



**Meeting of the Historic District Commission**

October 9, 2025, 5:30 PM  
City Hall Room 101 & Zoom

**NOTE: The October 9, 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, Tommie Flowers Davis, Kylee Cole, and Britin Bostick.

**Approval of Minutes from the September 11, 2025 Meeting:** Motion to accept by Commissioner Coley with a corrective amendment by Chair Myres, second by Commissioner Didway. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Unfinished Business:**

1. **Downtown Design Overlay District Review:** Chair Myres introduced the item and asked staff to give their presentation. Cole reminded the Commissioners of the discussion to date, including the Downtown Design overlay District boundary, which may or not change as the Downtown Plan project progresses. The focus to this point has been on residential architectural features, and Cole proceeded with the requirements for bay windows. She showed the current design standards, which prescribe depth, height, and length of projected bays, and provided details of that architectural feature type. She is proposing the removal of sections B and C as it is redundant with other sections of the standards.

Chair Myres asked to define what we mean by “bay” specifically to address the distinction between a façade division and an architectural feature. Commissioner Coley agreed with the need for a definition. Commissioner Didway concurred. Whether this was actually better identified as an “oriel” was discussed. Cole will work on the language to improve the clarity of the language.

**New Business:**

1. **Oak Grove Local Historic District:** Cole presented a proposal for a local historic district called “Oak Grove”, which had successfully been submitted by petition in accordance with the Arkansas Historic Districts Act. Cole shared the background of the proposal, a map of the proposed districts and the partial overlap with the Wilson Park National Register Historic District, and some of the attributes of the homes within the proposed district. The neighborhood is within some of the early platted

additions to the city after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The development of the area was primarily by Noah Fields Drake, namesake of the city's Drake Field. Cole shared biographical information for Drake and his involvement in the development of the neighborhood, which is notable for the style and materials of the homes he designed as they include native stone and often brick. His first home was a home that has been recently remodeled in the neighborhood before he built a home himself with some of the characteristics for which is style is now well known. Ten homes remain in the neighborhood from his original eleven.

Other houses in the neighborhood are primarily Craftsman or Craftsman Bungalow style, with a lot of consistency in the neighborhood. There is extensive use of stone in both the buildings and landscaping. There are 31 historic-age properties within the proposed district, with predominantly Craftsman style as was typical of the 1920s era in which most of the houses were constructed.

Chair Myres asked how many non-contributing structures. Cole replied there are six, one of which is not historic and the others have had significant alterations or additions that have removed historic fabric to a great extent or altered the building completely.

Cole instructed the commissioners that their role is to review the report and make any changes as they will be issuing the report. Chair Myres had read the narrative but would like to look at the individual structures. She stated her confidence in Cole's recommendation on non-contributing structures, and with a 72% buy-in from owners she is in favor of moving forward. She noted the rationale for protection and the overlap with the National Register District. She stated her support for protecting as much of the city's historic fabric as possible. She asked about taking the time until the next meeting to review. Cole laid out the different options available to the commissioners, including forwarding the report to the state preservation office and the Planning Commission as a draft to provide them the 60 days to review, then the commission would be able to take any comments into account in their final recommendation to the City Council.

Commissioner Harper asked about the impact to any non-conforming properties. Cole noted that non-historic or non-contributing structures can have more flexibility as there is often not historic fabric to retain or protect. She has also been in close contact with the neighborhood and there have been a lot of communication efforts to neighbors about the proposal. Cole noted that the HDC will still need to hold a public hearing once comments are received back and the neighborhood will need to be formally notified for that public hearing. Cole clarified further that there is not an expectation that individual properties will be able to "opt-out" as the district has been proposed as a complete, closed boundary, but that the application of design standards or guidelines can be successful, even with new construction as has already been seen in the neighborhood with recent construction.

Cole presented a draft letter for the commissioners' consideration, as letters would need to be sent to both the Planning Commission and the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program with the report to notify that the process has been initiated.

Chair Myres asked if the timeline can proceed more quickly. Cole detailed the process for review by the Planning Commission as an administrative item. She additionally showed a slide detailing the process with a sample motion.

Motion to forward the report to AHPP and the Planning Commission made by Commissioner Flowers Davis, seconded by Commissioner Harper. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

Chair Myres asked commissioners to review the report draft carefully for edits. Cole urged commissioners to contact her with any requests for details or information. Commissioner Flowers Davis asked for clarification on the inclusion of properties within both the Wilson Park National Register District and the Oak Grove local historic district. Chair Myres asked if the association with Noah Drake was clear in the report. Cole pointed out the notations where she was able to confirm the association and offer to make edits for better clarity. Commissioners are welcome to make edits digitally or on hard copies. Cole offered to add a statement about Noah Drake as additional background information in the report.

Commissioner Flowers Davis asked about the design standards being used. Cole said that she had worked with the neighborhood on design standards, which she will email. The drafted standards meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and address many aspects of historic preservation. Bostick reminded the commissioners that to their knowledge this is the first time this process has been undertaken in Arkansas.

**Other Business:** None.

**Announcements:**

1. Cole announced that the Wilson Park Apartments are being considered for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. She will scan the packet and email to Commissioners.
2. Cole announced that Post Oak will be in town October 20-24 for the phase one survey of historic properties.
3. Chair Myres announced a pancake breakfast 6-10am on Saturday, Oct 11 at the Lake Wedington Fire Station.

**Adjourned:** 6:21 PM