



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

300 Martin Luther King Blvd.

October 9, 2025

TIME: 4:30 PM

1. A CALL TO ORDER

Rush Denson called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Debbie Purves to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Linda Lanz. All approved.

1. Approve September 11, 2025 minutes

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

(Limit comments to 3 minutes or less)

Rush Denson opened the floor for public comments. There were none.

4. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

5. NEW BUSINESS

2. 315 N. 10th St: Northside Historic District

COA: Replace Siding and Windows

Applicant: Charlie Brewer

Agenda Item #: 1

Meeting Date: 10/09/2025

Action Requested: COA: Replace Siding and Windows

Location of Property: 315 N. 10th St; Northside Historic District

Petitioner: Charlie Brewer

Resources:

Circa 1925. One story, wood frame bungalow with side gable roof of asphalt shingles, shed roof dormer with three lights composed of five lites, exposed rafters under eaves, weatherboard siding, off windows, wooden porch supports. Contributing Resource.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Remove and replace all wood siding with Hardie Plank (Select Cedar Mill design) to match rear addition.
2. Repair rotted wood columns on the front porch.
3. Replace right three windows on front with white aluminum clad, 7/8" SDL exterior and interior bars, no interior grids, natural pine interior.

Proposed Guidelines:

2. Wood:

- a. **Significant architectural features should be retained and preserved. Deteriorated material should be repaired or replaced with material that duplicates in size, shape and texture the old material as closely as possible. Composite and other materials may be used so long as these materials duplicate the original in size, shape and texture and do not cover any existing wood materials.**
- b. Do not remove architectural features such as siding, cornices, brackets, window architraves, doorway pediments, trim, shutters, etc. These are an essential part of a building's character and appearance and illustrate the history of the building.
- c. Do not resurface frame buildings with new material that is inappropriate or is incongruous with the architectural style or materials of the asphalt shingles or siding. Aluminum or vinyl siding overlaid over wood siding, wood soffit or wood fascia is not allowed on contributing structures in historic districts (see <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tips/briefs/brief08.htm>). It may be allowed on non-contributing structures in historic districts, subject to the guidelines above and on a case-by-case basis. In no event shall vinyl or aluminum material be permitted to cover existing wood detailed trim such as door and window casings, wood cornice and frieze boards, brackets, window architraves, doorway pediments and wood columns.

7. Entrances, Porches and Steps:

- a. Porches and steps that are appropriate to the building and its development should be retained. Porches or additions that reflect later architectural styles are often important to the building's historical integrity and wherever possible, should be retained.
- b. **Original material and architectural features, such as handrails, balusters, columns, brackets and roof decoration shall be preserved. Where necessary to replace deteriorated pieces, the new material should match the original in texture, shape, size and color.**
- c. Original details and shape, outline, roof height and roof pitch should be retained.

- d. Enclosing of front porches is inappropriate if done in a manner that destroys their intended appearance.
- e. The enclosing of side and rear porches may be considered appropriate if the visual openness and character of the original porch is maintained.

The following items DO NOT require a COA:

- Minor repairs to materials and features when repaired to match the original
- Porch flooring and ceilings, trim boards, railings, brackets, etc.

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

- Removal or addition of porches
- Screening of side porches according to guidelines (staff approval)
- Screening of front porches according to guidelines (commission approval)
- Enclosure of porches

5. Windows:

- a. **Retain and repair existing windows including window sash, glass, lintels, sills, architraves, shutters, pediments, hoods and hardware. If new sashes are used, duplicate the original material, design, size and hardware of the original window. Do not change window size, sash size or windowpane size.**
- b. Do not introduce or create new window openings into the front principal elevation of the structure and do not enlarge or reduce original window openings to fit new stock window sizes.
- c. **The original number and arrangement of panes should be maintained.**
- d. Storm windows should be visually unobtrusive and should not damage existing window frames. Storm windows should be designed so that they can be removed in the future without damage to the original fabric of the structure. Storm windows should be compatible in color and design with the original windows. For example, mill finished aluminum storm windows should not be used with painted window sash.
- e. Plastic, canvas or metal strip awnings or fake shutters that are not compatible with the architectural style of the structure should not be used.
- f. Where existing shutters are replaced or reinstalled when missing, the new shutters shall be sized to fit the window opening, in height and width, whether the shutters are fixed or operable. Composite materials are

allowable for shutters so long as they duplicate the original in shape and texture.

g. New window openings should not be introduced unless they match the existing window configuration and their placement harmonized with the existing rhythm of openings.

h. Original windows should not be filled in.

