

**Town of Swansboro
Historic Preservation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 18, 2026**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm. Commission members in attendance were Kim Kingrey, Christina Ramsey, and Elaine Justice, and Brad Phillips. Jonathan McDaniel was absent. Two alternate seats were vacant.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mrs. Ramsey seconded by Mr. Phillips the July 21, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved.

Business

Review and Discuss Certificate of Appropriateness Application Fees

Deputy Clerk Aliette Cuadro Review of the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) application fee structure which was evaluated in 2022. At that time, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended changes that were subsequently approved by the Board of Commissioners. Those changes included reducing the major COA application fee from \$400 to \$200, establishing a \$50 minor work application fee where none had previously existed, and establishing after-the-fact penalty fees of \$500 for major COAs and \$100 for minor work violations.

The Commission discussed whether the current application fees were appropriate and whether the fee structure provided an incentive for property owners to seek approval prior to beginning work. Members discussed reducing application fees to encourage compliance and increasing after-the-fact penalties to deter unauthorized work. A proposal was made to reduce the Major Work application fee from \$200 to \$100. The Commission agreed to discuss penalty after-the-fact fees at a later date.

Town Manager Barlow stated that the Town could collect after-the-fact penalty fee information from other municipalities for comparison.

The Commission also discussed updating the Historic District guidelines and informational materials to reflect current requirements and practices, including the possibility of forming a subcommittee to review the materials and recommend revisions.

On a motion by Mrs. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Philips, the Commission recommended that the Board of Commissioners reduce the Major Work application fee from \$200 to \$100 and maintain the Minor Work application fee at \$50.

Review and Discuss Minor Work Committee Procedure

Town Manager Jonathan Barlow reviewed the Minor Work Committee application and the requirements outlined in the policy. He noted that, as a policy, the requirements could be revised by the Commission as deemed appropriate.

The Commission discussed the value of on-site meetings with property owners and the positive outcomes that can result from direct communication. Members expressed a preference for property owners or their representatives to attend committee meetings for

major COA reviews, The Commission agreed that the current process was working adequately and that no significant changes were needed at this time.

Chairman/Board Thoughts/Staff Comments

Deputy Clerk Cuadro provided an update on the Certified Local Government (CLG) training held in Wilmington. The training included a COA exercise and a tour of several historic properties, demonstrating how historic features can be preserved while adapting buildings for new uses.

Mrs. Justice informed the Commission that the State Historic Preservation Office had approached her about the Town possibly hosting a regional historic preservation event in the spring. The event would be open to the public and feature speakers from across the state. The Commission expressed support for hosting the event and noted its potential benefit to the Town's Certified Local Government status.

Commission members requested that, in addition to their regularly scheduled meeting week, a workshop meeting be scheduled for the week of November 9th.

Public Comments

Lee Schuler of 140 Front Steet, addressed the Commission regarding a COA application for replacement of the front door at 137 Front St. He explained that the tenant had replaced the deteriorating door without prior approval due to a breakdown in communication with the property owner. Schuler expressed concern that the flat COA application fee could be burdensome for smaller projects and suggested a graduated fee structure, noting that reducing the Major Work fee from \$200 to \$100 could provide relief for smaller projects.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Ramsey, seconded by Mr. Phillips, the meeting adjourned at 6:34pm