



# CHATTANOOGA HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION

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## MEETING MINUTES

**August 21st, 2025**

The duly advertised meeting of the Chattanooga Historic Zoning Commission was held on August 21st, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. in conference room 1A of the Development Resource Center Building.

**Chairman Skip Pond called the meeting to order at 9:33 A.M.**

**Roll Call:** Admin Support Shelby Ogle called the roll.

**Member Attendance:**

- ☒ Clif McCormick
- ☒ Piper Stromatt
- ☒ Brandon Panganiban
- ☒ Todd Morgan
- ☐ John Cavett
- ☒ Cassie Courtney
- ☒ Nathan Bird
- ☒ Matt McDonald
- ☒ Skip Pond

**Staff Attendance:**

- ☒ Presenter: Cassie Cline
- ☒ Admin: Shelby Ogle
- ☒ City Attorney: Andrew Trundle
- ☐ City Attorney: Chris McKnight

**Swearing In:** Admin Support Shelby Ogle swore in people addressing the Committee.

**Rules and Regulations:** Chairman Skip Pond explained the rules and procedures, order of business, and announced the meeting is being recorded.

**Approve Minutes:** Chairman Skip Pond presented the July 2025 Meeting Minutes to be voted on. No amendments need to be made. *Matt McDonald* motioned to **APPROVE** the July minutes. *Piper Stromatt* seconded the motion. All in favor. **The motion carries 7-0.**

**Staff Review Cases:** Historic Preservation Planner Cassie Cline presented the Staff Review cases to the Commission.

- **HZ-25-80:** 4415 St. Elmo Ave.: Fence
- **HZ-25-85:** 4811 Alabama Ave.: COA Renewal
- **HZ-25-86:** 4209 Tennessee Ave.: Siding + Window Replacement on New Construction

- **HZ-25-88:** 108 Eveningside Dr.: Eaves, Roof, Fascia, Soffit, Bracket Repair
  - **HZ-25-89:** 1505 W. 51st St.: Fence
  - **HZ-25-90:** 4616 Florida Ave.: Shed and Carport Repair
  - **HZ-25-91:** 4103 Tennessee Ave.: Gutters
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## **OLD BUSINESS**

- **HZ-24-41: 4709 Alabama Ave.: Retaining Walls**

### **Staff Presentation:**

Historic Preservation Planner Cassie Cline presented the report to the Commission.

### **Relevant Guidelines Covered:**

6.22 New Construction, Page 52

### **Applicant Presentation:**

Applicant Mike Cardillo presented to the Commission that they are only looking at what was not approved last meeting which is the rear retaining walls and back deck.

### **Community Response:**

The following community comment was presented to the Commission:

"4711 Alabama Ave, Chattanooga, TN 37409

My sincere apologies for not being present this August 21st in person, I'm currently out of the country, so I'm unable to physically attend. In prior meetings, I have been present and provided input on the proposed plans submitted by the applicant.

I was made aware that the applicant has since revised plans to lower the foundation to a max of 5ft, also removed the plans for the carport and reduction of 1 retaining wall at the rear.

Upon review of the proposed plans, and visual/measured inspection of our homes front foundation in line with adjacent property, I still have a concern. Even at a 5ft maximum that will put the top of the proposed foundation in excess of 6ft, closer to 7th above our 4711 Alabama Property foundation. Both properties either side of 4709 have had to tackle with grade changes which involve retaining walls around the homes to address grade change. In our homes case (4711) we have a retaining wall all around the two sides of the foundation to address grade change. These walls range between 1ft at the front of the property climbing to 3.5ft at the rear, with a similar change in grade going North to South along the back of the property. This is a similar change in grade to 4709 lot.

My ask is, my family would like to see the start of the visible foundation at the lowest point of current grade on the property that is in line with the front of properties 4707 & 4711. Also require a similar retaining wall around the foundation in accordance to the precedent set by 4711 Alabama Ave to address grade change. I understand this may result in additional earth removal on north side and north/south side of lot, but it would assist in alleviating a huge height discrepancy between 4709 & 4711. I understand it cannot be the same height as neighboring 4711, however my ask is to simply follow the same approaches as the homes around it to address the change in grade as you come south down the street, keeping in character with the other construction and characteristics.

Both Mathew Lewis and Brandon Panganiban will be physically present and are aware of my concerns and can talk to them also.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

I have included some pictures to assist with my explanation:

Regards Gary Whitehead-Nudd

Addendum to prior note, I should have also stated I was hoping the maximum visible foundation was closer to the 3.5ft than the previous 5ft given the existing precedent of retaining walls around foundation to address grade change between front to back and right to left of property."

