



Historic District Commission

Meeting Minutes

October 14, 2025, 6:30 PM

RM 110 | Council Chamber

Chair Brian Daniels

Vice-Chair Nancy McCormick

Glenn Connolly

Josh Gurlitz

David Hawisher

Laura Moore

Don Tise

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Opening

Elect temporary officer(s)

Commissioner Daniels moved, seconded by McCormick, that he and McCormick serve as temporary officers for the meeting. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Roll Call

Charnika Harrell, Staff Liaison, Anna Scott Myers, Staff Liaison, Kevin Hornik, Counsel to the Commission

Present 6 - Chair Brian Daniels , Vice-Chair Nancy McCormick, David Hawisher, Glenn Connolly, Don Tise, and Laura Moore

Excused 1 - Josh Gurlitz

Secretary reads procedures into the record

Commission Chair reads public charge

Approval of Agenda

Vice Chair McCormick moved, Hawisher seconded, to approve the agenda. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Aye: 6 - Chair Brian Daniels , Vice-Chair Nancy McCormick, David Hawisher, Glenn Connolly, Don Tise, and Laura Moore

Excused: 1 - Josh Gurlitz

Announcements

Commissioner Hawisher announced that it would be his last meeting because he is moving outside of Chapel Hill's jurisdiction and would be ineligible to serve on the commission.

Petitions**Approval of Minutes****1. [August 12, 2025 Action Minutes](#) [25-0385]**

Vice Chair McCormick mentioned that she did not attend the August meeting, and she reviewed the materials. Commissioner Hawisher moved, seconded by Tise, to approve the August 15, 2025, meeting minutes. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Aye: 6 - Chair Brian Daniels , Vice-Chair Nancy McCormick, David Hawisher, Glenn Connolly, Don Tise, and Laura Moore

Excused: 1 - Josh Gurlitz

Information**2. [Administrative COA Approvals and Maintenance Work Report](#) [25-0386]****Consent****3. [208 Hillsborough Street](#) [25-0387]****4. [603 E. Franklin Street](#) [25-0388]**

Commissioner Hawisher moved, McCormick seconded, to approve the written decisions for 208 Hillsborough Street and 603 E. Franklin Street. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Aye: 6 - Chair Brian Daniels , Vice-Chair Nancy McCormick, David Hawisher, Glenn Connolly, Don Tise, and Laura Moore

Excused: 1 - Josh Gurlitz

Old Business**5. [218 Wilson Street](#) [25-0389]**

Phil Szostak, architect, explained that the application was for a solar

shade structure in the community garden that could be used to provide electricity.

Szostak presented a rendering of the wood structure with solar panels. He explained that an additional box structure was needed for batteries and a small refrigerator. He said the structure would be pre-cut and assembled on site. He also presented a site plan that showed where the structure would be located.

Commissioner Moore asked about the wall next to the shade structure. Szostak explained that it was the structure that held the batteries, a small refrigerator, and other equipment needed for the solar panels.

Chair Daniels asked what faced the back of the structure. Szostak said the back of the structure faced the right-of-way and that the view in the rendering was from the right-of-way.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Hawisher moved, seconded by Tise, that the application was not incongruous with the special character of the district. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Aye: 6 - Chair Brian Daniels , Vice-Chair Nancy McCormick, David Hawisher, Glenn Connolly, Don Tise, and Laura Moore

Excused: 1 - Josh Gurlitz

6. 415 Hillsborough Street

[25-0390]

Phil Post, architect, said the house was on a half-acre lot and was not visible from the street. He explained that the application was for a cottage behind the house and a driveway.

Post shared an image of a map and identified the types of structures surrounding the property. He said the existing structure on the property was built in Chatham County about 200 years ago and it was moved to the current lot.

Post presented a plan of the existing conditions and identified the

existing house and driveway. He presented a plan of the proposed cottage. He said the cottage would be about 994 square feet with two porches and a low-slung roof. He said the existing driveway would be extended using the same materials as the existing driveway. He said no trees would be removed and bamboo would be removed. He explained that the grade drops at the rear of the property and grading was not proposed near the existing house.

Post presented elevations of the proposed cottage. He said the cottage would not be seen from the street. He also explained that the design called for a chimney, but he was not sure if there would be a fireplace. He said the design of the cottage was not trying to compete with the existing structure. He also said the windows would match those on the existing house.

