



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

300 Martin Luther King Blvd.

August 13, 2026

TIME: 4:30 PM

1. A CALL TO ORDER

Rush Denson called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approve July 9, 2026 minutes

A motion was made by Debbie Purves to approve the July 9, 2026 minutes. The motion was seconded by Aaron Bushey. All approved.

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. 314 N. 11th St: Northside Historic District

COA: Porte Cochere and Curb Wall

Application: David McClintoc

Agenda Item #: 1

Meeting Date: 08/13/2026

Action Requested: COA: Porte Conchere and Curb Wall

Location of Property: 314 N. 11th St; Northside Historic District

Petitioner: David McClintoc

Resources:

C.1890. Two story, wood frame Victorian residence with hip with cross gable roof of asphalt shingles, weatherboard siding, second floor façade with 2/2 double hung sash windows, decorative gable, first floor façade with off centered wood and glass door with sidelights and transom, flanking 1/1 double hung sash windows, partial width porch with shed roof, tapered columns, open rail balustrade. Contributing resource.

History: Applicant received a COA in June 2020 to restore windows, rebuild front porch and wrap around the side, replace columns, remove newer

addition on rear, extend rear deck, install Porta Cochere on side yard, and other renovations. Most of these have now been completed along with total rehab of the interior space.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Renew approval to install Porta Cochere on side yard for covered parking. Drive will be raised to provide a zero-entry threshold into the house.
2. Install a 2'h x 16"w curb wall along front of 11th St and wrapping around the side on 4th Avenue. Wall will be block with stucco to match foundation of house.

Proposed Guidelines:

A. THE ENVIRONMENT:

1. The environment consists of all exterior features in the designated historic districts which are visible to the public and includes structures, outbuildings, landscaping, streets, appurtenances, trees, mass and spacing between structures, scale, mass, color and materials of buildings that give a neighborhood its distinguishing character and contributes to its historic district designation.
2. Significant landscape features such as public parks and gardens, street lighting, signs, street benches, sidewalks, streets, alleys and building setbacks that have traditionally been maintained in the historic district and that contribute to its historic character should be retained. Existing streets should not be widened. paving material should not be changed to a different texture and color. Inappropriate new streets or parking lots incompatible with the neighborhood should not be constructed. (*updated 08/12/14*)
3. New plant materials, fencing, walkways, housing and other outdoor lights, signs, benches, etc. should be compatible with the character of the neighborhood in size, scale, material and color.
4. Plant material should be maintained so as not to become a hazard to the public, public property or shall not be allowed to cause deterioration to structures.
5. Existing street trees should not be removed without a plan for replacement. (*updated 08/12/14*)
1. Outbuildings:
 1. Garages and storage buildings should reflect the character of the existing structure and surrounding buildings and should be compatible in terms of height, scale, roof shape, materials, texture and details.
 2. Garages, if visible from the street, should be situated on the lot as historically traditional from the neighborhood.
100. The location and design of outbuildings should not be visually disruptive to the character of the surrounding buildings.
2. Appurtenances: Appurtenances related to new buildings, including driveways, sidewalks, lighting, fences, and walls, shall be visually

compatible with the environment of the existing buildings and sites to which they relate.

The following items DO NOT require a COA:

- Maintenance repairs to garages and accessory buildings when there is no change in the design and material

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

- Garages and accessory structures not larger than 8' x 12' in rear yards and not visible from the street (staff approval)
- Garages and accessory structures larger than 8' x 12' or that are visible from the street (commission approval)

10. Appurtenances:

- a. Appurtenances related to a building (fences, walls, outdoor lighting, steps, paving, sidewalks and signs) should be visually compatible with the environment to which they are related.

- b. Fences:

The size, scale, and transparent quality of the fence shall be considered in the design to minimize the impact on the historic fabric on the neighborhood. The orientation and location of the fence shall also be considered, with the structural members located on the interior of the fence (pretty side out) and the location and size such that it does not block views of the buildings from the street.

