



Meeting of the Historic District Commission

August 14, 2025, 5:30 PM
City Hall Room 101 & Zoom

NOTE: The August 14, 2025 Historic District Commission meeting was held in person and online, with commissioners attending in person and online. Staff were present in person.

Members: Chair Christine Myres, Meredith Mahan, Mark Harper, Cheri Coley, Jennifer Didway, Tommie Flowers Davis, and Karen Rorex

City Staff: Kylee Cole – Long Range & Preservation Planner; Britin Bostick - Long Range Planning & Special Projects Manager

Call to Order: 5:30 PM

In Attendance: Chair Christine Myres, Cheri Coley, Jennifer Didway, Mark Harper, Karen Rorex, Kylee Cole, and Britin Bostick. Commissioners Flowers Davis and Mahan were absent at the time of roll call, with Mahan joining later.

Approval of Minutes from the July 10, 2025 Meeting: Motion to accept by Commissioner Coley, second by Commissioner Didway. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Unfinished Business:

1. **Downtown Design Overlay District:** Chair Myres asked about the section of code sent to commissioners via email as the document length appeared short. Cole replied with specifics about the code section and how it relates to the full Unified Development Code. Cole needed a moment to connect to the internet for the presentation. Commissioner Mahan arrived at 5:34pm.

Cole's presentation was not fully functioning due to unknown technical issues but she proceeded with her presentation verbally, explaining that there are three building types: residential, commercial, and mixed use. There are also three eras or ages within those three types: contemporary, older, and historic construction. The term "historic" is a legal term for a resource, building, or structure that is at least 50 years old. The frustrating thing about guidelines for the Downtown is that there is no real differentiation for those building types, and all of the requirements have to be applied regardless of type or age.

Cole proposed to focus on residential, which has single-family, duplex, triplex, multi-family, etc. There are the three ages as well as architectural styles. Commissioners are welcome to refer back to the style guide in their binder. Today's presentation and discussion will focus a bit narrowly today and use this framework to review some of the current language.

Cole referred to the section on marquees and awnings and directed commissioners to the next section below - balconies - as marquees and awnings do not typically appear on residential buildings. Cole noted that "back of curb" can be understood as "built up to the street". Chair Myres asked for clarification on the definition of "back of curb" and staff replied with a detail explanation that covered measurement uses, dimensional standards, the situation of the absence of a curb, and how building fronts may be placed in relation to a curb.

Commissioner Coley asked if the standards should be rewritten to section out the building types. Cole provided examples of the standards not successfully applying to residential and continued with the explanation of balconies with a Downtown Fayetteville property with a balcony as a visual example. Cole has been reviewing Downtown building types for visual examples for the Commission. Commissioner Coley asked for a definition of "principle facade". Cole provided a description of the front different from the sides. Commissioners and Cole had a discussion about balcony conditions, depths, design possibilities, and the challenges of applying the current standards to a broad set of buildings and site designs.

Cole showed and described another example from Dickson Street with shallow balconies or "Juliet balconies" as a design feature that did not allow occupation, which is different from balconies supported by columns that may be much deeper. This creates a condition in which the public is walking under the balcony. Balconies of this type are required to have illumination and the example building did, with several light fixtures visible on the underside of the balcony above the sidewalk.

Another example showed a historic home with a small second floor balcony extending over a first floor porch roof. Commissioners and Cole agreed to revisit the standard of measuring or requiring balcony depth.

Cole proposed to skip forward to turrets and cupolas. The current size limitation does not accommodate differences in building size. Chair Myres proposed a percentage of building footprint as an alternate. Cole paused to define turrets and cupolas. Chair Myres asked to have illustrations in the updated code as sketches and drawings can help a lot to make the language more clear to readers. Cole noted that the standards were written to be interpreted by architects, which is not ultimately the system that was set up. Commissioners and Cole discussed the terms and how to define turrets and cupolas and reviewed street view images. Chair Myres proposed also separating the architectural elements instead of treating them the same. Cole asked if it's reasonable to expect new construction to include these elements? Commissioner Coley pointed out that if someone did choose that and the standards did not address it then a challenge may arise. Chair Myres discussed both sides of the question. Cole proposed to remove the height requirement as other portions of the code would restrict height. Commissioner Harper referred back to Commissioner Coley's caution about not having the

language if someone should attempt it. Commissioner Mahan had been reviewing images of turrets on her phone and shared her findings.

Cole noted the conversation time and offered to work to bring back her presentation successfully at the next meeting, recommended that Commissioners review the rules in the meantime, and suggested Commissioners think through how to "break" the rules so that accidental loopholes are not created. Problems with existing buildings are a great way to point things out that could be good improvements to the requirements.

Commissioner Coley asked for an updated working draft for reference to capture changes.

Chair Myres noted the book by Virginia McAlester "A Field Guide to American Houses" would be a helpful reference for residential architectural styles. The Library has a copy.

New Business: None.

Other Business: None.

Announcements:

1. We are under contract with Post Oak for Phase 1 of the citywide windshield survey, which is approximately the southeast quarter of the city.
2. We are in the season to be ready to submit projects for our 2026 CLG grant application. Phase 2 of the survey is the obvious next step, but staff would like to coordinate Phase 2 to focus on the Downtown area up to north street, west to Garland, and south to MLK. There are a number of demolitions in these areas so staff would like to prioritize these resources as well as coordinate with the upcoming Downtown Master Plan. Cole proposes to bring a boundary for Phase 2 at the September meeting. A second idea is to request funding for a consultant to develop design guidelines for the Historic Southeast Fayetteville neighborhood as they are currently gathering petition signatures to request the creation of a local historic district and staff would like to hire a consultant to provide the additional capacity for that project. Cole will have more information at the September meeting and will be asking for a recommendation to Council on the grant application.
 - o Chair Myres asked if the grant required in-kind match. Cole replied that cash is not required but in-kind work will be provided from staff. Staff and commissioners discussed funding histories and amounts and how projects are decided and the high quality results that have been delivered over the last few years.
3. Bostick announced the kickoff of the Downtown Plan on September 14 and will be bringing the plan information to the September meeting.

Adjourned: 6:37 PM