

**MINUTES OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)
December 19, 2025
8:00 AM**

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Chairman Gallagher called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Roll Call: Patrick Gallagher, Kevin Whipple, Rachel Butler, Andrew Bramlett, Sharon Blandford, and Thomas Neaves

Staff Present: Chanelle Campbell (Planning & Zoning Administrator) and Rebecca Goldstein (Community Development Administrative Assistant)

Speakers Present: None

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes: November 21, 2025

Chairman Gallagher called for a motion.

Motion to approve by Commissioner Neaves

Seconded by Commissioner Blandford

Chairman Gallagher proceeded with a roll call for approval.

Vote taken, motion unanimously approved 5-0. Motion carried.

3. Financial Report

Ms. Chanelle Campbell presented the financial report. As with previous meetings, the financial budget remains the same at \$23,398. These funds are available for use by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) for projects.

Chairman Gallagher called for a motion.

Motion to approve by Commissioner Bramlett

Seconded by Commissioner Butler

Chairman Gallagher proceeded with a roll call for approval.

Vote taken, motion unanimously approved 5-0. Motion carried.

4. Old Business

5. New Business

A. Discussion Only: Ethos Preservation Historic Design Standard and Ordinance Recommendations

Ms. Chanelle Campbell introduced the agenda items for discussion. The two discussion items include the Ethos Standards, which are an update to the Historic Design Standards completed in 2023, and the updated historic district map. The purpose of the discussion was to review the documents and provide questions, comments, and feedback. Ms. Campbell explained that the results of the discussion would be

incorporated into the documents and used to conduct a public hearing or town hall meeting to receive feedback from the public. After public comment, the documents would then go before Mayor and Council for official adoption. Ms. Campbell thanked Commissioners that sent in comments and reiterated that the discussion was an opportunity to dissect and review concerns about the proposed changes.

Ms. Campbell refreshed the Commissioners on the proposed changes to the Historic District Design Standards and ordinance sections relating to the Historic District and HPC. She explained that Ethos Preservation completed work in 2023 and that a representative from Ethos Preservation discussed the proposed updates with the HPC in 2024. Ethos Preservation reviewed the Historic District Design Standards to ensure they matched statewide historic district requirements, and to consolidate the ordinance, and to address gaps and overlaps between the Central Business District (CBD) standards and the Historic District standards. Ethos Preservation found repetitive and verbose language in the Design Standards and made suggestions to make the Standards more digestible for Commissioners, staff, and the public. Ms. Campbell opened the floor for discussion.

Ms. Campbell asked the Commissioners to discuss non-historic properties within the historic district. She explained that because the historic district boundaries are so broad, there are non-historic properties within the historic district that have to come through the historic review process. Commissioner Butler asked if the historic district map was available. Vice Chair Whipple sought clarification as to whether the map shown was the new historic district map or the old historic district map. Ms. Campbell responded that the map was the result of the survey completed by Kennesaw State University (KSU). Vice Chair Whipple asked if the intent was to reduce the historic district boundaries. Ms. Campbell responded in the affirmative. She stated that changes to the historic boundaries would not be made by staff alone and would involve town halls. She explained that the survey findings indicated that not many historic parcels remained in the historic district. Ms. Campbell relayed that another consultant, New South, proposed combining the neighborhood-specific historic districts into a single historic district. Another option, provided by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), would be to remove the historic district and instead designate specific properties as local landmarks, which would be historic properties subject to the HPC review process. Vice Chair Whipple commented that he knew the HPC receives applications to review roof and deck replacements from the Cherokee Ridge Trail subdivision, which is not historic but within the historic district. He agreed with removing individual historic districts to an extent but advised that the district should be contiguous along major arterial roads. Vice Chair Whipple suggested that the HPC should maintain the ability to regulate new construction or alterations on non-historic properties that are adjacent to historic properties to ensure continuity along street fronts. He added that some areas can be removed from the district because an undue burden is being placed on residents that are not in an actual historic area. Commissioner Bramlett agreed and stated that he preferred the district idea to the landmarks concept. He expressed that the idea of arterial connections made sense. He noted that there are gaps in the current historic district map where non-historic properties are located, and expressed

that it would be beneficial for the HPC to have oversight of the properties given their proximity to downtown Kennesaw.

Vice Chair Whipple commented that the packet noted an attempt to align the code requirements of the CBD and the historic district so they do not compete with each other. He asked if the historic district requirements will be stricter than the CBD requirements and if the historic district requirements would override the CBD requirements. Ms. Campbell responded that the HPC requirements are stricter requirements that superseded the CBD requirements in the recommendations. Vice Chair Whipple commented that incorporating CBD properties into the historic district made sense given that the Design Standards would supersede the CBD ordinance measures. Commissioner Bramlett commented that there is a hole in the historic district map north of Lewis Street. He expressed that including the area would be preferable because it is completely surrounded by the historic district.

