

STAFF REPORT

ATHENS MUNICIPAL-REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

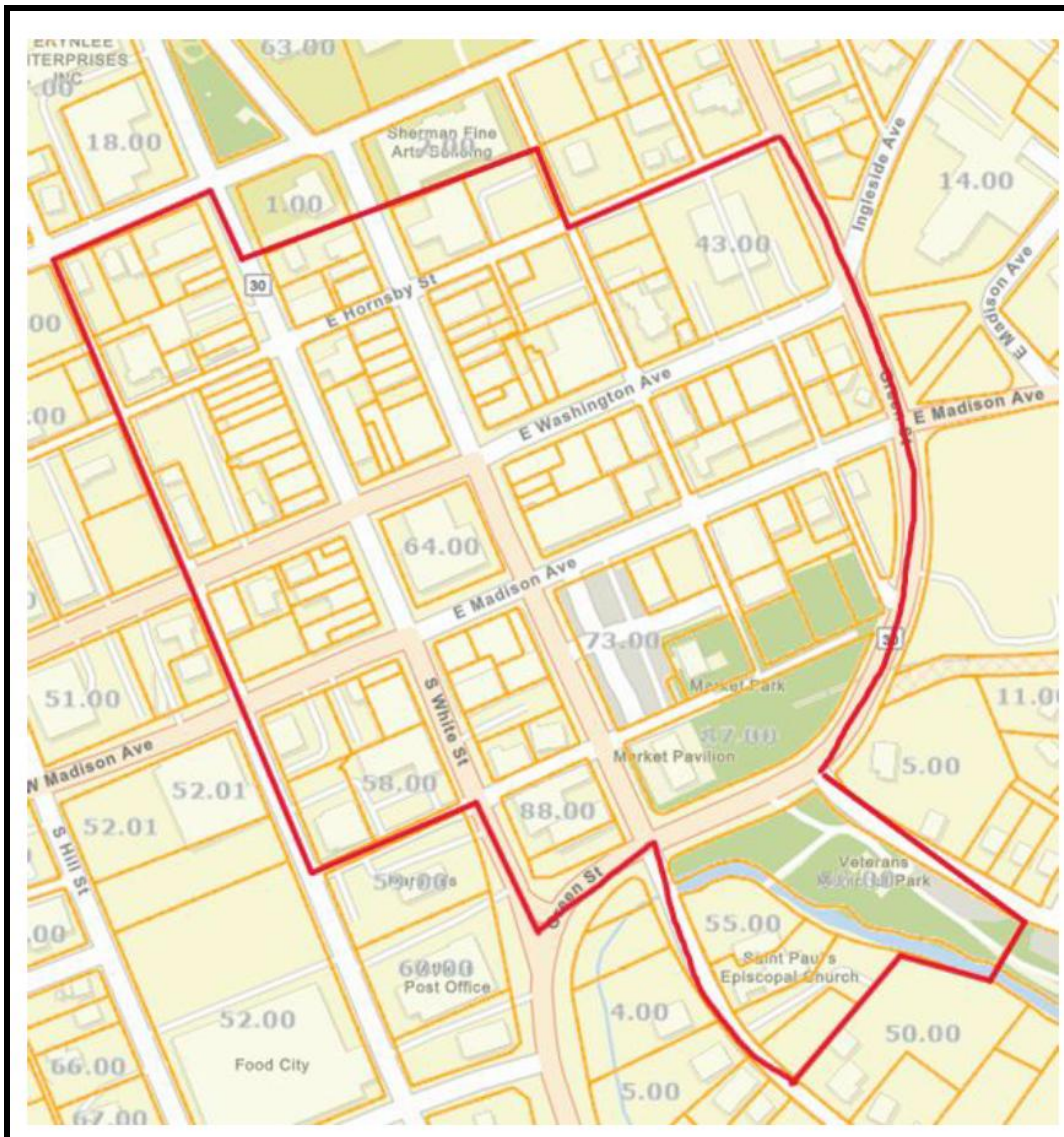
April 6, 2026

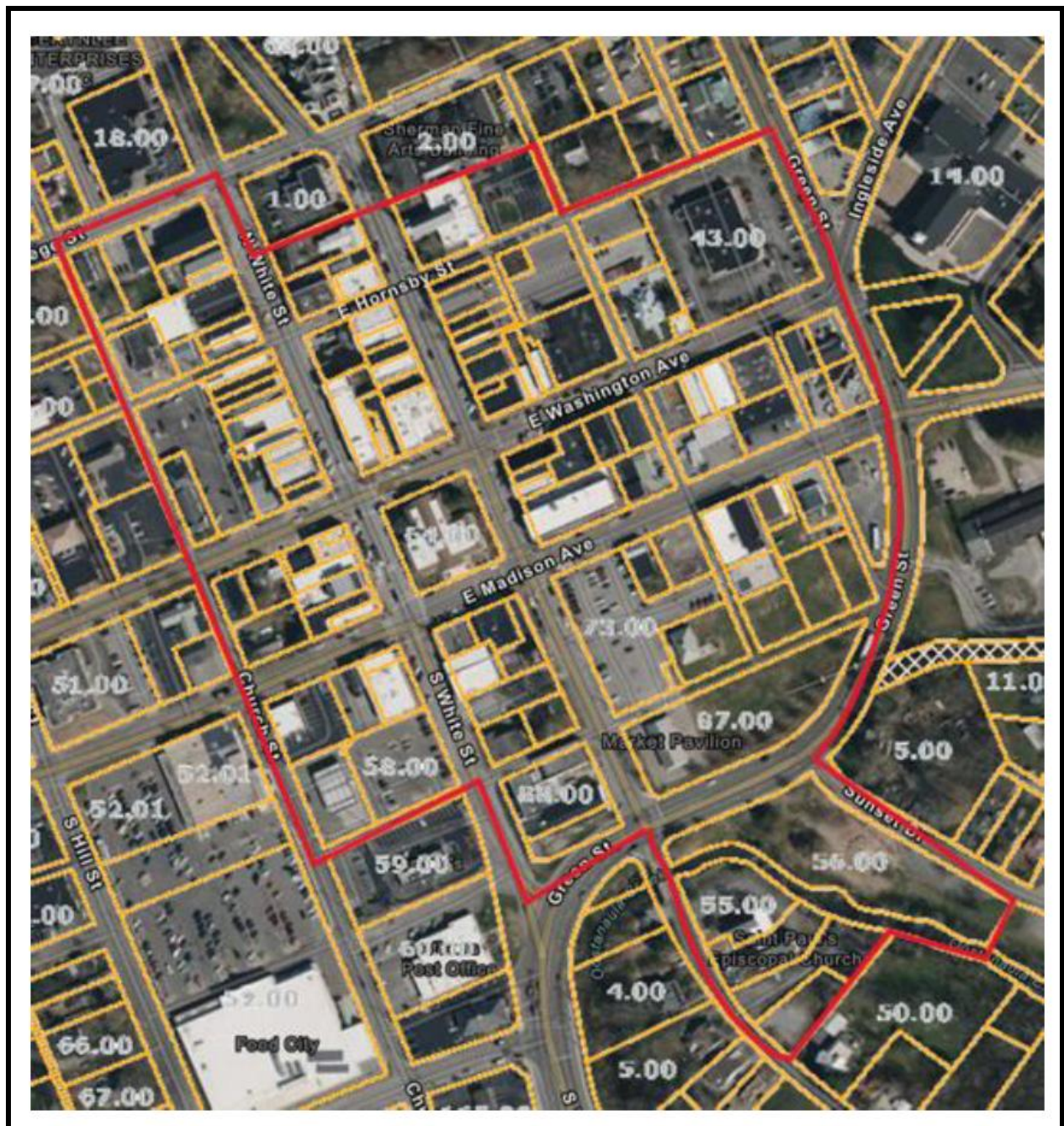
12:00 P.M.

CONFERENCE ROOM

OLD BUSINESS

1. Public Comments, review and recommendation of the Athens Historical Preservation Committee proposed H-2 Commercial Historic Preservation Overlay in the B-2 Central Business District.