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of replacing all wood siding with Hardie Plank (Select Cedar Mill design) to match the rear addition. The new Hardie siding should have the same profile and reveal as the current wood siding.
2. Staff recommends approval of repairs to wood columns on the front porch.
3. Staff recommends approval of replacing the right three windows on the front with white aluminum clad, 7/8" SDL exterior and interior bars, no interior grids, natural pine interior.

Discussion:

Staff provided a description of the changes to the siding and new windows.

Mark Grantham stated that all materials requested are approved materials in the district.

There was no further discussion.

A motion was made by Debbie Purves to approve with staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mark Grantham. All approved.

3. 107 N. 9th St: Downtown Historic District

COA: Facade Renovations and Signage

Applicant: Stone Martin Builders

Agenda Item #: 2

Meeting Date: 10/09/2025

Action Requested: Façade Renovation

Location of Property: 107 N. 9th St; Downtown Historic District

Petitioner: Stone Martin Builders

Resources:

This property is in the Downtown Historic District but is not on the National Registry. Noncontributing structure.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. A new concrete walkway will be added to the northeast end of Stone Martin's existing parking lot to enhance wayfinding and access to the new Design Center. The size and location are shown on the drawings.
2. The existing sign facing N. 9th Street that reads "Stone Martin Commercial" will be altered to read "Stone Martin Property Office". The style, size, and color of the lettering will not change.
3. A new sign is to be painted facing 1st Ave. which will read "Stone Martin Design Center". The style and color will match the existing painted signs, but overall size will be smaller.
4. A metal canopy will be added to shelter the new entrance to the Design Center matching the metal canopy over the existing "commercial" entrance.
5. An existing side door will be replaced with a full-lite storefront door, matching the finishing and construction of the two main front doors.
6. A 10'x10' metal roll-up door will be replaced with a storefront window matching the finishes of the existing storefront doors.
7. A new sconce light will be added over the entrance to the Design Center, and new sconces will be added to light the new Design Center sign.
8. An accent color is to be painted at the Design Center entrance.

Proposed Guidelines:

STOREFRONT - #2.

Preserve existing historic storefronts. Retain characteristic storefront features.

DISPLAY WINDOW: Maintain the original dimensions and transparent nature of the display window. Do not add small paned windows or reflective glass.

COLUMNS: Maintain cast iron columns and brick and stone piers which frame the storefront.

TRANSOM: Retain the original shape and transparency of the transom. Do not place a sign over the transom. If an interior ceiling has been lowered below the transom, it should be recessed from the storefront. Do not place air conditioning units in the transom.

RECONSTRUCTED STOREFRONT -#3

Reconstruction of a historic storefront should be based on physical evidence and historical documentation such as photographs.

RE-CONSTRUCTION: Obtain historic photographs, postcards of the downtown, and historical background about the building by contacting the historical society, library, and/or state archives.

NEW STOREFRONT - #4.

If documentation of the original storefront does not exist, design a new storefront that is compatible with the materials, size, scale, and character -defining features of nearby buildings.

NEW DESIGN: Respect the original design of the building and visual character of the district. Do not add early colonial features, attempt to create a theme, or make a building more ornamental than it originally was. The new design should incorporate characteristic elements of a traditional storefront, including the display window, transom, recessed entrance, and bulkhead using compatible materials. (see Preservation Brief #11)

AWNINGS - #5.

Awnings should be compatible with the design of the building and the streetscape.

PRESERVATION: Preserve original canopies and awning hardware where feasible.