Front, side and rear yard area will be determined on a case-by-case basis from a site plan showing the footprint of house and proposed fence, due to the variety of lot and building shapes. Generally speaking, the front yard is the portion of lot between the street and the rear edge of the building; the side yard is the portion of lot behind the house, between the sidewalk and the rear corner of the building, on corner lots; and the rear yard is the portion of lot behind house. Staff approval may be granted for fences that clearly fall within the guideline specifications; particularly those pertaining to staff permissible materials and fence heights.

1. Low retaining walls in front and side yards should be kept where they exist. If new retaining walls are required, they should match the existing or match a documented example correct for the period of the structure.
2. Existing period fencing should be maintained and repaired. Where necessary to replace period fencing, it should be replaced with compatible fencing of the same material, size and appropriate design.
3. Materials:

Where a fence is desired to be installed, it should be appropriate for the period and architectural style of the structure. Materials and size of the fence should be documented as correct for the period of the structure.

- i. Appropriate materials: wood, iron, wire, stone or plants.
- ii. Inappropriate materials: chain link, concrete block, unfaced concrete, plastic, fiberglass, plywood, slatted "snow" fences and mesh "construction" fences

3. Chain link fences may be used in rear yards, if visible from the street, shall be camouflaged with vegetation.
4. Staff approved fences are limited to wood dog ear and open gothic fences as pictured below. Other styles or materials require formal Commission approval.

Staff recommendations:

1. *Staff does not object to the design and construction of the Porte cochere. Porte cochere are common among historic homes. The setback variance was approved by ZBA in June 2020.*
2. *Staff does not object to the installation of a curb wall because it is common in the historic district. Approval is contingent on right of way approval by Engineering, Planning, and/or City Council.*

Discussion:

Staff provided an overview of the proposed Porte cochere and curb wall. The Porte cochere has previously been approved, but approval has expired. An Encroachment Agreement for the curb wall will be presented to city council on August 18th for review and approval.

There were no questions or further discussion.

A motion was made by Aaron Kovak to approve. The motion was seconded by Aaron Bushey. All approved.

3. 609 Geneva St: Geneva Historic District
COA: Rear Addition, Parking, Side Door, Outdoor Seating
Applicant: Kevin Lyons
Agenda Item #: 2
Meeting Date: 08/13/2026
Action Requested: COA: Rear Addition, Parking, Side Door, Outdoor Seating
Location of Property: 609 Geneva St; Geneva Historic District
Petitioner: Kevin Lyons
Resources:

Stokley House, Circa 1900. One-story, frame, hip and gable roof, partial wraparound porch with Tuscan columns on piers, siding and Perma stone. Contributing Resource.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Remove current rear deck and build a 15 x 30 rear addition for a commercial kitchen.
2. Demo rear garage and add gravel parking to accommodate approximately twenty (20) spaces and one (1) ADA concrete parking pad with sidewalk.
3. Install 6ft wood privacy fencing to provide screen at rear property line and parking lot. Landscape plan included.
4. Install 4ft aluminum fencing in side yard around outdoors sitting area with fountain.
5. Remove one (1) dogwood and one (1) pecan tree. Replacement plan includes planting black gum and dogwood trees. See complete landscape plan including ground lighting, fountain, and outdoor seating.
6. Add exterior entrance and wood ramp and decking for ADA compliance.
7. Install ceiling fans with lights and furniture on front porch for seating.
8. Install a 3'w x 5'h monument sign with painted stone foundation to match existing structure.

Proposed Guidelines:

A. THE ENVIRONMENT:

1. The environment consists of all exterior features in the designated historic districts which are visible to the public and includes structures, outbuildings, landscaping, streets, appurtenances, trees, mass and spacing between structures, scale, mass, color and materials of buildings that give a neighborhood its distinguishing character and contributes to its historic district designation.
2. Significant landscape features such as public parks and gardens, street lighting, signs, street benches, sidewalks, streets, alleys and building setbacks that have traditionally been maintained in the historic district and that contribute to its historic character should be retained. Existing streets should not be widened. paving material should not be changed to a different texture and color. Inappropriate new streets or parking lots incompatible with the neighborhood should not be constructed. (*updated 08/12/14*)
3. New plant materials, fencing, walkways, housing and other outdoor lights, signs, benches, etc. should be compatible with the character of the neighborhood in size, scale, material and color.
4. Plant material should be maintained so as not to become a hazard to the public, public property or shall not be allowed to cause deterioration to structures.