The discussion on the potential downtown historic district began over a year ago. After the first recommendation, the City Council requested that the Historic Commission do more public outreach and revise the boundary. Since then, the Commission has discussed the matter at length. This includes holding two informational meetings, one of which included a panel discussion with panelists from the State of TN Historic Commission, Cleveland, Sweetwater and Loudon. Downtown property owners within the proposed district were mailed notices making them aware of both of these meetings in which the potential downtown district would be discussed in detail. Notices about the meetings were also posted on social media and in the DPA. These

informational meetings each had around 25 members of the public in attendance. Members of the public were able to ask any questions they may have and voice their support or opposition. After the most recent informational meeting in November, a survey was mailed to downtown property owners asking if they support the creation of a historic zoning overlay in the downtown area. Of the 77 surveys sent, 21 responses were received. 8 votes were in favor of the creation of the historic district, and 13 votes were opposed. This equates to 27% response rate with 61% opposed and 39% in favor. This is not a survey that shows the true feelings of all 77 property owners and should be treated in your decision-making as not being a survey of statistical significance. In addition, state laws that govern zoning do not require surveys or voted percentages in any form or fashion to establish the need for any type of zoning regulations. Not that public opinion doesn't matter, it certainly does, but the legislative board of the Athens City Council has all power to regulate zoning matters in the city as they see fit. Staff did not receive any additional comments or questions after the survey was mailed out. Having done over a year of outreach and education with members of the public, the Commission decided on their January 8th, 2026 meeting to recommend the district to the Planning Commission.

Below is the data from the existing residential H-1 Overlay district 2019- Present:

2019- 9 COA applications submitted, 9 approved
2020- 17 COA applications submitted, 17 approved
2021- 22 COA applications submitted, 22 approved
2022- 11 COA applications submitted, 11 approved
2023- 7 COA applications submitted, 7 approved
2024- 12 COA applications submitted, 11 approved
2025- 5 COA applications submitted, 5 approved

Total since 2019- 83 applications and 82 approved

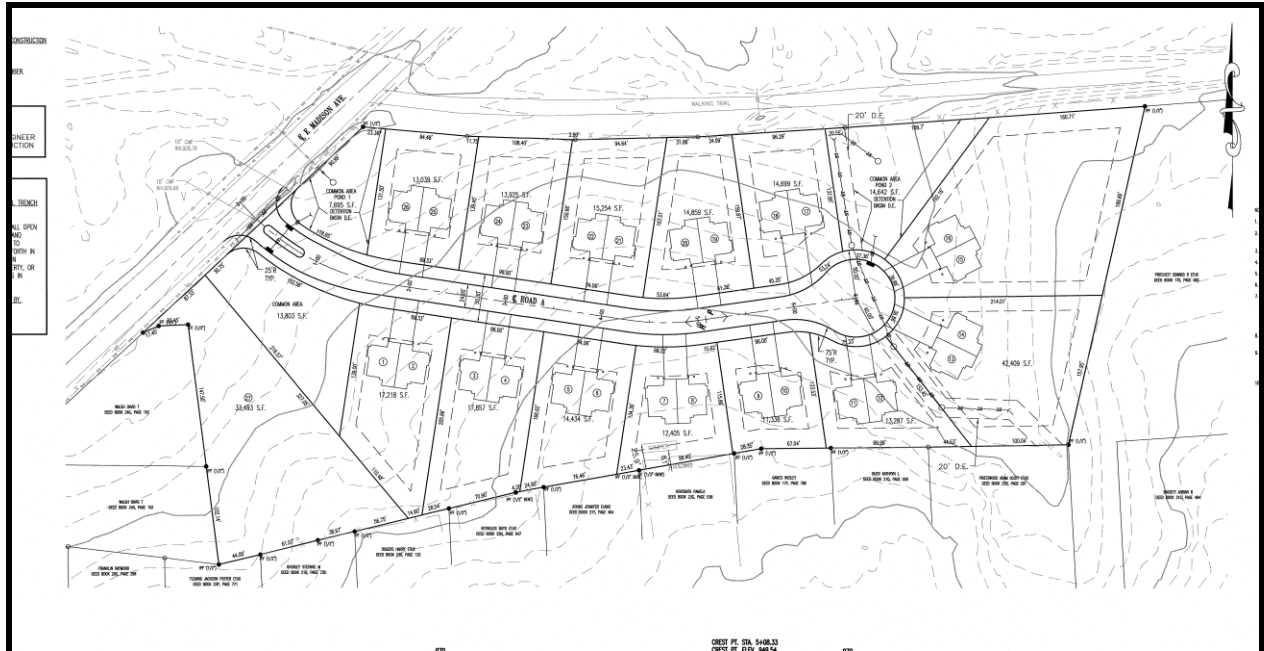
The above data equates to a 98.79% approval rate, which shows the willingness of the Preservation Commission to accommodate the exterior work landowners have requested in accordance with the design guidelines.

