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July 14, 2026

The Honorable Jelani Linder, Mayor
Members of the City Council
City of Stone Mountain
875 Main Street
Stone Mountain, GA 30083

Re: Letter of Interest — Appointment to the Historic Preservation Commission

Dear Mayor Linder and Members of the Council:

I am writing to express my interest in appointment to the City of Stone Mountain Historic Preservation Commission. I live within the historic district, and I have attended Commission and Council meetings as a resident. Understanding the urgent need for commission members who apply the relevant guidelines and standards consistently, explain their reasoning plainly, and treat every applicant equitably, I offer my service.

For the past seven years, applying fixed written standards to individual cases has been the core of my professional work. As a Clinical Research Coordinator at Emory University School of Medicine, I review individual cases against federal regulations and Institutional Review Board protocols daily — determining eligibility, documenting the rationale for each decision, and preparing applications and amendments for formal board review. The subject matter differs from design review, but the discipline is identical: read the governing document carefully, apply it to the facts in front of you, document why, and hold the line evenly whether the outcome is welcome or not. I also know, from years of explaining regulatory requirements to the public, how to deliver an unwelcome answer while preserving the person's trust in the process, which I suspect matters as much at a COA hearing as it does in a research clinic.

My education supports this work from a different angle. My Master of Social Work from Georgia State University, with a concentration in Community Partnerships, included formal training in asset mapping and community-level planning — tools for understanding what a neighborhood values and why. Before that, I completed a double major in Philosophy and English with a focus in rhetoric, which is to say I was trained to construct careful arguments and to communicate them clearly in public settings. Additionally, I have spent two decades in volunteer and paid leadership of DeKalb County community programs, including running a community-association program on a budget that stayed 15% under target every year.

I want to be direct about what I am not: I am not an architect or a preservation professional. What I bring instead is a resident's stake in the district, a demonstrated capacity for fair, standards-based review, and the reliability to read every application closely and show up prepared. I understand the Commission meets monthly on Wednesday evenings at City Hall; my schedule accommodates that cadence, including the review work between sessions, and I am prepared to serve a full three-year term.

Stone Mountain's historic district is one of the city's most durable assets, and the Commission is what keeps stewardship of that asset predictable and fair. I would be honored to contribute to that work. My resume is enclosed, and I am glad to answer any questions or appear before the Council at your convenience.

Respectfully,

Sean Minton