#### **Commission Discussion, Motion, and Vote:**

The Commission began by asking staff whether changes were being requested to the foundation material or height from the prior approval. Staff clarified that the rear retaining walls and the carport in the right of way had been omitted entirely. The Commission then asked the Applicant to confirm the foundation materials and inquired about the materials for the steps leading up to the retaining walls, to which the Applicant replied they would be stone or poured cement. Staff confirmed that the items requiring approval were the retaining walls, foundation height, and foundation materials. The Commission noted that while they understood the neighbors' concerns, they believed the issues had been addressed. Staff also reviewed the conditions from the previous COA's to ensure the Commission was aware before making a motion.

- Matt McDonald made a motion to **APPROVE** case #: HZ-24-41: 4709 Alabama Ave., with the following conditions:
  - All previous conditions from the previous approval are still in effect.

Clif McCormick seconded the motion.

**All in favor.**

**The motion carries 7-0.**

- **HZ-25-48: 5121 Alabama Ave.: Deck**

#### **Staff Presentation:**

Historic Preservation Planner Cassie Cline presented the report to the Commission.

#### **Relevant Guidelines Covered:**

6.6 Decks, Page 38

#### **Applicant Presentation:**

Applicant Clayton Davis, representing HomeRX Construction, presented options for making the deck functional while complying with requirements and improving visibility of the house. He proposed a catwalk in the middle with a slight extension on one side. Additionally, he presented an alternative design featuring the main deck at a lower level with a few steps leading up to the doors from the deck.

#### **Community Response:**

No community comments.

#### **Commission Discussion, Motion, and Vote:**

The Commission began the discussion by thanking the Applicant for taking the project on and being willing to work on accommodating the requests of the Commission. The Commission then spoke to the proposed option 3 deck and stated thatThe Commission opened the discussion by thanking the Applicant for taking on the project and working to accommodate the Commission's requests. They then addressed the proposed Option 3 deck, noting that it appears to meet the Commission's objectives by maximizing visibility

of the house while providing a functional and usable space. It seems to meet what was asked from the Commission in regards to being able to see the house best and make it a usable space.

- Cassie Courtney made a motion to **APPROVE** case #: HZ-25-48: 5121 Alabama Ave., with the following conditions:
  - All previously approved conditions/approved plans apply.
  - Deck Option #3 is the design being approved.

Piper Stromatt seconded the motion.

**All in favor.**

**The motion carries 7-0.**

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## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **HZ-25-64: 4610 Florida Ave.: Shed**

### **Staff Presentation:**

Historic Preservation Planner Cassie Cline presented the report to the Commission.

### **Relevant Guidelines Covered:**

6.22 New Construction, Page 52

### **Applicant Presentation:**

Applicant Victoria Jones informed the Commission that she requires storage for her yard equipment, as she currently does not have an appropriate location to store it.

### **Community Response:**

Wendy Allison stated that she believes the house looks good and emphasized the importance of having a neighborhood where residents have proper storage for their belongings. She noted that, as someone living on a corner lot, she also needs space to store her items and pointed out that there are sheds located along the entire alley. She expressed her full support for the storage request.

### **Commission Discussion, Motion, and Vote:**

The Commission began the discussion by confirming that they did not have any questions for the applicant

- Brandon Panganiban made a motion to **APPROVE** case #: HZ-25-64: 4610 Florida Ave..  
Clif McCormick seconded the motion.

**All in favor.**

**The motion carries 7-0.**

- **HZ-25-81: 229 Eveningside Dr.: Shed**

### **Staff Presentation:**

Historic Preservation Planner Cassie Cline presented the report to the Commission.

### **Relevant Guidelines Covered:**

7.I Outbuildings, Page 24

**Applicant Presentation:**

Applicant Simon Galas informed the Commission that they are seeking approval to build a shed, citing the need for additional storage as they have a small house and a baby on the way. He stated that the proposed shed design complies with all applicable codes and requirements, includes no plumbing or electrical, and was chosen to match the existing house.

**Community Response:**

No community comments.

**Commission Discussion, Motion, and Vote:**

The Commission began the discussion by stating that there are no questions for the Applicant.

- *Clif McCormick* made a motion to **APPROVE** case #: HZ-25-81: 229 Eveningside Dr.

*Cassie Courtney* seconded the motion.