Post presented photos of nearby structures. He mentioned that he took the photos in March because he wanted to show how the cottage would not be visible without vegetation. He also presented photos of the existing house from the street.

Vice Chair McCormick asked if there were similar structures nearby. Post showed a picture of a nearby house. He said there was a nearby house with an accessory unit. He explained that the photo of that house showed both the main house and accessory unit.

Commissioner Moore asked which way the front of the cottage would face. Post said it would face south. Moore also asked about a tree shown in the driveway on the site plan. Post said the tree was dead and would be removed.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Tise appreciated that the cottage was not mimicking a style in the historic district and noted that the details were not over-the-top.

Vice Chair McCormick moved, seconded by Hawisher, that the application was not incongruous with the special character of the district. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Aye: 6 - Chair Brian Daniels , Vice-Chair Nancy McCormick, David Hawisher, Glenn Connolly, Don Tise, and Laura Moore

Excused: 1 - Josh Gurlitz

7. 702 Gimghoul Road

[25-0391]

Ethan Fitzpatrick, a representative of the contractor NC Solar Now, explained that the application was for a solar and battery project for the property. He said that the contract was trying to blend historic preservation and environmental preservation. He said the project included 20 solar panels with a battery backup in the basement. He said the solar arrays would be on a detached structure at the back of the property. He explained that the building was not facing a publicly accessible road or area. He said the solar panels would be flush-mounted to the roof surface.

Fitzpatrick also presented a Google Map view of the house from the street. He identified the detached building that the panels would be mounted to. He said it would be difficult to see the panels from the street.

Commissioner Tise asked where the power wall would be. Fitzpatrick said it would be in the basement.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Connolly moved, seconded by Hawisher, that the application was not incongruous with the special character of the district. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Aye: 6 - Chair Brian Daniels , Vice-Chair Nancy McCormick, David Hawisher, Glenn Connolly, Don Tise, and Laura Moore

Excused: 1 - Josh Gurlitz

New Business

8. 724 Gimghoul Road

[25-0437]

Coby Linton, architect, presented a vicinity map. He said the house was built in 1935 in the colonial-revival style. He said previous

additions to the house had been low-sloped hipped roofs. He said there was a big addition on the rear with two fieldstone walls in the back of the property in 2015. He said the property slopes down steeply in the back and the fieldstone walls created terraces to help.

Linton presented a site plan. He said the garden house would be built on the lower terrace. He said a plunge pool would be installed on the upper terrace. He said a water feature would also be installed to help with noise from Raleigh Road. He said a fence around the pool is required by building code and noted the project included a 4-foot-tall black painted metal fence.

Linton presented a photo of the back of the house. He explained that no changes were proposed to the house. He presented a photo of the terraces and stone walls. He said the walls were about 3- to 4-feet-tall in most places.

Linton presented a cross-section of the property. He said the garden house would sit lower because of the grade. He said the top of the proposed retaining wall would be below the street because of how much the grade slopes down.

Linton presented an elevation of the proposed garden house. He said the materials of the garden house were taken from the existing house. He explained that the existing house had a lot of different window types. He also said the rear of the property was not visible from the street because of existing trees.

Linton presented a plan of the proposed fences and gates on the east and west sides of the house. He said the gate on the east side was to shield trash bins. He presented a photo of the proposed landscape wall with a water feature. He said the wall would have an opening that led to a wooden sauna. He said the landscape wall would be Chatham fieldstone to match the terrace walls. He also said the sauna has glass doors that face the rear of the property.

Linton presented photos of brick fences in the Gimghoul neighborhood. He pointed to a black metal fence that he thought was similar to the proposed fence. He also talked through the proposed windows and presented photos of different window styles on the existing house. He also presented photos of white painted

accessory structures in the Gimghoul neighborhood.

Vice Chair McCormick said accessory structures are often less detailed than the primary structure and she thinks the garden house was more elaborate than the existing house. She asked if the chimney was functional. Linton said the garden house would be smaller than the main house. He also said the existing house has a lot of projecting forms. He said the garden house has smaller gables and is symmetrical, and he did not think it was more elaborate. He explained that the chimney was for a fireplace.

Commissioner Moore said the garden house should be simpler.

