

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

ATHENS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DECEMBER 5, 2024

3:30 P.M.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Laura Lenoir
Timberly Guffey
Tyler Boyd
Jordan Curtis
Justin White
Chairperson Shawn McKeehan

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jona Garrett

OTHERS ATTENDING

Nora Cardin
Anthony Casteel
Mike Stevenson
Sandra Kinney
Lena Perkins
Will Houston
Lisa Long
Lisa Mayfield
Juanita McClure-Lewis
Stewart Mason
Charlie Clark
Tanya Freeman
Dr. Lane Tillner
Kelley Reid

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of November 7, 2024 regular meeting minutes

There was an amendment to the minutes by Justin White on page 6. Mr. White said he did not think it was transcribed correctly. His intent of that statement in the third sentence was that they could tell the Council to do it if they wanted to or just let them make the decision on their own and if it hurt feelings ... (could not hear the rest of the sentence due to a baby cooing). He was not trying to push them to just tell the Council to do it.

Mrs. Cardin said she would make a note of that.

The minutes of the November 7, 2024, regular meeting were amended and approved on motion by Laura Lenoir; seconded by Justin White; vote – unanimous

NEW BUSINESS

1. Presentation on the benefits of historic overlays- Dr. Lane Tillner with the Tennessee Historical Commission

Chairperson McKeehan introduced Dr. Lane Tillner, from the Tennessee Historical Commission. She got her M.A. and Ph.D. from Middle Tennessee State University.

Dr. Tillner said she is at the Tennessee Historical Commission, also known as the State Historic Preservation Office. They have state programs and federal. She works with the federal program side. They have the National Register of Historic Places. They do historic preservation throughout the state. She discussed the Certified Local Government Program (CLGP).

Chairperson McKeehan said the intent for bringing her in was to go over the advantages of the Historic Overlay district for the commercial area of downtown Athens.

Dr. Tillner said the CLGP is a partnership through preservation. It is overseen nationally by the National Parks Association. It is for local governments who have an active historic zoning commission, historic districts, design guidelines, and are actively practicing preservation in their city and want to preserve their resources in their community. They get fifteen extra points on their application if they decide to apply for federal historic preservation grants. These can be used for planning, or they can be used for brick and mortar nationally historic buildings. She talked about where the zoning code came from. Historic districts are an overlay superimposed on top of other zoning. They do not alter or change that zoning in any kind of way.

After Dr. Tillner's presentation, there were questions and comments from those in attendance.

Mrs. Cardin showed the area that the Commission discussed for the downtown historic overlay. It is not set in stone; it is just what was most recently talked about.

Chairperson McKeehan said that the charge of this committee was to recommend that such a district be created, and that's passed on to the planning commission which encourages the Council to pass an ordinance.

MOTION: To make a recommendation to the Planning Commission that a historic overlay be put in place based on the proposed boundary as presented.

MADE: Jordan Curtis

SECOND: Justin White

There was discussion about the process of making the recommendation to whom.

Mr. Casteel said the process is that they will recommend this to the regular planning commission. That planning commission will look at it and then if they choose to, they will make a recommendation to the City Council for rezoning. It will then follow the rezoning process for an overlay. It will have two readings and public hearing and on the second reading it will be voted on.

Mrs. Lenoir asked if the boundary could be altered to include other structures and museums.

Mr. Casteel said they could recommend it however they want to.

There was more discussion.

Mrs. Garrett asked if Tennessee Wesleyan was included in this.

Mr. Boyd said the cafeteria is.

Someone in the audience asked how long it would take to implement this.

Chairperson McKeehan said it will take a few months, because they will send it to the Planning Commission, and the Planning Commission could either send it back to them or send the recommendation to Council.

VOTE: Unanimous
MOTION PASSED

Mr. White discussed giving the homeowners in the downtown district a way to rebuild if their home was destroyed.

Mr. Casteel said they talked about taking something to the planning commission that would involve protecting those houses in the downtown historic district. That would take the regular planning commission and the city council as well. They could recommend it to the planning commission.

Mr. White said that it is his recommendation because those people, if their house is destroyed, they are out of a house. They can't even get a loan on the house. They are kind of losing value on the houses that are in this district now.

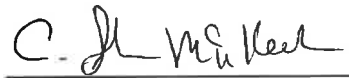
Mrs. Cardin asked if he was making a motion.

MOTION: To make a recommendation to the Planning Commission to look at regulations to protect residential properties in the B-2 district that are inside the proposed Downtown Historic District.

MADE: Justin White
SECOND: Jordan Curtis
VOTE: Unanimous
MOTION PASSED

MOTION: To adjourn.

MADE: Jordan Curtis
SECOND: Justin White
VOTE: Unanimous
MOTION PASSED


Shawn McKeehan, Chairperson


Timberly Guffey, Secretary