5. Existing street trees should not be removed without a plan for replacement. (*updated 08/12/14*)
1. Additions are areas that increase the living or working space of a structure. This does not include the addition of architectural elements.
2. Additions should be compatible with the architectural style of the structure and should not obscure, remove, conceal or replace significant architectural features of the existing structure. Additions should be compatible in scale, mass, proportion, materials, texture and color to the existing structure.
3. Additions should follow the guidelines for new construction

The following items DO NOT require a COA:

Installation of temporary/emergency wheelchair ramps when they are not attached to the building

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

Installation of temporary wheelchair ramps (staff approval)

H. DEMOLITION:

1. Definition: The tearing down of a building by active means or by neglect resulting in the structural decay of the original building fabric. Neglect means not maintaining a weatherproof, watertight, secure building, structurally stable and/or maintaining vegetation around the structure or structures on the property.
2. Since the purpose of historic zoning is to protect historic properties, the demolition of a building which contributes historically or architecturally to the character and significance of the district is inappropriate and shall be avoided. This means demolition by active means or by neglect in failure to maintain a property. This also includes any structure that contributes to the architectural character of the historic district, not just the most outstanding architectural structures in the district, but the ordinary period structures as well.
3. Demolition is inappropriate:
 - a. if a building is of such architectural or historical interest and value that its removal would be detrimental to the public interest.
 - b. if a building is listed as contributing to the architectural character of the district.

- c. if a building is of such old or unusual or uncommon design and materials that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced without great difficulty and expense.
- d. if its proposed replacement would make a less positive visual contribution to the district, would disrupt the character of the district or would be visually incompatible.
- e. if a building is listed as contributing to the architectural character of the district or qualifies for any of the above a through d and can be feasibly stabilized and no new compatible structure is proposed to be built on the site. An existing structure shall not be demolished for a parking lot or vacant lot. The applicant for demolition must demonstrate financial resources for stabilizing the site after demolition and the construction of a new building or new structure. Stabilization plans as well as Architectural plans and specifications for the new construction along with a schedule for their completion shall be presented to the Opelika Historic Preservation Commission prior to a COA for demolition being issued.

4. Demolition is appropriate:

- a. if a building has completely lost its architectural and historical integrity and importance and has become structurally unsound and its removal will not result in a more negative, less appropriate visual effect on the district.
- b. if a building is not listed as contributing to the historical or architectural character and importance of the historic district and its removal will result in a more positive, appropriate visual effect on the district.

10. Appurtenances:

- a. Appurtenances related to a building (fences, walls, outdoor lighting, steps, paving, sidewalks and signs) should be visually compatible with the environment to which they are related.

b. Fences:

The size, scale, and transparent quality of the fence shall be considered in the design to minimize the impact on the historic fabric on the neighborhood. The orientation and location of the fence shall also be considered, with the structural members located on the interior of the fence (pretty side out) and the location and size such that it does not block views of the buildings from the street.

Front, side and rear yard area will be determined on a case-by-case basis from a site plan showing the footprint of house and proposed fence, due to the variety of lot and building shapes. Generally speaking, the front yard is the portion of lot between the street and the rear edge of the building; the side yard is the portion of

lot behind the house, between the sidewalk and the rear corner of the building, on corner lots; and the rear yard is the portion of lot behind house. Staff approval may be granted for fences that clearly fall within the guideline specifications; particularly those pertaining to staff permissible materials and fence heights.

1. Low retaining walls in front and side yards should be kept where they exist. If new retaining walls are required, they should match the existing or match a documented example correct for the period of the structure.
2. Existing period fencing should be maintained and repaired. Where necessary to replace period fencing, it should be replaced with compatible fencing of the same material, size and appropriate design.
3. Materials:

Where a fence is desired to be installed, it should be appropriate for the period and architectural style of the structure. Materials and size of the fence should be documented as correct for the period of the structure.