MATERIALS: Fabric awnings are appropriate. Vinyl coated canvas and acrylic awnings may be acceptable. Metal awnings may be appropriate in a few instances, but rough sawn wood, plastic, or asphalt shingle awnings give an immobile, hard, mansard—like appearance and are not appropriate.

DESIGN: Retractable or fixed standard shed—type canvas awnings are appropriate. Fake mansard roofs and rustic wood shingle awnings are inappropriate. Carefully coordinate the awning color with other building design features.

LOCATION: The awning should fit the dimensions of the storefront within the masonry opening and should not obscure architectural details. Mount the awning just above or just below the transom. Where feasible, align the awning so that it is the same height as others on the block. Upper story awnings should fit inside the window surround. Arched windows should have awnings shaped like the curvature of the arch, and rectangular windows should have rectangular awnings.

SIGNS - #6.

Signs should complement, rather than compete with, the character of the building and downtown.

These design guidelines apply to the exterior signs within the Northside and Geneva Street Historic Preservation Districts. All signs in a historic preservation district must meet the provisions of the Opelika Zoning Ordinance as well as receive a Certificate of Appropriateness. A Certificate of Appropriateness review will determine whether a sign proposal meets the context of these

guidelines. Whenever there is a conflict between the regulations of the zoning ordinance and these guidelines, the more stringent regulations will take precedence. *(Updated 08/12/13)*

LOCATION: Signs should be designed with the historic character of the building and district in mind. The design should be compatible with the architectural features of a building or neighboring buildings and should not obscure architectural details of the building. Locate signs on flat unadorned parts of the facade or paint directly onto the glass storefront. Hanging signs should not project more than 40 inches beyond adjoining buildings or obscure the view of the streetscape. A hanging sign should be at least 8 feet off the ground. Signs should not be located on the roof. They should be aligned with others in the area in order to create a more uniform appearance. *(Updated 08/12/14)*

TYPES: A variety of signs may adorn a building. Awning signs and small facade sign panels can attract the attention of passing motorists or pedestrians across the street. Signs painted on storefront windows and doors attract the attention of pedestrians. Hanging signs should be attached so that they do not damage the wall surface. Attach signs through joints in the masonry rather than to the brick itself. Moveable or portable signs are not appropriate. Sandwich Boards measuring up to 24" wide by 36" tall may be approved by staff and must be of an A-frame design. The use of painted wood signs is encouraged and the use of metal and plastic signs are discouraged. One sandwich sign per building is permitted, though buildings housing multiple businesses may share a slightly larger, 24" wide by 48" sign. *(Updated 08/12/14)*

SIZE: Size should be determined by the scale of the building, not whether the sign is meant to be viewed by a passing motorist or pedestrian. Generally, lettering should not exceed 18 inches high. The maximum area of any sign in a historic commercial district shall be limited to twenty-four (24) square feet, and in the Gateway Corridor (Geneva St, 10th St, Torbert Ave, 2nd Ave) shall be limited to forty-eight (48) square feet, unless acceptable documentation proves that original signage from the date of construction of the building or the most significant architectural renovation of the building was larger.

MATERIALS: Sign materials should be compatible with those of the historic building. Traditional signs were often painted on finished wood or metal panels. Signs painted onto fabric awnings are effective. Unfinished plywood and plastic signs may not be appropriate in the downtown.

DESIGN: New signs should not attempt to look older than the building. Colonial designs are not appropriate on Victorian buildings. Custom signs are preferable to mass-produced standardized signs. Simple designs which are subordinate to the building are appropriate. Where several businesses occupy a building, it is best to coordinate the signs. The use of symbolic, three-dimensional signs, such as the red and white barbers' pole, is encouraged.

