

HISTORIC COMMISSION MINUTES

May 15, 2025



MEETING LOCATION: City Council Chambers, City Building

MEMBERS PRESENT: Corey Carter Matthew Dixon
Roger Daniel Gabriel Schoenlein
Anthony Rossi

STAFF PRESENT: Kacie Savage, Zoning Administrator
Claire Fetters-Binegar, City Planner
Luis Rodriguez, Assistant Director of Community and Economic
Development
Bobby Mumma, Staff Attorney

OTHERS PRESENT: Tracey and Amy Hamilton

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Mathew Dixon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The roll was called by Kacie Savage. A voting quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 17, 2025

Mr. Dixon then moved to the next item on the meeting agenda: the meeting minutes from April 17, 2025 meeting. Mr. Dixon asked if everyone had the opportunity to receive and review the meeting minutes. Mr. Schoenlein motioned that the meeting minutes be accepted as presented; Mr. Carter seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS – 304 THE ALAMEDA

Mr. Dixon presented the Certificate of Appropriateness request and asked for a staff report. Ms. Savage stated the Staff report was the same as last week's report; however, the applicant was present to answer the Commission's questions from the April meeting. Mr. Daniel motioned to waive the staff report; Mr. Carter seconded the motion. Mr. Schoenlein was opposed to waiving the staff report, so Mr. Rossi could have a chance to hear the staff report since he was absent at the previous meeting.

Ms. Savage presented the staff analysis using a PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Savage stated the requested action is for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new single car garage. The property was built in 1914 and is a residential property on a .34 acre lot. It is 3,238 square feet, and it was last sold in November of 2019. Ms. Savage then cited the Middletown Development Code's text regarding the issuance of a

Certificate of Appropriateness as well as the time limits and appeals associated with Certificates of Appropriateness. Ms. Savage displayed the property location, the Certificate of Appropriateness application, pictures provided by the applicant, and Certificate of Appropriateness design review criteria.

Mr. Dixon swore in all person in attendance who were to speak before the Commission. Mr. Dixon asked if the applicant wished to address the commission. Mr. Hamilton approached the podium.

Mr. Hamilton stated he wanted to make changes to his original application and provided the commission members with new plans and renderings for his proposed detached garage. Mr. Hamilton stated he would like to propose the construction of a 2-car detached garage on the third parcel of their property to the south away from the existing detached garage on the property. Mr. Hamilton stated he would like to use brick paneling and have the appropriate overhang and corbels to better match the character of the existing garage.

Audio Indiscernible. Mr. Hamilton stated he wanted to go with a shingle roof or if needed they could do the faux clay tiles.

Mr. Dixon asked if the commission had any questions for the applicant.

Mr. Daniel asked if the garage would be seen from the street. Mr. Hamilton stated that the land slopes down towards the alley so you would see maybe 50% of the detached garage with a door and windows that are similar in style

Mr. Schoenlein asked Mr. Hamilton if any vegetation besides the honeysuckle would be removed. Mr. Hamilton stated he believed just the honeysuckle would be removed.

Mr. Dixon asked if the commission had any questions for the applicant. Hearing none, Mr. Dixon asked if any member of the public wished to speak in support of the application. Hearing no response, Mr. Dixon asked if any member of the public would like to speak in opposition of the application. Hearing no response, Mr. Dixon asked if there was any preliminary discussion to be had amongst the commission.

Mr. Schoenlein thanked the applicant for following the appropriate process. Mr. Schoenlein believed the updated plans presented at the meeting by the applicant are an improvement from last month's submission and stated he would be in favor of approving the new plans.

Mr. Daniel stated he was concerned about the garage facing the alleyway and what that would look like from the front of the property.

Audio Indiscernible.

Mr. Carter stated he feels more comfortable approving the new proposed plans from the applicant.

Mr. Dixon expresses his concerns regarding how the single car garage will match the existing home.

Mr. Schoenlein motioned that the application be approved as modified and supplemented by the materials provided by the applicant during the June meeting; Mr. Carter seconded the motion.