- i. Appropriate materials: wood, iron, wire, stone or plants.
- ii. Inappropriate materials: chain link, concrete block, unfaced concrete, plastic, fiberglass, plywood, slated "snow" fences and mesh "construction" fences
- iii. Chain link fences may be used in rear yards, if visible from the street, shall be camouflaged with vegetation.
- iv. Staff approved fences are limited to wood dog ear and open gothic fences as pictured below. Other styles or materials require formal Commission approval.

6. Doors:

- a. The original size and shape of door openings should be maintained. Original doors and door hardware should be repaired and reused in place. Original transoms, sidelights and doors should be maintained.
- b. Replacement doors, when necessary, should be compatible with the original doors in terms of style, texture and size.
- c. Shiny aluminum storm doors and screen doors are not appropriate. Full view storm doors painted to match the door are appropriate.
- d. New door openings should not be introduced on the front, principal façade of the structure.
- e. Original door openings should not be filled in.

The following items DO NOT require a COA:

Re-glazing of windows or replacing broken panes of glass

- Repairs to original wood windows and doors when there is no change in appearance and material
- Painting of window frames and sashes
- Installation of full view (glazed) storm windows and doors – either wood or aluminum with baked enamel or painted finish are acceptable

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

Replacement of original windows

- Removal or addition of a window or door opening
- Exposing a previously covered window units with a replacement according to the guidelines

d. Signs:

1. The appearance, size, position, method of attachment, texture of materials, color, and design of signs shall be in keeping with the collective characteristics of the structures surrounding the property on which the sign will be located. *Murals and advertising relevant to the historic district is permitted. (updated 08/12/14)*
2. Off-site signs shall not be permitted.
3. Signs shall be limited to one sign for each street frontage per premise and if placed in the yard, less than five feet in height.
4. The maximum area of any sign located in a historic residential district shall be four (4) square feet; 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) 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. *(updated 08/12/14)*
5. No sign that flashes, blinks, revolves or is put in motion by the atmosphere shall be permitted. No visible bulbs, plastics or luminous paints will be permitted as a part of any sign.

6. Buildings and signs may be illuminated by remote light sources, provided that these light sources are shielded to protect adjacent properties.
7. Signs attached to the structures shall not cover any architectural feature.
8. Real estate signs shall be removed not more than ten (10) calendar days after the closing of a sale of a house, building, or lot.

The following items DO NOT require a COA:

- Real estate signs
- Home security signs
- Temporary signs and banners

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

- All new building/business identification signage
- Replacement signs that differ in dimension, design, material or location from the existing

Staff recommendations:

1. *Staff recommends approval of demolition of carport/shed to allow for kitchen addition and parking. This structure is not original to the house and has no historic significance.*
2. *Staff recommends approval of rear addition with aluminum siding and stucco foundation matching existing structure. Applicant shall receive setback variance from ZBA prior to construction.*
3. *Staff recommends approval of gravel parking to include rear 6ft privacy fencing and landscape trees and ADA concrete parking pad.*
4. *Staff recommends approval of 4ft aluminum fencing around outdoor seating area, fountain, aluminum dining sets, and umbrellas.*
5. *Staff recommends approval of removing damaged pecan and dogwood tree based on arborist report.*
6. *Staff recommends approval of new side entry to include wood door w/transom window, wood ADA ramp and landing with simple railing, and stucco foundation finish matching existing structure.*
7. *Staff recommends approval of all front porch seating furniture, planters, and ceiling fans.*
8. *Staff recommends approval of wood faced monument sign with painted stone foundation.*

Discussion:

Staff provided a detailed description of the proposed work. An arborist report was presented with a recommendation for removing a pecan and dogwood tree. The applicant received a set-back variance approval from ZBA on August 11, 2026.

Rush Denson asked about the orientation of fencing. Staff explained that the applicant will be required to install “pretty side out” so that the neighbor see the better side. Also, the addition will have aluminum siding to match the aluminum siding on the main structure.

There were no questions or further discussion.

A motion was made by Aaron Bushey to approve. The motion was seconded by Linda Lanz. All approved.