LIGHTING: The sign should be illuminated to fit the design of the building. The color and intensity of illumination are central to achieving a complimentary balance of the building and signs. Light intensity should not overpower the building or street edge. Sign lighting should be subdued or indirect. Internally lit *(including digital)* plastic signs are not appropriate, although, in some cases, neon signs may be appropriate. Neon lighting should be used in limited volume to

ensure that it does not become visually obtrusive and dominate the street frontage. Incandescent lights are preferable to the harsh, cold appearance of fluorescent lights. Flashing lights are not appropriate. *(updated 08/12/14)*

HISTORIC SIGNS: Retain historic signs whenever possible. (See Preservation Brief #25.) Preserve signs that: reflect the history of a building or district; are characteristic of a particular historic period or style; are associated with events, people, or places; are evidence of the history of a product or business; display excellent craftsmanship, use of materials, or design; are incorporated into the buildings design or physical fabric. *Photo evidence of previous sign design and/or style is encouraged. (Updated 08/12/14).*

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of new concrete walkway at parking area on 1st Ave side for Design Center.
2. Staff recommends approval of revised painted signage matching the style, size, and color of the existing sign meeting sign regulations.
3. Staff recommends approval of new painted sign facing 1st Ave. matching the style and color of existing signs meeting sign regulations.
4. Staff recommends approval of metal canopy above new entrance to the Design Center matching existing metal canopy.
5. Staff recommends approval of a new full-lite storefront door matching the two main front doors.
6. Staff recommends approval of replacing the roll-up door with anodized framed storefront windows. This is a non-primary side to a noncontributing structure.
7. Staff recommends approval of new sconce lighting matching existing.
8. Staff recommends approval of painting an accent color on the already painted brick. Color selections are not regulated.
9. All staff approval recommendations are based on this being a noncontributing structure in the Downtown Historic District.

Discussion:

Staff provided an overview of the proposed changes to signage and side storefront addition.

There were no questions or additional comments.

A motion was made by Debbie Purves to approve with staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Linda Lanz. All approved.

4. 706 Geneva St: Geneva Historic District
COA: New Construction Commercial and Residential
Applicant: Hartbrook Development, LLC

Meeting Date: 10/09/2025
Action Requested: COA: New Construction Commercial and Condos
Location of Property: 706 Geneva St; Geneva Historic District
Petitioner: Hartbrook Development, LLC

Resources:

This is currently a vacant lot inside the Geneva Historic District.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Construction of two-story professional office building with 24" raised foundation fronting Geneva Street. Structure will be 55' wide x 43' deep. The horizontal lap Hardie siding, with brick veneer skirt, exposed rafter tails, and asphalt shingle roof. Metal standing seam will be used above rear doors and porches. Windows will be double-hung aluminum. Exterior doors will be ¼ glass stainable fiberglass. Nineteen parking spaces will be on the rear.
2. Construction of eight four-unit two-story condo units on 24" raised foundation at the rear of the site. The horizontal lap Hardie siding, with brick veneer skirt, exposed rafter tails, and asphalt shingle roof. Columns will be 6" x 6" treated wood posts with corbels. Metal standing seam will be used above rear doors and porches. Windows will be Sun Windows, Patriot Series, casement aluminum exterior with vinyl interior and SDL raised profile grilles. Exterior doors will be ¼ glass stainable fiberglass. A 20ft paved private rear alley provides access to carports with gravel drives. The carports consist of shed roof, treated wood columns with base caps, exposed rafter tails, corbels, and asphalt shingle to match homes. A 4ft concrete sidewalk provides access to front doors.
3. A double row of staggered six (6ft) foot evergreens will run along the property lines.

Guidelines:

G. NEW CONSTRUCTION:

1. Definition: The construction of any freestanding structure on any lot or addition to an existing structure.
2. General Principles:
 - a. These guidelines shall apply only to the exteriors of buildings and to areas of lots visible from public right-of-way.
 - b. The public facades, front- and street-related elevations, of proposals for new buildings shall be more carefully reviewed than other facades.
 - c. New buildings should be **compatible with other architectural styles in the historic district** but are not required to imitate the past architectural styles of the historic district. They should reflect the era of their own construction.
 - d. Since construction in a historic district has usually taken place continuously

from the nineteenth century to the present, a variety of building types and styles result which demonstrate the changes in building tastes and technology over the years. The special architectural character of the majority of the buildings in the historic district is responsible for this designation, and new buildings should complement and be compatible with the prevailing architectural styles of other buildings in the historic district.