Commissioner Bramlett commented that there was a property identified as historic outside the historic district boundaries on Hampton Court. He asked if staff knew why the property was included. Ms. Campbell responded that staff was working with DCA and KSU to identify the property. To her knowledge, the property is just a house. Ms. Campbell explained that staff was trying to gain clarification on about five properties from the KSU survey. She stated that the HPC would be notified once results were finalized.

Commissioner Neaves sought clarification on whether there was a discussion to get rid of the districts and replace them with parcel-specific historic designations. Ms. Campbell responded that the topic was not explicitly discussed, but was an option provided by DCA. Ms. Campbell reiterated that the goal was not to eliminate the historic district, as it is needed to maintain Certified Local Government status.

Commissioner Neaves agreed that neighborhoods like Cherokee Ridge Trail located off main corridors with no identified historic structures should be revised out of the historic district. He supported retaining the historic district structure instead of using a parcel-specific historic designation because the parcel-specific option could lead to a non-cohesive streetscape.

Vice Chair Whipple asked what the determination was from Ethos Preservation and New South regarding the Camp McDonald area. Ms. Campbell shared that the consultants stated the area was non-existent and should be removed. Vice Chair Whipple commented that the Adams Park area in the historic district was a large chunk that could be removed and suggested that the district lines could be adjusted to follow Watts Drive, which has some historic properties.

Vice Chair Whipple asked if there was a new historic district map. Ms. Campbell responded that there was no new map yet and that the items presented were preliminary findings. She explained the map would have to go through the official adoption process, which would include a town hall meeting.

Vice Chair Whipple explained some of the history on the efforts to combine and consolidate the historic district. He stated that there were originally multiple districts within the historic district. During a city signage update, the HPC was tasked with identifying way points for each district to assist residents, building officials, code enforcement inspectors, and relators in identifying the location of the historic districts. The discussion of merging the districts into a single, more defined historic district was to help simplify the process.

Ms. Campbell shared that New South suggested combining the districts to eliminate confusion. She explained that the districts are not currently consolidated and that areas like North Main Street and Big Shanty were assigned specific character details, which makes a cohesive interpretation of the historic district difficult. Ms. Campbell commented that a consolidated district would make it easier for people to understand the boundaries and regulations of the historic districts.

Commissioner Bramlett commented that the Pine Hill Drive neighborhood off of Big Shanty Road has many homes older than 50 years. He asked what the commissioners' thoughts were about adding the area to the historic district given that the structures are older than 50 years but were not recorded on the survey as historic properties. Ms. Campbell responded that expanding the district would require an additional survey to identify historic properties followed by a new map adoption. She explained that the survey completed by KSU was within the existing historic district boundaries.

Commissioner Butler asked if there was a future road system map available to review; she asked whether any parts of the historic district would be affected by new roads. Ms. Campbell responded that she had not been updated on any new road systems, but was aware of projects for Sardis Street and Cherokee Street. She stated that she could find out if there were any updates and provide the information.

Vice Chair Whipple commented that the current discussion involves shrinking the historic district due to a loss of properties, road improvements, and growth. He suggested a phased approach where the current phase involves updating the Design Standards to reduce confusion and redefine the historic district. He agreed with Commissioner Bramlett that there should be a phase two, which would involve extending the survey to get more information for the Commission. He expressed that he wanted to grow the historic district without placing an undue burden on longtime homeowners and wanted to select an age criteria for historic structures that balanced the two objectives. Ms. Campbell responded that she agreed phasing would be the best approach. She noted that phasing would allow the Commission to see how the updates impact the community and the historic district before assessing how to grow the historic district. Vice Chair Whipple suggested that adding specific area like Pine Hill Circle could be a move independent of the district updates. Vice Chair Whipple recommended that outreach and engagement to specific neighborhoods should involve more intimate, smaller town halls for areas that might be added to the historic district. Ms. Campbell asked the Commission to take into consideration the number of pending projects

including the City's comprehensive plan, which could impact the ability to pursue additional projects. She explained that the current goal was to preserve the identified historic resources and use the existing documentation to create a cohesive vision and goal for historic preservation in Kennesaw.

Vice Chair Whipple commented that the Commission needed to take a detailed look at demolitions with the updates, including what requirements should be placed on applicants for demolition. He advised that the HPC should require more documentation to support demolition, including information on what will replace the demolished structure and a timeline for new construction. He asked if staff could research what other historic districts require for demolitions and relocations to ensure that demolition is a last resort. Ms. Campbell explained that the completion of the historic district survey means the City is now qualified for funding as a category two Certified Local Government (CLG). Ms. Campbell expressed that funding access is an opportunity to consider how the HPC can assist with rehabilitating structures before they reach the point of demolition. She asked the Board to consider how funding the City has access to can be used to help preserve structures.