4. 904 5th Ave: Northside Historic District
COA: Expand Front Porch, Lighting
Applicant: Clay and Jennifer Harper
Agenda Item #: 3
Meeting Date: 08/13/2026
Action Requested: COA: Expand Front Porch
Location of Property: 904 5th Ave; Northside Historic District
Petitioner: Clay & Jennifer Harper
Resources:

Circa 1940. One story, wood frame bungalow with hip roof of asphalt shingles, interior chimney, weatherboard siding, off centered wood and glass pane door, flanking 8/1 double hung sash windows, partial width porch with gable roof, columns on brick piers. Contributing Resource.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Extend the roofline of the front porch to the right. Add an additional column to match existing for support with stone or brick bases, build bench-style wall, and install copper gas lanterns.

Proposed Guidelines:

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

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of extending the roofline of the front porch, adding an additional column for support, and copper gaslight lanterns.
2. Staff recommends approval of brick column foundations, painted or unpainted. Staff does not recommend overlaying contemporary stacked stones over existing historic material.

Discussion:

Staff provided a brief overview of the front porch expansion, including information on the type of columns and bases on other cottages inside the Northside Historic District.

Debbie Purves suggested using the same stone type as on other historic homes in the district.

Aaron Kovak stated that the applicant would need to find a brick with a similar texture as the other two columns and paint them for it not to look odd. The best option would be to cover all columns with stone to marry the three bases.

A motion was made by Debbie Purves to approve with staff recommendations. Applicant to return with sample stone for staff approval prior to installation. The motion was seconded by Aaron Bushey. All approved.

5. 409 Geneva St: Geneva Historic District
COA: Rebuild Structure, Parking
Applicant: John Marsh
Agenda Item #: 4
Meeting Date: 08/13/2026
Action Requested: COA: Rebuild Structure
Location of Property: 409 Geneva St; Geneva Historic District
Petitioner: John Marsh
Resources:

Butler-Canon House c. 1890. The Canon House is of Victorian Influence and is on-story frame with a hip roof with cross gables. This residence has characteristics similar to 411 Geneva St: Window trim on front windows, recessed entrance with pilasters to either side of the door, sidelights and transoms. The porch is supported by four fluted columns and two fluted pilasters. The back porch has been enclosed since 1924 to create a sunroom. Because of the slope of the corner lot, the house has a full basement to the rear. The house is thought to have been built c. 1890, but with fewer rooms and an open back porch. The kitchen and dining areas were in the brick-floored basement. John Bluford Butler moved his family there in 1986. Mr. Butler was Tax Assessor of Lee County. Contributing Structure.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Rebuild roof structure and install galvanized metal roof.
2. Replace siding where needed with wood or Hardie of the same reveal.

3. Repair available historic windows. Install new wood or composite windows of the same scale and light pattern.
4. Restoration and rebuilding include the original sleeping porch that was later enclosed to a sunroom on the rear. This sleeping porch will be recreated with a simple railing.
5. Install graveled parking in the rear, along Ave D, to accommodate 10 spaces. A 6ft privacy fence will screen parking from public view.

Proposed Guidelines:

A. THE ENVIRONMENT:

1. The environment consists of all exterior features in the designated historic districts which are visible to the public and includes structures, outbuildings, landscaping, streets, appurtenances, trees, mass and spacing between structures, scale, mass, color and materials of buildings that give a neighborhood its distinguishing character and contributes to its historic district designation.
 2. Significant landscape features such as public parks and gardens, street lighting, signs, street benches, sidewalks, streets, alleys and building setbacks that have traditionally been maintained in the historic district and that contribute to its historic character should be retained. Existing streets should not be widened. paving material should not be changed to a different texture and color. Inappropriate new streets or parking lots incompatible with the neighborhood should not be constructed. (*updated 08/12/14*)
 3. New plant materials, fencing, walkways, housing and other outdoor lights, signs, benches, etc. should be compatible with the character of the neighborhood in size, scale, material and color.
 4. Plant material should be maintained so as not to become a hazard to the public, public property or shall not be allowed to cause deterioration to structures.
 5. Existing street trees should not be removed without a plan for replacement. (*updated 08/12/14*)
1. Outbuildings:
 - a. Garages and storage buildings should reflect the character of the existing structure and surrounding buildings and should be compatible in terms of height, scale, roof shape, materials, texture and details.
 - b. Garages, if visible from the street, should be situated on the lot as historically traditional from the neighborhood.