e. Reconstruction may be appropriate when it reproduces facades of a building which no longer exists and which was located in the historic district if; the building would have contributed to the historical and architectural character of the area, and if it will be compatible in terms of style, height, scale, massing, and materials with the buildings immediately surrounding the lot on which the reproduction will be built, and if it is accurately based on pictorial documentation.

f. New buildings should relate to an established **pattern and rhythm** of existing contributing buildings, both on the same and opposite sides of a street, the dominance of that pattern and rhythm must be respected and not disrupted.

g. New construction should be consistent with existing contributing buildings along a street in terms of **height, scale, setback, and rhythm; relationship of materials**, texture, **details** and color; **roof shape**; orientation and **proportion and rhythm** of openings.

1. Height: New buildings should be compatible in height with the height of adjacent buildings. This shall not mean that new construction must be the same height as adjacent structures, but that new construction should be of similar heights as adjacent structures. New construction may not be over one story higher than adjacent structures or more than one story lower than adjacent structures.
2. Scale: The size of a new building; its mass in relation to open spaces; its windows, doors, openings and **porches should be visually compatible with the surrounding buildings.**
3. The relationship and use of materials, texture, details and material color of a new building's public facades shall be visually compatible with and similar to those of adjacent buildings or shall not contrast conspicuously.
4. The roofs of new buildings shall be visually compatible, by not contrasting greatly with the roof shape and orientation of surrounding buildings.
5. The setback from front and side yard property lines established by adjacent buildings must be maintained. When a definite rhythm along a street is established by uniform lot and building width, infill new buildings should maintain the rhythm.
6. Orientation: The site orientation of new buildings shall be consistent with that of adjacent buildings and shall be visually compatible. Directional expressions shall be compatible with surrounding buildings, whether that expression is vertical, horizontal or non-directional.

7. The relationship of **width to height of windows and doors**, and the **rhythm of solids to voids in new buildings shall be visually compatible** with the surrounding buildings.

Staff recommendation:

1. New construction should be compatible with other architectural styles in the district but reflect the era of its own construction.
2. Staff recommends approval of new two-story construction office building and condo units. Staff recommends all visible doors be wood (stained or painted) and windows have SDL exterior 7/8" to 1 1/4" grids. The rhythm and sizing of windows shall be consistent with surrounding properties.
3. Staff recommends both new construction, commercial and residential, have a raised foundation of approximately 24 inches.
4. Staff recommends that porches be more defined than the main structure.
5. Approval of the COA is contingent on Planning Department approval of the site plan and zoning.

Discussion:

Staff provided a detailed report of this new construction project.

Developer Cody Holly confirmed brick skirting will be used on the raised foundation like what was done on the duplexes built on Geneva Street.

Debbie Purves asked if the Hardi siding could be installed horizontally instead of vertically. Mr. Holly agreed.

Mike Buckalew asked about the design of the second floor patio on the commercial property. Debbie Purves asked if instead of having a pitched roof line and a "sunken" patio, could they do a shed roof line with a knee wall and railing. She also suggested details of corbels on all columns and gables. Mr. Holly agreed to add corbels and crow's feet in gables.

Debbie Purves asked that the applicant return with revised renderings showing all changes for staff approval prior to construction.

A motion was made by Mike Buckalew to approve, with revisions to the orientation of the siding, roof and patio on the front of the commercial building, and changes to columns and gables as discussed above. The motion was seconded by Debbie Purves. All approved.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

5. Enforcement Report

Staff reported that two enforcement letters were sent out. One has completed work and the other is getting work lined up with contractors.

6. Staff Report

Staff provided the members with a copy of the Annual Report for the State Historic Preservation Office. Twenty-five applications were received for a total investment of \$4,906,941.00 during the 2024-2025 year.

7. Next meeting DATE

1. Next meeting November 13, 2025

7. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Debbie Purves to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mike Buckelew. All approved.

The meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Rush Denson, Chair

Linda Lanz, Secretary