Commissioner Neaves asked what level of design review was required for properties outside the historic district but within the CBD and how the level of review compares to the Historic District Design Standards. Ms. Campbell responded that the CBD tends to be more lenient compared to the Design Standards. She also explained that the CBD district tries to be compatible with the historic district, which is why non-historic structures in the CBD need to be reviewed by the HPC for alignment with the historic district. Commissioner Butler provided examples of differences between the Design Standards and the CBD regulations with fence height and building height restrictions. Vice Chair Whipple commented that the height limitation in the Design Standards has been adjusted so often that it is virtually non-existent. He hoped the updates could clean up the height requirements, so the Commission can evaluate projects based solely on the Design Standards.

Commissioner Neaves commented that he asked about the level of design review for the CBD because non-historic buildings along South Main Street impact the look and feel of historic buildings in Downtown Kennesaw. Commissioner Neaves expressed that people may come to Downtown Kennesaw believing that a property is within a historic area when it is instead subject to much less stringent regulation. Ms. Campbell responded that staff has been trying to rectify discrepancies between the CBD and Historic District Design Standards. She explained it was a difficult balance because there is a limit on what restraints can be placed on a property outside of the historic district. Ms. Campbell expressed hopes that the Design Standards rewrite and comprehensive plan would help clarify what the historic district should look and feel like in the context of Kennesaw.

Vice Chair Whipple asked if the request for proposal the HPC reviewed for the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) included generating a form-based code. Ms. Campbell responded that the form-based code was for Cobb Parkway. Vice Chair Whipple asked

if the goal of the LCI was to create a gateway into Kennesaw. Ms. Campbell responded in the affirmative. She explained that part of the project would cover placemaking and having designated areas that could be used for the identity of Kennesaw.

Vice Chair Whipple commented that in the past, CBD projects that were not in the historic district were required to be reviewed by the HPC. Vice Chair Whipple was skeptical about how much the HPC's comments were taken into account in the CBD review process. He commented that the HPC's concerns were usually about being cognizant of neighboring properties with regard to building height, fence height, and potential impacts on historic structures during construction activity. Vice Chair Whipple questioned whether placing CBD properties in the historic district would place an undue burden on the properties, but noted that it would allow the HPC oversight to create a more cohesive district. Commissioner Bramlett asked if CBD cases would still come before the HPC. Ms. Campbell responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Campbell stated that Ethos Preservation's review also covered building materials. She referenced section H of the recommended revisions provided by Ethos Preservation, which stated: "The use of hardiplank as an approved material on a historic building is not appropriate and is not consistent with preservation best practices. It is appropriate on new buildings or on new additions to historic buildings. Remove this as a permitted material on historic buildings". She asked the Commissioners for their thoughts and comments on the suggested revision. Commissioner Bramlett asked if the HPC had allowed hardiplank for the last few years. He commented that he thought the Commission discussed the material due to state requirements. Chairman Gallagher commented that the HPC had previously allowed hardiplank. He explained that the material was the closest available option to wood. Vice Chair Whipple commented that hardiplank is still an acceptable material for additions. He stated that alterations to historic buildings require wood siding. He noted that requiring wood creates challenges because wood siding is often in poor shape and requires significant repair. He believed that the intent of the Design Standards is to limit hardiplank to new construction and additions to existing historic structures. Vice Chair Whipple stated that wood would still be one of the allowable materials for rehabilitation. Commissioner Butler asked if the HPC needed to vote on the siding measure. Ms. Campbell responded that a vote was not needed as the item was for discussion only. Vice Chair Whipple asked Commissioners if they were in agreement that existing wood siding would need to be maintained or replaced in like kind with wood siding instead of hardiplank or similar cement siding. Commissioner Butler agreed. Vice Chair Whipple commented that the HPC could ask Ethos Preservation for more information about the hardiplank recommendation if needed. Commissioner Neaves agreed with Vice Chair Whipple's comments about hardiplank siding. Ms. Campbell commented that the document was sent out to Commissioners for review because they are more familiar with what occurs within city limits. She noted that Ethos's comments were based on its history as a consultant. Ms. Campbell explained that this was an example of why staff wanted the HPC to review the recommendations to ensure that they align with the City's goals for the historic district. Commissioner Neaves asked if Mayor and Council could override the HPC if they voted not to allow someone to have hardiplank siding. Ms.

Campbell responded that Mayor and Council could override the HPC. She noted that the session was in part to ensure any recommenced updates were grounded in actual requirements by the governing historic body within the state. Commissioner Neaves commented that he wanted to ensure there was a relief mechanism built into the process so an applicant could appeal their case to Mayor and Council if they were denied by the HPC. Ms. Campbell responded that anyone has the right to appeal denials to Mayor and Council. She explained that Mayor and Council would use the same documentation as the HPC to review the case. Chairman Gallagher explained that an applicant would need a variance from Mayor and Council to go outside of the Standards.

