respond. Staff explained that if no response is received, the case would be referred to the building department for code enforcement. Commissioner Millican suggested that the letter's formatting be adjusted, recommending that the content be centered or left-aligned for consistency. Vice-Chairman West proposed revising the wording to state, "Please submit your application so it can be presented at the next board meeting." Additionally, Vice-Chairman West recommended that a report of all letters sent out be included in each meeting's agenda, allowing the board to record and track these actions in the minutes.

Chairman McKinney asked staff if there was anything else to discuss.

Staff noted that a new section titled "Staff Reports" had been added under "Other Business" for this meeting. This section allows staff to address matters that have recently come to their attention. First, staff shared feedback from homeowners who had received letters reminding them of their residence in a Historic District. Some homeowners suggested conducting monthly drive-through in the districts, expressing concerns that unapproved changes might be occurring without the board's knowledge. Staff also mentioned a comment from the owner of the Doby's House on Watauga Street. The homeowner questioned why her house was not included in the Historic District, arguing that it holds more historical significance than many other homes on Watauga Street. Vice-Chairman West emphasized the importance of promptly addressing requests from homeowners interested in joining the Historic District. Staff recommended that the homeowner reach out to neighbors whose properties lie between the existing Historic District boundary and her house, which is located at 1434 Watauga Street, according to Google. Chairman McKinney asked if it would be possible to incorporate the homeowner's property into the Historic District individually. Staff responded that while this might be possible, it would be preferable to avoid creating a fragmented district along Watauga Street. Chairman McKinney suggested drafting letters to nearby homeowners to gauge their interest in joining the Historic District, potentially creating a more contiguous extension.

2244 Netherland Inn Terrace:

Staff reported that during the process of sending letters to homeowners, one recipient expressed frustration, stating that the board should not dictate what can or cannot be done on her property, especially when the property behind hers is in severe disrepair. In response, staff conducted a drive-by inspection and

observed that a tree had fallen on the house in question. Staff contacted the City of Kingsport's Building Department and Code Enforcement, which conducted an assessment. The findings confirmed that the house is severely dilapidated, with a damaged roof, an unsecured structure, and an interior that has been gutted and further compromised by exposure to the elements. Code Enforcement has scheduled a dilapidation hearing for February 20, 2025, and staff plans to attend. The Building Department is considering demolition of the house later in 2025. Staff brought this situation to the board's attention due to the property's location within the Historic District. Chairman McKinney inquired about the property tax history, and staff confirmed that no taxes have been paid on the house for the past eight years. Vice-Chairman West asked whether the property would remain in the Historic District after the house is demolished, noting that this would result in a vacant lot within the district, which could present challenges for redevelopment. Staff explained that the lot is quite small, making it difficult to build on the parcel. Vice-Chairman West also observed that demolishing the house could lead to a "checkerboard effect," with non-compliant vacant lots interspersed throughout the Historic District, which runs counter to preservation goals. Staff further noted that, based on mapping, the house encroaches on an adjacent parcel owned by the same individual.

418 W Sullivan Street:

Staff brought forward the final item for discussion: 418 W Sullivan St. They proposed sending one of the new letters reviewed earlier, as the work completed on the property was done without the necessary approval. Staff explained that the homeowner had installed a fence around the back of the property and added guardrails to the porch. While a building permit was not required for the work, the homeowner failed to seek the required review and approval from the commission. Vice-Chairman West agreed, stating that this property would be an appropriate candidate for the new notification letter.

The Chairman opened public comment. No public comment was received.

With no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jewell McKinney, Chairman