**All in favor.**

**The motion carries 7-0.**

- **HZ-25-82: 4914 Florida Ave.: Addition**

**Staff Presentation:** Historic Preservation Planner Cassie Cline presented the report to the Commission.

**Relevant Guidelines Covered:**

6.1 Additions, Page 33

6.8 Doors, Page 40

6.9 Driveways + Paving, Page 41

6.25 Porches, Porch Columns and Railings, Page 59

6.41 Windows, Page 74

**Applicant Presentation:**

Applicant Matthew Lewis informed the Commission that they plan to replace all vinyl windows with wood windows, changing from a 1-over-1 to a 3-over-1 design, which they believe matches the original house. He stated they intend to install pea-gravel steps, renovate the driveway to match, move a door to install a period-appropriate one, and reuse historic windows and panes from the sunroom and other parts of the house. Mr. Lewis also indicated that they do not want to install soffits, preferring to maintain the house's original design features.

**Community Response:**

Brad Allison, a neighbor of the property, expressed full support for the proposed plans. He noted that the existing house has numerous issues and features that are not historic. He also supported the size of the addition, stating that the St. Elmo neighborhood needs more 3-bedroom/2-bathroom houses and fewer 2-bedroom/1-bathroom houses, as families often struggle to find homes large enough for their needs.

**Commission Discussion, Motion, and Vote:**

The Commission began by noting that they typically review the size of additions to houses but acknowledged the importance of the neighbor's support for the proposed size. They confirmed that the sunroom would be included in the addition's square footage and requested verification of the total square footage with the proposed addition. The Commission expressed concerns that the addition should be smaller than the main structure, noting that the proposed design exceeds this guideline. Staff and the Commission recommended a deferral to allow the applicant time to clarify materials and dimensions for

the addition. The Commission also inquired about moving the front door and discussed the precedent for relocating doors unless historically documented. They emphasized that any historic windows must be preserved on site and that existing window openings should retain their original frames within the home.

- *Matt McDonald* made a motion to **DEFER** case #: HZ-25-82: 4914 Florida Ave. to the September meeting.
  - Land Disturbing Permit can be released to allow for grading and related site work.
  - Interior demo permit released as long as no windows or doors are removed or adjusted. The sunroom windows can be removed and stored off site for safe-keeping.

*Clif McCormick* seconded the motion.

**All in favor.**

**The motion carries 7-0.**

- **HZD-25-8: 835 Clark St.: Primary Structure Demolition**

**Staff Presentation:**

Historic Preservation Planner Cassie Cline presented the report to the Commission.

**Relevant Guidelines Covered:**

7.3 Demolition, Page 71

**Applicant Presentation:**

Applicant Michael Bridges of Surface Architecture, representing the property owner, stated that the owner has held the duplex for over a decade and has rented it out during that time. He noted that due to the house's poor condition, it has been difficult to find renters, particularly college students, as the hallways are narrow and the property requires significant remodeling. Mr. Bridges acknowledged the community's sensitivity regarding demolition but indicated that the house has limited architectural and historical value. He emphasized that the owners aim to create a new structure while remaining considerate of the neighborhood context.

**Community Response:**

The following community comment was presented to the Commission:

**ANGELENA AND MIKE BRUESEWITZ**  
**836 VINE STREET CHATTANOOGA, TN 37403**  
**423.991.7923**

August 19, 2025

I am writing in response to an application for the demolition of the structure located at 835 Clark Street in Fortwood. The case number is HZD-25-8. This application is a cause of concern as both a resident of Fortwood and adjacent property owner. To be clear, this property is located at the rear of my home from which I have a direct view.

**HZD-25-8**

In my time as a resident of Fortwood, there is no precedent for the demolition of a structure in this district. Similar requests in this and other districts have been denied despite challenging structural or maintenance problems. This building's problem is a terrible, long-term lack of maintenance which makes it more difficult to rent at market rates to quality tenants. Maintenance and attention to landscaping and other aesthetics would be transformative. This application should be denied given a complete lack of qualifying need for demolition.

Additionally, it is concerning that it would set an unwanted precedent for other historic structures in Chattanooga. We have so little left and what we do have should be preserved. The current state of the building is due to a long history without property maintenance by the owners.

The structure at 835 Clark St is described as a "non-contributing" structure. While this may be technically correct but is in conflict with the purpose of a historic district to preserve the history and story of the community. The subject structure is representative of the time it was built and habitable, though clearly in need of significant maintenance. In approximately 1980, when this neighborhood became a part of the National Historic Register, there were properties afforded protection which were newer (at that time) than the current age of the home at 835 Clark Street (currently 68 years old). Will our current opinions about the aesthetics or age dictate what is worthy of keeping?

Respectfully,  
Angelena Bruesewitz

Paul Stallings stated that the building is not architecturally attractive and expressed support for the demolition but noted that the property's condition is the responsibility of the owner, which he feels has been neglected.