Chair Daniels asked Linton to clarify the location of the proposed fences. Linton presented the site plan and explained that the fence starts at the back of the main house. He said the panels may be 4-feet-tall with piers that project another six inches. Daniels asked how much the grade drops to the terraces. Linton said nine feet for the first terrace and another three feet for the second terrace. Daniels asked for the height of the sauna. Linton said the sauna would be 8-feet-tall. Daniels asked if the sauna would be visible. Linton said existing trees would screen it. Daniels asked if the sauna would be visible from the street without the existing trees. Linton said the top of the sauna may be visible without the trees. Daniels explained that he was concern that a modern structure would be visible from the street.

Commissioner Hawisher said he looked at the property on Google Maps and suggested the applicant share it with the commission. Linton searched the property on Google Maps and shared the street view. He pointed out where the proposed brick walls would be. He said the sauna may be entirely concealed.

McCormick asked if the garden house would be visible from the street. Linton said the first few feet of the eastern side may be visible and the rest of the structure would be behind the house.

Commissioner Moore and Daniels asked what would be visible from the neighbor's yard. Linton said it would not be visible unless the trees were chopped down.

Daniels asked for the width of the garden house compared to the main house. Linton said the garden house has a similar width to the main house.

There was no public comment.

Hawisher asked the commission if they could consider vegetation and screening because he thought they could for existing vegetation.

Counsel Hornik advised that he was not aware of a standard that would limit them from considering existing vegetation. Hornik also reminded them that they should determine if what was proposed would be incongruous with the character of the district. He said that the question was not if the new elements were visible from neighboring property.

Daniels said they should talk about the ornamentation, scale, and visibility of the cottage. He said the garden house looked wider than the main house. McCormick questioned how the ornamentation of the cottage compared to other accessory structures in the district.

Moore asked if placing the sauna in a less visible location would help. Daniels thought that would be a solution.

Commissioner Tise agreed that the garden house was ornate, but he thought that being all white would help. He said he did not think there was anything jarring about how it would fit into the character of the neighborhood. He said the sauna would be jarring.

Commissioner Connolly asked what the commissioner meant by ornamentation. McCormick clarified that they were talking about the Chippendale railing, chimney, and other elements.

Hornik said the commission could approve elements they do not think are incongruous with the character of the district and continue the hearing for the remaining elements.

Linton said the owner was willing to remove the sauna from the project and the railing on the garden house.

Commissioner Tise, moved, seconded by Hawisher, that the application was not incongruous with the special character of the district provided that the sauna and Chippendale railing on the garden house were removed. Moore suggested reducing the height of the chimney if the railings would be removed.

Matthew Dill, owner, said the chimney was functional to the indoor and outdoor space. Linton said the chimney's height could be reduced to meet building code minimums.

Tise withdrew his motion.

Commissioner Hawisher moved, seconded by Tise, that the application was not incongruous with the special character of the district, provided that the sauna and Chippendale railing on the garden house were removed and the chimney height reduced to the building code minimum. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Aye: 6 - Chair Brian Daniels , Vice-Chair Nancy McCormick, David Hawisher, Glenn Connolly, Don Tise, and Laura Moore

Excused: 1 - Josh Gurlitz

Officer Elections

Commissioner McCormick, seconded by Hawisher, moved to elect Tise as Chair and Daniels as Vice Chair. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Aye: 6 - Chair Brian Daniels , Vice-Chair Nancy McCormick, David Hawisher, Glenn Connolly, Don Tise, and Laura Moore

Excused: 1 - Josh Gurlitz

Adjournment

Next Meeting - November 11, 2025

Order of Consideration of Agenda Items:

- 1. Staff Presentation*
- 2. Applicant's Presentation*
- 3. Public Comment*
- 4. Board Discussion*
- 5. Motion*

6. *Restatement of Motion by Chair*

7. *Vote*

8. *Announcement of Vote by Chair*

Public Charge: The Advisory Body pledges its respect to the public. The Body asks the public to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous manner, both with the Body and with fellow members of the public. Should any member of the Body or any member of the public fail to observe this charge at any time, the Chair will ask the offending person to leave the meeting until that individual regains personal control. Should decorum fail to be restored, the Chair will recess the meeting until a genuine commitment to this public charge is observed.

Unless otherwise noted, please contact the Planning Department at 919-968-2728; planning@townofchapelhill.org for more information on the above referenced applications.

See the Advisory Boards page <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/boards> for background information on this Board.