

**MINUTES**  
**Town of Southern Pines Historic District Commission**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**August 14, 2025 at 4:00 PM**

The Town of Southern Pines Historic District Commission held its regular meeting on Thursday, August 14, 2025, at 4:00 PM at the Community Development Building, 801 SE Service Road, Southern Pines, North Carolina.

Members present: Chair Elizabeth Oettinger, Vice Chair Robert Brown, Robert Anderson, Karl Ecker and Sarah Farrell.

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 PM.

Karl Ecker made a motion, seconded by Robert Anderson, to approve the Minutes of the July 10, 2025 regular meeting. The motion carried.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**HD-17-25 Certificate of Appropriateness - Major Work; 125 SE Broad Street**

Darren Johnson, Facilities Superintendent, has applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness – Major Work for the Town of Southern Pines Administration building in order to construct an ADA-compliant ramp on the E. Pennsylvania Avenue side of the building, replace the original windows with new windows identical in appearance, replace broken or damaged slate roof tiles with matching slate, repair the roof underlayment, install new drip-edges and replace the ridge caps.

Attorney McCarley qualified the members of the Commission and the oath of testimony was administered to Town Manager Reagan Parsons.

Chair Oettinger resumed the public hearing that was continued from the July 10, 2025 meeting.

Planner Mason Mattox entered staff report HD-17-25 and his slide presentation into the record and provided an overview of the application which included the replacing broken or damaged roof tiles, adding drip edges and replacing the existing ridge caps with coppered-colored aluminum; and adding an ADA compliant ramp on the Pennsylvania Avenue side of the building, which was originally approved in 2020 but that Certificate of Appropriateness has expired.

Commissioner Anderson asked if anyone had recommended a particular brick for the ramp that will match the existing brick and Darren Johnson, Utilities Superintendent, stated the intent was to match the brick as closely as possible.

Mr. Parsons recommended that obtaining a closely matching brick be a condition of approval and asked if the proposed landscaping would cover the brick, which Mr. Johnson confirmed would be the case.

Commissioner Anderson inquired about the use of aluminum ridge caps in lieu of copper or lead-coated copper.

Mr. Johnson responded that lead is a toxin and he had spoken with the contractor who did the work on the building approximately 12 years ago and it had copper on it at that time. He is simply trying to return it the original colors.

Commissioner Farrell inquired about the drip edge and Commissioner Anderson stated that anything associated with the building should be replaced with the same material and did not recommend a copper colored aluminum because it does not age and there are other colors that are closer to aged copper that would be more consistent.

Mr. Mattox provided a sample of the proposed replacement window, which was entered into the record and stated that the proposal included the replacement of 15 original windows with vinyl windows.

Commissioner Anderson inquired about the Town's plans for the building.

Mr. Parsons responded that the Administration building and the Finance building are going to be vacated and whether the building is leased, sold or just sitting until further disposition is determined, repair of the roof is a priority. The ADA ramp was approved in 2020 but the Town had difficulty finding a contractor. If the ramp is approved, it is not a project that needs to be completed in the immediate future.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the windows were currently leaking and Mr. Parsons responded that they had not experienced significant water inside the building to date.

Commissioner Anderson stated that the building is a contributing structure in the Historic District and he was at least expecting the muntins to be outside of the glass.

Mr. Parsons stated cost would determine whether they decide to replace the windows because the intent is for the building to be vacated as of January 1, 2026. A decision, even if that decision is denial, with an expectation or explanation attached to it, would be of some value regardless of the Town Council's decision.

Chair Oettinger asked if the existing windows are original to the building and Mr. Mattox responded that to the best of staff's knowledge, the windows have never been replaced.

Mr. Johnson said the only window he could say with certainty had not been replaced is the one in the front office because it has wavy glass and Mr. Parsons added that the windows had not been replaced in at least 21 years.

Mr. Mattox stated that he had not found any permits for replacement of the windows since the adoption of the Historic District.

Katie Martin of The Pines Preservation Guild spoke in favor of repairing the existing windows as opposed to replacing them and stated that storm windows are perfectly acceptable. A letter from Ms. Martin was entered into the record.

Leslie Brians of The Pines Preservation Guild urged the Commission to deny the request to replace the windows, stating that the windows need general maintenance but not replacement. A letter from The Pines Preservation Guild was distributed to the Commission and entered into the record.

Chair Oettinger asked Ms. Brians what the timeline would be to replace versus repair the windows.

Ms. Brians responded that interior storm windows would be installed first and then the actual windows would be removed for rehabilitation. She said the proposed windows are not compatible and encouraged the Town to investigate repair and/or rehabilitation of the windows. She also distributed a statement from Andrew Wing, which was entered into the record.