- c. The location and design of outbuildings should not be visually disruptive to the character of the surrounding buildings.
2. Appurtenances: Appurtenances related to new buildings, including driveways, sidewalks, lighting, fences, and walls, shall be visually compatible with the environment of the existing buildings and sites to which they relate.

The following items DO NOT require a COA:

- Maintenance repairs to garages and accessory buildings when there is no change in the design and material

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

- Garages and accessory structures not larger than 8' x 12' in rear yards and not visible from the street (staff approval)
- Garages and accessory structures larger than 8' x 12' or that are visible from the street (commission approval)

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/tps/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.

4. Roofs and Roofing:

- a. Original roof shape and pitch should be maintained.
- b. Provide adequate roof drainage and ensure that the roofing materials provide a weather tight covering for the structure.
- c. Retain the original roofing material whenever possible.
- d. Replace deteriorated roof covering with new materials that are compatible with the period of the structure and appropriate to the structure. Fiberglass asphalt shingles may be substituted for original roofing when it is not economically feasible to replace or repair with original materials or when the original roof is beyond repair. The color and texture of fiberglass-asphalt shingles should be appropriate to the architectural style and period of the structure.
- e. Built-in gutters may be covered over when it is not economically feasible to maintain or replace or repair with original material. Care should be taken to provide for the drainage of water away from the structure if built-in gutters are covered over.
- f. Preserve or replace where necessary, but do not remove, all architectural features that give the roof its essential character, such as dormer windows, cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneys, cresting and weathervanes.
- g. Do not introduce new roof features, such as dormers where none existed before. Low profile skylights may be used on the side or rear facades not facing a street.

- Built-in gutters may be covered over when it is not economically feasible to maintain or replace or repair with original material. Care should be taken to provide for the drainage of water away from the structure if built-in gutters are covered over.

- Replacement of existing asphalt composition roofing shingles

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

- Changes in roofing material including the removal and replacement of slate, terracotta tile and standing seam metal roofing materials

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.

6. Doors:

- a. The original size and shape of door openings should be maintained. Original doors and door hardware should be repaired and reused in place. Original transoms, sidelights and doors should be maintained.
- b. Replacement doors when necessary, should be compatible with the original doors in terms of style, texture and size.
- c. Shiny aluminum storm doors and screen doors are not appropriate. Full view storm doors painted to match the door are appropriate.
- d. New door openings should not be introduced on the front, principal façade of the structure.
- e. Original door openings should not be filled in.

The following items DO NOT require a COA:

- Re-glazing of windows or replacing broken panes of glass

- Repairs to original wood windows and doors when there is no change in appearance and material
- Painting of window frames and sashes
- Installation of full view (glazed) storm windows and doors – either wood or aluminum with baked enamel or painted finish are acceptable

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

- Replacement of original windows
- Removal or addition of a window or door opening
- Exposing a previously covered window units with a replacement according to the guidelines

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

9. Architectural Details:

- a. Original details shall be maintained.
- b. The replacement of missing original details should be based on accurate historic, physical or pictorial documentation and should be a close visual approximation of the original.
- c. Architectural details of any period or style not original to the building should not be introduced.
- d. Changes that have taken place in the course of time which are evidence of the history and development of a building, and its environment may have acquired significance in their own right; their significance should be recognized and respected.

c. Lighting:

1. Original lighting fixtures should be retained.
2. Where new lighting fixtures are required, they should be compatible or unobtrusive with the architectural style of the structure.
3. Yard and house lighting shall be compatible with the neighborhood and not overly bright (less than 1-foot candle as measured at the property line).

The following items DO NOT require a COA:

- Motion detector lighting

Staff recommendations:

1. Staff recommends approval of rebuilding original hip and gable (Jerkinhead) roof structure matching the old roof with galvanized metal roofing material.
2. Staff recommends approval of replacing damaged siding with wood or Hardie of the same reveal as the original structure.
3. Staff recommends approval of new Lincoln aluminum clad wood windows of the same scale and 9/9 light pattern. All trims shall match existing trims on other windows. All other historic wood windows shall be restored.