Bea Lurie, a nearby resident, stated that she sees the building daily and knows the owners, describing them as "slumlords" who rented the property to unsavory tenants. She emphasized that the nearly 20-year-old building in Fort Wood has been poorly maintained and expressed concern about setting a precedent for demolishing neighborhood buildings.

Pat Smith of the Advisory Demo Board requested access to the property prior to demolition to salvage any materials for community use.



Jane Keegan commented that Clark Street suffers from feral cats, trash cans, and overgrown weeds left by renters, and stated that the building does not contribute to the neighborhood's historic character. Kerwin Hetlser, a long-time Fort Wood resident, described the building as an eyesore, noting that it has never looked better than in the pictures presented. Angelena Bruesewitz stated that although she does not like the building's appearance, she is concerned about demolishing it, emphasizing that houses with historic significance should be preserved.

#### **Applicant Rebuttal:**

The applicant stated that they are sensitive to the concerns raised by neighbors and acknowledged that it is within the Commission's purview to determine whether demolition is appropriate.

#### **Todd Morgan recuses himself.**

#### **Commission Discussion, Motion, and Vote:**

The Commission began the discussion by asking whether any information had been received on the condition of the house. It was noted that no documentation was provided to show the state of the property. The Commission stated that the Applicant would need to supply proof that the house is beyond repair. Commissioners also observed that the property is situated among two other houses that create a small community feel, and demolition and rebuild could result in a structure that does not match the surrounding homes. The Commission expressed concern that the property's for-sale advertisement was not presented in good faith and noted that they have previously denied demolition requests for houses in far worse condition. The Commission concluded that substantially more information is needed before a decision can be made.

- *Clif McCormick* made a motion to **DENY** case #: HZD-25-8: 835 Clark St.

*Piper Stromatt* seconded the motion.

**All in favor.**

**The motion carries 6-0-1 abstention.**

- **HZ-25-87: 835 Clark St.: New Construction**

#### **Staff Presentation:**

Historic Preservation Planner Cassie Cline presented the report to the Commission.

#### **Relevant Guidelines Covered:**

3.1-3.2 Site Design, Page 25

5.1-5.12 New Construction, Page 53

#### **Applicant Presentation:**

Applicant requests to withdraw.

#### **Commission Motion, and Vote:**

- *Clif McCormick* made a motion to **WITHDRAW** case #: HZ-25-87: 835 Clark St.

*Todd Morgan* seconded the motion.

**All in favor.**

**The motion carries 7-0.**



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## **Other Business**

**Chair Skip Pond called for a 2 minute break.**

**Nathan Bird arrived at 11:14am.**

**Historic National Register Nomination:** St. Mark's United Methodist Church

- *Todd Morgan* made a motion to **RECOMMEND** St. Mark's United Methodist Church for the Historic National Register.

*Matt McDonald* seconded the motion.

**All in favor.**

**The motion carries 8-0.**

**Next Meeting Date:** September 18th, 2025 (Application Deadline, August 22nd, 2025 by 4 p.m.)

**Historic Guidelines Update:** Staff provided the Commission with an update on the Historic Guidelines revision process. They reported that comments had been reviewed with the Mayor's staff and that a meeting with the Mayor is scheduled for the end of September to discuss the revisions in detail. Commissioners asked whether a public meeting would be held prior to presentation to the Commission. Staff stated that a timeline will be established once the Mayor provides direction, after which the updated guidelines will be presented to the Commission for consideration and recommendation to City Council. Staff also discussed the possibility of presenting the guidelines to neighborhoods through public presentations and providing printed hard copies of the updated guidelines.

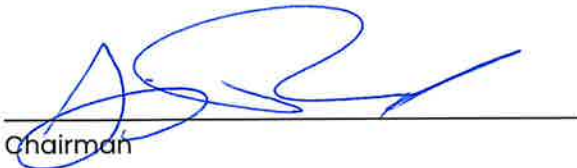
**Ethics Training:** City Attorney gave the yearly ethics training to the Commission.

Matt McDonald motioned to adjourn the meeting.

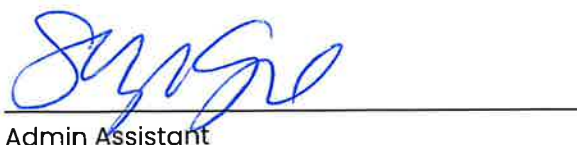
Piper Stromatt seconded the motion.

All in favor.

**Meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m..**

  
Chairman

  
Date

  
Admin Assistant

  
Date