The motion was approved through roll call, passing unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

Corey Carter – Yes to Approve

Matthew Dixon – Yes to Approve

Roger Daniel – Yes to Approve

Gabriel Schoenlein – Yes to Approve

Anthony Rossi – Yes to Approve

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN UPDATE

Ms. Savage stated City Staff would like to present an update on the Historic Preservation Plan. City Planner, Ms. Fetters-Binegar, stated she had been in communication with the consultant and delivered to them all of the Commission's comments from the last meeting. Ms. Fetters-Binegar stated that the consultant was targeting the June Commission Meeting for the final plan review as the number of revisions requested would take more time than anticipated. Ms. Fetters-Binegar stated if the Commission felt comfortable with the final draft of the plan, she would target the July Council Meeting for adoption.

Ms. Fetters-Binegar stated the consultant would be present at the June Historic Commission meeting and the July Council meeting to answer any questions. Ms. Fetters-Binegar stated the consultant has asked the City for support in getting them pictures of various properties. Ms. Fetters-Binegar asked the Commission member if they had any properties in mind they want pictured for the plan to share them with her. Ms. Fetters-Binegar asked the Commission if they had any questions.

Mr. Daniel asked how far in advance could the consultant provide the Commission with the draft. Ms. Fetters-Binegar stated she asked the consultant to provide the draft at least a week in advance of the June meeting. Ms. Fetters-Binegar stated if there were any additional external organizations the Commission would like to review the plan draft to provide her with a list.

Mr. Schoenlein asked Ms. Fetters-Binegar if the consultant would accept pictures of properties that could potentially be designated such as Forest Hills Country Club. Ms. Fetters-Binegar stated she would like to touch base with the consultant prior to adding additional information in the plan at the last minute. Ms. Fetters-Binegar also stated that the plan may include limited resources as the intention is to not age the document by including links.

Mr. Schoenlein asked Ms. Fetters-Binegar if the Historic Commission would be able to force the inclusion of potentially designated historic properties. Ms. Fetters-Binegar stated she

believed the Commission had the authority to make suggestions, but was unsure. Mr. Dixon stated the City has not previously been in support of using City resources to include properties for designation that do not wish to be designated.

Mr. Schoenlein asked if this was typical or if this was a City policy in place. Mr. Dixon stated that when adding new properties has been raised before, the City has spoken to the property owner and indicated that if they were interested in pursuing designation that the City would be willing to support that effort, but if a property owner did not wish to be included the effort concluded.

Mr. Schoenlein stated that is a practice. Ms. Fetters-Binegar stated she would need to review the Middletown Development Code and if there is a review criterion associated with that process. Mr. Schoenlein wanted to clarify that he understood the will of the property owner is very important in the decision, but it's not required law. Mr. Dixon confirmed. Mr. Dixon stated that in order to survive contest by the property owner a significant amount of resources would have to be devoted.

Mr. Schoenlein moved that the commission have the consultant include potentially designated properties that are appropriate for designation. Ms. Fetters-Binegar stated that she suggested not drilling down to the property level, but suggest generalized areas.

Mr. Daniel and the Commission discussed a proposal of having a non-voting council member liaison for the Historic Commission from a prior Planning Commission meeting. Ms. Fetters-Binegar stated the text amendment for this change has not been initiated yet and this would be coming in the future.

Mr. Dixon asked if there were any updates on the Manchester Inn. Ms. Savage stated she did not have any updates, but could provide an update at next month's meeting. Mr. Schoenlein asked if Mr. Tuttle was a structural engineer. Ms. Savage stated she did not know. Mr. Rodriguez stated he is not a structural engineer. Ms. Fetters-Binegar clarified that the City has hired a structural engineer to assess the buildings.

Ms. Savage and the Commission discussed the scheduling of a Boards and Commission training session.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously.



Historic Commission Vice Chairman



Kacie Savage, Historic Commission Liaison

*Full Meeting Recording Available on the City's YouTube Channel.