The Commission discussed the feasibility of repairing the windows and the potential benefits of using storm windows.

Chair Oettinger closed the public hearing.

Karl Ecker made a motion, seconded by Robert Anderson, that HD-17-25 be approved as submitted with the following conditions:

1. that any replacement slate matches the existing color as closely as possible and be used on the back of the building;
2. that real copper ridge caps and drips be used on the roof instead of aluminum ridge caps and drips;
3. that the brick and mortar used for the ADA access either precisely match the tone and color of existing brick and mortar on the building or make use of the closest colors that are commercially available at the time of selection, and that the ADA access be obscured from view from the street by a landscape screen per the UDO standards for screening; and

4. that the existing windows be first enhanced with interior storm windows and afterwards, the windows be repaired following appropriate window spot repair or full rehabilitation methods as determined necessary

The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

Exhibits entered into the record during the public hearing:

- A. July 10, 2025 staff report
- B. July 10, 2025 staff presentation
- C. ProVia physical window sample
- D. August 14, 2025 The Pines Preservation Guild letter
- E. Letter from Andrew Wing – saving old windows
- F. August 14, 2025 staff report
- G. August 14, 2025 staff presentation

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#### **HD-18-25 Certificate of Appropriateness - Major Work; 180 SW Broad Street**

Darren Johnson, Facilities Superintendent, has applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness – Major Work to replace the original windows in the front of Town of Southern Pines Finance building with new vinyl windows identical in appearance.

Attorney McCarley qualified the members of the Commission and the oath of testimony was administered to Reagan Parsons and Maria Donnelly.

Chair Oettinger resumed the public hearing.

Planner Mason Mattox provided an overview of the application accompanied by a slide presentation and entered the staff report and the slide presentation as well as the window sample into the record. He stated that replacement of the arched windows on the front of the building, as well as the windows on the remainder of the building, was proposed. The windows on the sides and rear of the building were previously replaced but staff was unable to locate a COA - Major Work for that work.

Mr. Johnson stated the windows that had previously been replaced are aluminum clad and they are failing.

Commissioner Anderson stated that the windows may have been replaced around the time the new library was completed and shortly before the HDC was established.

Commissioner Ecker asked if repair versus replacement of the original windows had been considered, the financial considerations for both options, and if replacement meets local, state and federal guidelines.

Mr. Mattox stated that the Town has proposed replacing the original windows at the front with like for like as an alternative and will share the cost estimate.

Mr. Johnson stated that the company told him that to replace the windows with a like wooden window with a 20-year life would cost approximately \$15,000 per window.

Commissioner Anderson asked what the issue was with the existing windows and Mr. Johnson responded that the windows in the front are rotten and the aluminum clad windows are failing.

Commissioner Anderson commented that nothing about the addition adds to the Historic District but it would be worth the Town's money to replace the arched windows or repair them as much as possible to keep the original appearance.

Mr. Parsons asked Leslie Brians for her recommendation based on what she had seen and heard during the hearing.

Ms. Brians responded the windows are completely repairable. You would cut out whatever wood is failing, put in liquid epoxy and wood epoxy. You would either cut out the damaged wood and do a Dutchman repair, which means you just cut out the section that is failing and reinstall it with another piece of wood.

Maria Donnelly, a member of The Pines Preservation Guild, read a letter from Cathleen Turner, Piedmont Regional Director of Preservation NC, urging the Commission to deny the request to replace the front windows. Ms. Turner's letter was entered into the record.

Ms. Brians suggested adding exterior storm windows on the front of the building as an extra layer of protection for any of the windows that need to be removed for repair.

Katie Martin of The Pines Preservation Guild recommended repair versus replacement of the original windows and presented a letter from another Board member, Jennifer Brennan, who is a Main Street Coordinator in West Virginia, which was entered into the record.

Chair Oettinger closed the public hearing.

Karl Ecker made a motion, seconded by Sarah Farrell, to approve HD-18-25 with the condition that the twelve existing windows in portions of the building not facing Broad Street be replaced as presented in the application, but that the eight (8) existing windows on the portion of the building facing Broad Street be first enhanced with interior storm windows and afterwards be repaired following appropriate spot repair or full historically-appropriate window rehabilitation methods as determined necessary. The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

Exhibits entered into the record during the public hearing:

- A. July 10, 2025 staff report
  - B. July 10, 2025 staff presentation
  - C. ProVia physical window sample
  - D. Letter from Cathleen Turner of Preservation NC
  - E. Letter from Andrew Wing of Saving Old Windows
  - F. The Pines Preservation Guild letter dated August 14, 2025
  - G. Letter from Jennifer Brennan of The Pines Preservation Guild
  - H. Letter from Katie Martin
  - I. Adapting Historic Windows and Doors for Resilience Standards Overview
  - J. August 14, 2025 staff report
  - K. August 14, 2025 staff presentation
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**HD-19-25 Certificate of Appropriateness - Major Work; Downtown Park**

Darren Johnson, Facilities Superintendent has requested a Certificate of Appropriateness – Major Work to replace the existing light poles seven (7) new 50-foot light poles adjacent to the existing tennis courts in the Downtown Park.