Whether this Commission Recommends approval, denial or some other alternative that would create a situation to send it back to the Athens Historical Preservation Commission for revisions, this can only be accomplished if City Council wants to proceed with the recommendation. This will move to the next City Council meeting with whatever recommendation is voted upon, just like any other rezoning/zoning ordinance amendment this Commission has been asked to consider.

Please see the attached Draft AHPC minutes from January 8, 2026, and all approved minutes of 2025 concerning the H-2 Overlay District work of the AHPC on the following pages

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Public Comments and Preliminary Plat Concept approval** for Kevin Reynolds on property shown as part of Tax Map 057 Parcels 012.00 on the Tennessee Real Estate Property Assessment Data Website. The property is located on East Madison Avenue and contains 7.57 acres and a possible 14 lots. The property is zoned R-2 Medium Density Residential.



The concept appears to meet the subdivision regulations and the zoning standards for the R-2 Medium Density Residential District. The engineering submission will show if this layout will work once all plans are approved. **Staff recommends approval of the preliminary plat concept as presented.**

- 2. Public Comments and Review and Recommendation for a Zoning Code amendment to add minimum and maximum parking requirements for a drive through oil change facility with light auto services bays and no overnight storage of vehicles.**

Staff approached this new use as a cross between light automobile service, and a drive through carwash. This new use is compatible with the carwash model, in that the patrons stay in the vehicle for the oil change just like they do for a drive through carwash. And the light service bays would be similar but less intensive than a conventional auto service shop that stores vehicles to provide multi-day services that are more intensive than what would be provided by this use. Below is research of other Tennessee municipalities and what they do to address these uses.

Nashville - TN

Carwash-Two spaces per bay or stall plus one per employee.

Oil Change- 4 spaces per 4 stalls (16 total) plus 1 for each additional stall over 4

Knoxville - TN

Vehicle Repair/Service – Minor - Two per bay.

Carwash-1/2 per employee of largest shift

Clarksville - TN

Vehicle Repair/Service – Minor -One (1) space per employee, plus stacking for three (3) vehicles for each bay.

Carwash- 4 staking spaces per bay, plus 1 per employee of largest shift

Murfreesboro – TN

Carwash- three spaces plus 3 queuing spaces for each bay

Vehicle Repair/Service – Minor - 2 per stall

Chattanooga, TN

Carwash- One space per bay plus 3 queuing spaces for each bay

Vehicle Repair/Service – Minor - 4 per bay

Mt Juliet, TN

Vehicle Repair/Service – Minor – 1 per 500 square feet of gross floor

Oil Change- 4 queuing spaces per Bay

Car Wash- 5 queuing spaces per Bay

Spring Hill, TN

Carwash- One space per bay

Vehicle Repair/Service – Minor - 2 per bay

Morristown, TN

Carwash- 3 queuing spaces for each bay plus 1 per employee

Vehicle Repair/Service – Minor - 2 per bay plus 1 per 300 square feet of gross floor

Based on the information gathered above, Staff recommends the follow amendment to the Commercial Minimum and Maximum Parking standards in Section 4.03.03 an Section 4.03.07.

Minimum

USE- Drive through oil change facility with minor auto service without overnight storage of vehicles

STANDARD-1 space for each bay (oil change and/or service) plus 2 spaces per bay dedicated to minor service, plus 2 queue spaces for each oil change bay.

Maximum

USE- Drive through oil change facility with minor auto service without overnight storage of vehicles

STANDARD -1.5 space for each bay (oil change and/or service) plus 2.5 spaces per bay dedicated to minor service, plus 3 queue spaces for each oil change bay.