4. Staff recommends approval of new wood doors and exterior light fixtures.
5. Staff recommends approval of rebuilding the original rear sleeping porch with simple railing, for the sunroom was not original to the house.
6. Staff recommends approval of rear gravel parking with privacy fence for screening.

Discussion:

Staff provided a detailed description of the proposed rehabilitation of the home along with before photos and pictures showing the fire damage. The applicant does not plan on rebuilding the attic living space and wishes to return the rear sun room to a sleeping porch.

Aaron Kovak approves of not building back the top attic addition. However, the proposed square rear sleeping porch columns should mirror the rounded front porch columns. All agreed.

A motion was made by Aaron Kovak to approve with the rear porch columns matching the round front porch columns. Applicant to return with specs on the columns for staff approval prior to installation. The motion was seconded by Mike Buckalew. All approved.

6. 601 S. Railroad Ave: Downtown Historic District
COA: Signage, Landscaping, Parking
Applicant: Jake Whaley

Agenda Item #: 5

Meeting Date: 08/13/2026

Action Requested: COA: Signage, Landscape, and Parking

Location of Property: 601 S. Railroad Ave; Downtown Historic District

Petitioner: Jake Whaley

Resources:

Robertson-Huskey House. Circa 1894. Two story Second Empire-Italianate home, wood frame, mansard roof and dormers. This home is in the Downtown Historic District. However, it is not on the National Registry.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Install a 52" x 33" (10.75sf) wood with raised wood letters on existing pole.
2. Install five (5) 4" caliper Willow Oak trees along the right driveway and 6th Street ramp to replace trees previously removed. New landscape plan includes trees, shrubs, a variety of plantings, and grass. Landscape to be installed this Fall after the severe heat has passed.

3. Install gravel parking lot in rear with approximately ten (10) parking spaces in rear and one (1) ADA parking pad near rear entrance and ramp. Parking will have a landscape barrier.

Proposed Guidelines:

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).*

LANDSCAPE - #24

Use traditional trees and plants which unify the district and do not obscure the buildings.

PLANTING MATERIALS: New trees should be similar to varieties already planted. Trees with limited height and dimensions which do not completely mask signs and buildings are recommended. Low maintenance, drought resistant native varieties are more appropriate than ubiquitous Bradford Pear trees. Where overhead power lines are present, plant materials should “crown out” beneath the power lines. Shrubs and small trees which do not obscure the buildings as they grow are preferred. Potted trees, plants, and flowers are acceptable but should not impede pedestrian traffic and should be maintained.

MAINTENANCE: Maintenance of street plantings is very important. Replace and remove dead, dying or poorly maintained plants. Prune mature trees which obscure signs. Water and mulch plants regularly.

PARKING - #20.

Parking lots should be screened from public view.

LOCATION: Off—street parking should be located behind, or to the side of, commercial structures, not in front of the building. If a parking lot fronts the street, it should maintain that blocks' established setback through the alignment of landscape elements with the facades of buildings.

DESIGN: Parking lots should be screened from public view either by a wall or by landscaping that is only high enough to screen cars. Parking lots with a large capacity should consider landscaped islands with trees to divide the lot into small areas so that the visual impact of a large, paved area is reduced. The front of a multistory parking deck should be compatible with building facades in the block and have street level retail or office space.

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of wood sign on existing pole meeting sign regulations.
2. Staff recommends approval of gravel parking with 4" caliper trees and/or shrubs for screening along 6th Street bridge ramp.
3. Parking and landscape are contingent upon Planning Department approval.

Discussion:

Staff provided a description of the landscaping, parking, and signage plans.

There were no questions or further discussion.

Mike Buckalew made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Aaron Kovak. All approved.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

7. Enforcement Report

Staff stated she and the Main Street Director completed a downtown walking tour noting any maintenance, trash, and landscaping that needed attention. Department heads were notified and letters will go out to property owners.

8. Staff Report

There was no staff report.

9. Next meeting DATE

1. Next meeting September 10, 2026

7. ADJOURN

**With no further business, a motion was made by Aaron Busey to adjourn.
The motion was seconded by Debbie Purves. All approved.**

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Rush Denson, Chair

Linda Lanz, Secretary