Attorney McCarley qualified the members of the Commission and the oath of testimony was administered to Town Manager Reagan Parsons.

Chair Oettinger resumed the public hearing that was continued from the July 2025 regular meeting.

Planner Mason Mattox provided an overview of the application accompanied by a slide presentation, both of which were entered into the record and stated that the Commission had requested that the applicant conduct more research to determine whether the height of the poles could be reduced. He said the applicant had conducted the research and the request remained unchanged.

Commissioner Ecker said the staff report stated that the proposed lights would light the tennis courts with minimal light outside of the tennis courts and no light affecting any neighboring buildings.

Mr. Mattox shared images for the manufacturer and stated that the manufacturer has guaranteed that there would be no light trespass away from the tennis courts. It was explained to him that lower lighting would require the fixture heads to be angled but higher lights could be directed straight down.

Planning Director BJ Grieve stated that Planning staff conducts regular lighting inspections and it is remarkable how well lighting is controlled with baffling, and as long as the poles are shorter than the adjacent tree canopy, they will blend in with the trees.

Commissioner Ecker asked if the airport had any concerns regarding the height of the new poles and Mr. Mattox responded that the Moore County Airport received a request for agency comments and no comment was received.

Mr. Mattox stated that he had received confirmation from the Town Arborist that many of the trees in the Downtown Park are between 85 and 95 ft. tall.

Commissioner Anderson said he had a hard time believing that lights on lower poles cannot be controlled.

Mr. Johnson responded that when the Town converted some other tennis courts to pickleball courts, the same lights were converted to the LED lights and those lights have dark spots, they do not have the correct light balance, and according to the players, night play is very difficult because there is not enough light. We want to avoid that same issues at the tennis courts.

Commissioner Anderson said he understood that, but he wanted to avoid 50 ft. light poles in downtown Southern Pines because they would be out of scale.

Mr. Johnson said they consulted a lighting professional and 50' light poles are normal.

Leslie Brians recommended using a balloon tied to a string to get an idea of how tall a 50' light pole would be.

BJ Grieve said it seemed plausible to continue the hearing for 30 days and in the meantime conduct the balloon test or use the drone to obtain images to give an idea of the height.

Commissioner Farrell asked Mr. Johnson if the new poles would be placed in the same location and Mr. Johnson responded that the poles will be in the general area of the existing poles, but not in the exact spot.

Mr. Grieve asked Mr. Johnson if the vendor would be willing to create a photometric plan and Mr. Johnson did not think that would be a problem.

Mr. Grieve asked if it was reasonable to come back in a month with a photometric plan and a picture of the balloons and Mr. Johnson said he did not see a problem with that.

Mr. Parsons stated that one of the benefits of using the current vendor is that there are lighting systems at the Town's recreational fields that have some timing and remote capabilities that the current lights at the tennis courts do not have.

Mr. Johnson said that was correct and that the Parks and Recreation team can control the lights from their desks or their phones.

Commissioner Anderson asked what was the issue with the current lights.

Mr. Johnson responded that they had attempted to utilize the existing hoods with an LED conversion and they do not provide the correct reflection and the wiring is starting to fail due to age. The current height is not consistent with the lighting at newer tennis courts and also, the components for the existing lights are imported and availability can be an issue.

Karl Ecker made a motion, seconded by Robert Anderson, to continue the public hearing to the September regular meeting to allow time for staff to perform an experiment to duplicate the height of the light poles being proposed. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

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## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Mattox stated that the next CLG training will be held in Southern Pines on October 3, 2025 and the Commission may choose the training topics. Additionally, the training can count towards required credits for the current year.

Mr. Mattox stated that the E.S. Douglass Community Center, formerly Our Lady of Victory Catholic School, is ready to go before the state board that reviews National Register nominations.

The Commission consented to holding the September meeting at the E.S. Douglass Community Center.

Karl Ecker made a motion, seconded by Sarah Farrell, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Cindy Williams  
Secretary to the Historic District Commission

An audio recording of the proceedings is available upon request.