

MINUTES
Town of Southern Pines Historic District Commission
Regular Meeting
October 9, 2025 at 4:00 PM

The Town of Southern Pines Historic District Commission held its regular meeting on Thursday, October 9, 2025, at 4:00 PM at the Community Development Building, 801 SW Service Road, Southern Pines, North Carolina.

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

Chair Oettinger called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM.

Robert Brown made a motion, seconded by Sarah Farrell, to approve the Minutes of the August 14, 2025 and September 11, 2025 regular meetings. The motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

HD-19-25 Certificate of Appropriateness - Major Work; Downtown Park Lighting

Darren Johnson, Facilities Superintendent submitted a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness – Major Work to replace the existing light poles surrounding the tennis courts in Downtown Park with seven (7) new 50’ light poles.

Chair Oettinger reopened the public hearing that was continued from the September 11, 2025 regular meeting.

Planner Mason Mattox provided updated information and photographs documenting the balloon experiment that was conducted to provide a visual reference of the height of the proposed light poles.

Member Ecker asked if any trees interfere with the existing lights currently.

Member Farrell asked if the arborist had indicated that any of the trees would have to be trimmed.

Mr. Mattox responded that Mr. Purcell, the Town Arborist had not commented on that issue prior to the meeting.

Member Ecker stated that some trimming would be required.

Darren Johnson stated that minimal trimming may be necessary as determined by Mr. Purcell.

Member Anderson asked if Mr. Purcell had been making tree-related decisions.

Assistant Town Manager Roth responded that Mr. Purcell has been employed by the Town for 10 years, previously in the Building & Grounds Department, and currently as the Town Arborist and that he is very well qualified for his position.

Mr. Mattox stated that the applicant had provided a lighting study which found that the light trespass would be well below what is allowed by the UDO.

Member Farrell asked if shorter poles had been considered.

Mr. Johnson responded that he had discussed the possibility of using shorter poles and the vendor had responded that a 40 ft. pole could be used but he was not in favor of them and indicated that the Town would lose some technical support from the vendor.

Member Anderson asked if the software that is used to control the lights is proprietary software.

Mr. Johnson stated that the Parks & Recreation Department requested the subject lights so they would be on the same system as the existing lights at the Town's other recreation fields.

Member Anderson asked how often the tennis courts are used at night, and what percentage of the population uses the courts at night.

Mr. Johnson responded that tennis lessons are held late in the day.

Member Ecker commented that some residents are only able to play in the evenings.

Member Anderson stated that he was concerned that the trees would have to be stripped for the new lighting, and also the scale of the light poles, and there will be unintended consequences.

Jessica Roth stated that the Parks & Recreation Department is part of her team and stated that she has some experience with lighting plans and based on her experience, she was not sure the Town would get a difference answer from another manufacturer. The Town uses contracted instructors for evening tennis lessons, which is an important service to the residents and they provide revenue to the Town. Additionally, one of the courts was converted to pickleball courts, making lighting of the tennis courts even more important.

Chair Oettinger commented that she did not think the light poles would be noticeable.

Chair Oettinger closed the public hearing.

Sarah Farrell made a motion, seconded by Robert Brown, to adopt Attachment 1 of the staff report, as drafted, as Findings of Fact regarding Certificate of Appropriateness – Major Work HD 19-25; and therefore, to approve HD-19-25 with the following conditions:

1. All existing trees in the vicinity of the proposed light poles shall be pruned as minimally as necessary to provide adequate clearance for the light fixtures and illumination of the tennis courts.
2. Pruning shall be performed in a manner that preserves the health, structural integrity and form of the trees.
3. No trees shall be removed and no trees shall be pruned in a manner that removes more than 30% of the canopy without prior approval from the Historic District Commission.

The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

HD-21-25 Certificate of Appropriateness - Major Work; 107 NE Broad Street; Applicant: Gary Thomas

Gary Thomas requested a Certificate of Appropriateness – Major work to replace the roof of the existing building located at 107 NE Broad Street with a white standing seam metal roof. Pursuant to the Moore County tax record, the property is identified as PIN 858106289386 (PARID 00036285) and is owned by Gary B. Thomas, Trustee.

Gary Thomas and Mason Mattox took the oath of testimony.

Mason Mattox qualified the Commission members.

Chair Oettinger opened the public hearing.

Mr. Mattox provided an overview of the proposal and stated that a Certificate of Appropriateness – Major Work was approved in 2009 or 2010 for the repainting of the roof and the file indicated that asbestos was suspected at that time.

Mr. Thomas responded that he was not certain whether asbestos was present, but that the tiles are very thin from age and will easily crack, even with a silicone coating.

Vice Oettinger asked if replacing the problem tiles was a consideration.

Mr. Thomas said his builder proposed covering the roof with treated lumber and install the metal roof over.

Vice Oettinger asked why a white roof.

Mr. Thomas said white reflects light and is therefore, more energy efficient than a darker roof.

Member Anderson asked if he wanted to replace the roof with a concealed fastener.

Mr. Thomas responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Mattox entered his staff report into the record as Exhibit A, his slide presentation as Exhibit B and the approved paint colors as Exhibit C.

Vice Oettinger closed the public hearing.

Karl Ecker made a motion, seconded by Robert Anderson, to adopt Attachment A, as drafted, as Findings of Fact regarding Certificate of Appropriateness – Major Work HD-21-25.

Karl Ecker made a motion, seconded by Robert Brown, to approve HD-21-25 with the following condition:

- The color of the roof shall match a shade of white found in the Town of Southern Pines approved color palette.

The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

HD-22-25 Certificate of Appropriateness - Major Work; Signage in Downtown Park; Applicant: Town of Southern Pines

Graham Purcell, Parks & Grounds Superintendent for the Town of Southern Pines, has requested a Certificate of Appropriateness – Major Works for the placement of two free-standing signs and associated landscape improvements, in Downtown Park.

The oath of testimony was administered to Jessica Roth, Darren Johnson and Mason Mattox.

Mr. Mattox qualified the members of the Commission.

Chair Oettinger opened the public hearing.

Mr. Mattox provided an overview of the application accompanied by a short slide presentation and added that the sign on Ashe Street will also be replaced with an identical sign.

Chair Oettinger asked why the first sign was installed prior to HDC approval.

Assistant Town Manager Roth apologized and stated that the oversight was unintentional.

Chair Oettinger asked why the new sign was not similar to the previous sign.

Ms. Roth responded that the Town adopted a new logo two years ago and the current signs were not consistent with the new branding and the Town also wanted to use materials that would be more durable and easier to maintain than the previous signs. She stated that several residents had complimented the new sign.

Mr. Mattox entered his staff report into the record as Exhibit A and his slide presentation as Exhibit B.

Karl Ecker made a motion, seconded by Robert Brown, to adopt Attachment A, as drafted, as the Findings of Fact regarding Certificate of Appropriateness – Major Work HD-22-25. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

Karl Ecker made a motion, seconded by Sarah Farrell, to approve HD-22-25. The motion carried by a vote of 4-0, with Robert Anderson abstaining.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion ensued regarding requiring applicants to provide material and color samples of the items that are the subject of the application.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Cindy Williams
Secretary to the Historic District Commission

An audio recording of the proceedings is available upon request.