Commissioner Neaves commented that the agenda packet included a recommendation to remove the COA application submittal requirements from chapter one of the design standards and instead place the requirements exclusively on the COA application. He stated he did not agree with the recommendation because applications typically reference the adopted documents when justifying required materials. Vice Chair Whipple commented that design professionals use documents like the Design Standards to determine requirements for a particular property. He stated that having the required documents outlined in the Design Standards works as a cheat sheet for design professionals. He noted that the application requirements in the standards could be reduced, but expressed that the standards need to direct design professionals and residents through the application process without having to call Planning and Zoning. Ms. Campbell commented that based on the comments by Ethos Preservation, the recommendation to remove the application requirements was to allow application updates without legislative action. She explained that with the requirements outlined in the Historic Design Standards, any changes have to go through a lengthy process. Outlining the requirements on an application would allow staff the flexibility to change the application requirements in response to any changes in state requirements. Commissioner Neaves understood the value of having the flexibility to update applications without legislative action. He explained that he has come across needing to justify an application requirement that is not in the regulations. He stated that it creates the potential for an applicant to ask about a requirement and having to answer that it was not based on regulation. Ms. Campbell responded that she understood the viewpoint. She explained that one option was to broadly outline the requirements in the standards and provide specifics on the application. Vice Chair Whipple commented that the information on the application requirements could be placed on the first few pages of the application. Ms. Campbell suggested there could be a comment in the requirements that stated "as outlined in the application" so the application would be tied to the Design Standards. She explained that the option would allow the application to be updated without legislative action. Commissioner Neaves suggested that language could be added stating that the application requirements were subject to approval by the Planning and Zoning Administrator.

Vice Chair Whipple stated that he saw comments about windows. He explained that windows have been one of the biggest contention points in the Standards. He commented that he saw a recommendation to allow alluminum windows instead of

strictly wood windows. He noted that the Standards still only allow wood windows on new construction. He asked the Commissioners for their opinions on window materials. He thought that the issues with window materials were similar to the siding discussion. He advised that the HPC needed to decide on the distinction between material for rehabilitation, additions, and new construction. Commissioner Bramlett commented that the recommendations seem to allow clad windows only on new construction. Vice Chair Whipple sought clarification on whether revisions were proposed to the section on window materials. He asked if historic windows still needed to be wood. Commissioner Bramlett responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Campbell asked if there were any additional thoughts or notes. She stated that staff will continue to work on the updates based on the feedback received. She explained that the next step would be to conduct town hall meetings to provide updates to the public and allow an opportunity to provide feedback. Ms. Campbell stated that after town halls were completed, staff will bring the historic design standards to the HPC and the necessary boards for official adoption.

Vice Chair Whipple asked if a new historic district map would be completed before the town halls so residents would know whether they are in the updated historic district boundaries. Ms. Campbell responded that a revised map would be ready to present at the town halls. She stated that a revised map would be completed internally to avoid undue panic from the public. She explained that the map revisions will take the Commissioners' feedback into consideration. Ms. Campbell clarified that staff will provide the map to the HPC before it goes to the public. Commissioner Bramlett asked if there were any details on the timing of the town halls. Ms. Campbell responded that staff was hoping to have at least two town halls. She stated that a date had not been set for the town halls.

Chairman Gallagher asked if there was any further discussion. Ms. Campbell stated that there was no further discussion and that the discussion had been helpful. Chairman Gallagher asked if the floor needed to be open for public comments. Ms. Campbell responded that there was no public comment on discussion only items.

B. Discussion Only: Updated Historic District Map

6. COAA Approval by City Staff and HPC Chair

A. COAA2025-21 - 2893 N Main Street

This is a Certificate of Appropriateness for a vinyl and skate shop at 2893 North Main Street. The Certificate of Appropriateness application was submitted by Harrison Marcus on behalf of 41 South Creative for two signs. The application was administratively approved on December 2, 2025.

7. Discussion

Vice Chair Whipple asked if staff was still actively seeking applicants to join the Commission. Ms. Campbell responded in the affirmative. She stated that there is currently one vacancy on the HPC. She asked if Commissioners knew anyone with a

background in historic preservation, architecture, engineering, or a similar field, to please direct them to staff. Commissioner Bramlett stated that someone reached out to him recently but he did not know if she was filling out the application.

8. Public Comments

Chairman Gallagher opened the floor to public comment. Hearing no public comment, he closed the floor to public comment.

9. Staff Comment

10. Adjourn

Chairman Gallagher adjourned the meeting at 8:54 a.m.