Historic District Commission
September 25, 2025
Meeting Minutes

Chair Kaitlyn Peeler called the meeting of the Historic District Commission to order at 5:58 p.m. on Thursday, September 25, 2025, at City Hall in the Council Chamber, 181 S. South Street of Gastonia, NC.

Present: Chair Kaitlyn Peeler and Commissioners Carol Hauer, Jeff Trepel, and Ben Pruitt.

Absent: Commissioner Blair Propert, Stephanie Hartman, and Joshua Hauser.

Staff present: Charles Graham, Joe Gates, Jalen Nash, and Rebeca Mintz.

ITEM 1a. Roll Call / Sound Check
Chair Kaitlyn Peeler opened the meeting, conducted a roll call, and declared a quorum.

ITEM 1b. Oath of Office
Chair Kaitlyn Peeler stated that on September 2, 2025, the Gastonia City Council appointed Ben Pruitt to the Historic District Commission. Ms. Peeler asked the new commissioner to join Rebeca Mintz, Secretary to the Historic District Commission, at the podium to conduct the Oath of Office. Mrs. Mintz conducted the oath.

ITEM 1c. Approval of July 24th, 2025, Meeting Minutes
With one correction to be made on a date on Page 8. Commissioner Jeff Trepel moved that we adopt the meeting minutes from the July 24, 2025, meeting. Commissioner Carol Hauer seconded the motion. The motion was passed on the condition that corrections be made on Page 8. The motion was passed (4-0).

Commissioner Trepel asked Mr. Charles Graham, Assistant City Attorney, if the request from the last meeting to draft an ordinance amendment had been fulfilled, specifically to facilitate having something recorded at the Register of Deeds when there's an outstanding violation. Mr. Graham stated that he hasn't drafted anything yet, but plans to discuss the matter with the City Attorney.

ITEM 2. Public Hearing – Certificate of Appropriateness (File # PLCA202500275) Cont.

- Ryan Pickens
- 522 W. Fourth Avenue
- Requesting retroactive approval for window replacements and changing frames and door molding from white to black.

Chair Peeler opened the public hearing and recognized Mr. Nash, Planner, for the staff presentation. Mr. Nash stated that this is a continuation of the application from the July 24th meeting. The applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for after-the-fact window replacements and changes to frames and door molding from white to black. Commissioner Hauer asked Mr. Nash if this application was a continuation of a subcommittee meeting. Mr. Nash said, "No." The zoning map was displayed, and Mr. Nash noted that the building was built in 1953. It's a one-story structure with brick and vinyl siding, a side-gable roof, and a projecting front gable bay. Features include one-over-one sash windows, a single-leaf entry door, and a flat-roofed entry porch supported by square posts. This property is considered a contributing feature to the local York Chester Historic District, and it is zoned RS-8, surrounded by residential zoning districts. Mr. Nash stated that the reason for the replacement, according to the applicant, is that there was damage to defective exterior windows, and the three front-facing windows had their exterior frame color changed from white to black. The front door molding was changed from white to black, as it is initially connected to the adjacent window frame, according to the information provided in the application. Mr. Nash noted that the gutters were replaced, changing from white plastic to black aluminum, and displayed excerpts from the design standards. The applicant will retain the existing window and door openings, along with their details, including window trim, sash, glass, lintels, sills, grids, shutters, and hardware.

Mr. Nash displayed pictures of the property and stated that no new window openings have been introduced, only the change in trim and molding on the windows and door. Additionally, the installation of gutters does not require a COA. However, the size, scale, and color of the gutter should be appropriate to the home, and vinyl gutters are discouraged. The colors should not be excessively bright, feature large expanses of shiny metal, or employ highly contrasting colors. Mr. Nash displayed the before-and-after pictures explaining the differences. Commissioner Trepel asked if the color of the door behind the storm door was the same, but that was a question for the applicant. Mr. Nash stated that the only changes to the elevations were on the front

elevation. Commissioner Hauer asked if the shutters on the front were originally not the same size. Mr. Nash said, "Yes." Commissioner Hauer asked if the shutters were the same color. Mr. Nash said yes, everything is still the same except for the trim and the molding. Chair Peeler and Commissioner Hauer discussed the difference in the color of the left shutter compared to the one on the right. Mr. Nash said it may be the angle in the picture because they are pretty much the same color, a faded navy blue, but that is not part of the application since those have not been touched.

With no further questions for the Planning Staff, Chair Peeler recognized the applicant, Ryan Pickens of 522 W. Fourth Avenue, Gastonia, NC. Chair Peeler asked if there were any questions for the applicant. Commissioner Trepel again wondered if the color of the door behind the storm door was the same. Mr. Pickens responded Yes, it is the same aqua color.

Commissioner Pruitt asked what the necessity was for replacing the windows. Mr. Pickens stated that the windows did not lock or close all the way, especially the big one in the middle. Commissioner Pruitt asked if the sash was now functional. Mr. Pickens responded Yes, it's functional now.

Mr. Pickens stated that the small window was not broken, but he replaced it to match the others.

Chair Peeler stated that since the window replacements were like-for-like, the only thing they could discuss was the color of the trim. Commissioner Pruitt asked if they were comparing it to a house built in 1910 with the prominent trim colors typically seen, or if they were comparing it to a modern mid-century house, which would be from 1940 to 1960, since this house was built in 1953, because the trim that's acceptable during this period is very different. Commissioner Trepel stated that he thinks the trim is appropriate for this house. Commissioner Pruitt agreed that he believes the current trim is acceptable. Commissioner Trepel stated he wanted to make an observation, and since it's not part of the application, he can't require it, but he thinks it would be better if the shutters on the left were painted black. Mr. Pickens stated that it might be the picture because the colors on both shutters are the same. Mr. Trepel noted that he would like to see both sets of shutters painted black, just as an observation. Mr. Pickens responded that he would like to do that eventually. Commissioner Hauer stated Mr. Pickens could remove the shutters since they do not fit the windows. Commissioner Trepel responded that the board cannot require the removal of shutters that have existed. Commissioner Hauer agreed but stated, as an observation, that the removal of the shutters would help lighten the front elevation.

Chair Peeler asked if the applicant had only painted the trim on the front of the house or if the entire façade, including the windows, was also painted black. Mr. Pickens responded No, only the front. Commissioner Trepel noted, as he lives in proximity, that the sides and back of this house are very limited in visibility.

Chair Peeler noted that this home is considered a contributing property; however, a significant amount of work had been done to it previously, regardless of whether the renovations were completed before the establishment of the Historic Commission. She personally doesn't see any issues with the black trim, given the existing amount of black iron on this property.

Commissioner Trepel moved to approve the application as submitted. Commissioner Hauer asked Commissioner Trepel if his motion was without changing the trim to the rest of the house. Commissioner Trepel responded, "Correct." He stated he was unsure whether they could require those changes since they were not part of the application. Chair Peeler and Commissioner Hauer stated that yes, they can require such changes. With there being no second to Commissioner Trepel's motion, the motion died.

Commissioner Hauer made a new motion to approve the application with the provision that the remaining trim on the windows and door frames be painted black. Commissioner Trepel seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (4-0).

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ITEM 5. <u>Other Business</u>
A subcommittee meeting was needed.

ITEM 6. <u>Adjournment</u>
There being no other business, Chair Peeler adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Rebeca Mintz, Planning Technician	Kaitlyn Peeler , Chair