

Town of Swansboro
Historic Preservation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 21, 2026

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:31pm. Board members in attendance were Jonathan McDaniel, Kim Kingrey, Christina Ramsey, and Elaine Justice. Brad Phillips was absent. Two alternate seats were vacant.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Ramsey complimented the preparation of the minutes for the Joint Special Meeting with the Board of Commissioners stating that an excellent job had been done by summarizing the presentation from the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office.

On a motion by Mrs. Ramsey seconded by Mrs. Kingrey the February 17, 2026, BOC & HPC Joint Special Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved.

Business

The public hearing was opened at 5:36pm, and the following individuals were sworn in by Deputy Clerk Aliette M. Cuadro.

- Planner Rebecca Brehmer
- Jonathan McDaniel

Certificate of Appropriateness/114 Elm Street

Planner Brehmer reviewed that the owner of 114 Elm Street or the “Jonathan Greene House” had requested a Certificate of Appropriateness for an exterior alteration to replace the roof with cedar shake shingles. This home was contributing to the Swansboro Historic District and was zoned R-6SF.

Planner Brehmer shared how the restoration restored the integrity of the original roof and could have improved the application for local landmark designation while providing potential tax credit benefits. The Commission found the application to be well prepared and in full compliance with the design standards.

The commission moved on to the next agenda item to simultaneously handle both COA’s.

Certificate of Appropriateness/Bartley House Privy/Post Office (114 Main Street)

Planner Brehmer reviewed that the Swansboro Historic Association had requested a Certificate of Appropriateness for an exterior alteration to the Bartley House Privy & Post Office also for a roof replacement to cedar shake shingles. The commission found this interpretation acceptable and consistent with the historic district design standards.

With the public hearing already opened, public comment was offered for both the Certificate of Appropriateness at 114 Elm St. and 114 Main Street. There were no comments offered from the public. The Board proceeded and voted without formally closing the public hearing.

On a motion by Mrs. Kingrey, seconded by Mrs. Ramsey, COA 2026-02 for exterior alterations of home at 114 Elm Street was unanimously approved.

On a motion by Mrs. Kingrey, seconded by Mrs. Ramsey COA 2026-03 for exterior alterations of an accessory structure at 114 Elm Street, was unanimously approved.

Preston's Corner Rooftop Bar Discussion

Planner Brehmer reviewed that Preston's Corner Bar & Grill, located at 106 Front Street, had requested the Swansboro Historic Preservation Commissions opinion on an addition of a rooftop bar to the restaurant.

Planner Brehmer shared that the building, originally the Buckmaster Store, was considered non-contributing to the historic district due to numerous alterations over the years. She noted that the proposed addition would create additional usable space and include railings, stairs, and an expanded dormer area and that a Certificate of Appropriateness and compliance with all applicable ordinance standards would be required; however, Section 11 of the Historic District Design Standards, which addressed new construction, did not specifically address additions to commercial buildings. The existing standards required a massing study to be completed by an architect for additions to homes of 250 square feet or more, but the language did not explicitly state whether this requirement applied to commercial spaces. Planner Brehmer sought the Commission's interpretation on whether a massing study should be required for this type of commercial addition.

Discussion focused on the original intent of the massing study requirement, which members noted had been implemented to address concerns about the scale and character of smaller historic residential structures and streetscapes. Members also discussed the potential visual impact of the proposed rooftop addition, noting that it could improve the appearance of the building and entrance to town, while confirming that downtown businesses are subject to different parking standards and that additional parking analysis would likely not be required for the proposed addition to an existing business. Members further acknowledged that significant engineering and design reviews would still be necessary to determine whether the structure could support the addition. Following discussion, the Commission reached consensus that a massing study should not be required for this type of commercial addition, noting that the requirement had originally been intended for residential applications.

Chairman/Board Thoughts/Staff Comments

Planner Brehmer reviewed that she had not prepared the usual staff approval report due to the length of time since the last meeting but noted that the full file was available for review if members wished to examine routine approvals, which primarily consisted of HVAC units and other minor items.

The Commission discussed the need for future text amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance. Planner Brehmer suggested forming a subcommittee to review potential amendments and develop a more targeted draft for consideration at a future meeting. Mrs. Kingrey and Mrs. Justice volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

Mrs. Kingrey requested a meeting between the Town Manager and Town Attorney to discuss historic district enforcement authority under the Unified Development Ordinance. Planner Brehmer shared that the Town Attorney occasionally arrives early before Board of

Commissioners meetings and she could review specific situations and clarify what the current ordinance allows with him.

Public Comments

Cynthia LaCorte of 220 S. Elm Street, expressed concerns about fence standards, urging the Commission to establish clearer requirements for fence placement within the historic district in addition to fence type, noting that recent approvals could have created long-term negative visual impacts on the district's character. Additionally, she recommended that the Commission consider whether properties with grandfathered nonconforming uses, such as duplexes, that had not actively operated under that use for an extended period should continue to retain their grandfathered status, citing concerns about the effect of such uses on surrounding properties.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Kingrey, seconded by Mrs. Justice, the meeting adjourned at 6:05pm.