Historic Resources Commission of Asheville & Buncombe County
Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2026
1st Floor North Conference Room
City Hall (70 Court Plaza)
4:00 p.m.

Present: Vice-Chair Sioux Oliva, Bill Roberts, Hans Skouby, Robert Mays, Jenny Bowen, Amy Moxley, Leslie Humphrey
Absent: Chair Will Hornaday, Shannon Watkins, Celesta Gorman, ~~Amy Charst~~
Staff: Alex Cole, Jannice Ashley, Aspen Johnston, Haley Mahoney

Administrative

- Ms. Moxley moved to approve the minutes and the Findings of Fact & Conclusions of Law of the February 11, 2026 meeting. This motion was seconded by Ms. Bowen and carried unanimously.
- After Vice-Chair Oliva explained the public hearing rules, all those present in the audience and staff who anticipated speaking were sworn in.

Public Hearings

1. Certificate of Appropriateness - 53 Birch Street (PIN 9639826325) - Replacement of existing partially collapsed stone retaining wall. Applicant: Patrick Haramija

Historic Resources Planner Alex Cole presented the following staff report and oriented the commission to the property.

Owner/Applicant: City of Asheville/Patrick Haramija
Subject Property: 53 Birch Street (Riverside Cemetery)
Hearing Date: March 11, 2026
Historic District: Montford
PIN: 9639826325
Zoning District: RS8

Property Description: 49.09 acre parcel containing Riverside Cemetery.

Certificate of Appropriateness Request: Replacement of approximately 80' long x 6' tall section of existing stone retaining wall adjacent to eastern property boundary damaged by Tropical Storm Helene; replacement wall will be constructed of concrete faced with a Hipps stone veneer and stone cap; four (4) mature trees will be removed to accommodate wall replacement; ___ long section of existing chain link fencing will be replaced to accommodate wall replacement. All work will be in accordance with attached and approved drawings and

plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

HRC Staff Concerns per the Applicable Standards & Submittal Requirements:

1. Replace in kind any portion of a historic fence or wall that is damaged or deteriorated beyond repair. Match the original in design, configuration, texture, material and color as closely as possible (#3, p. 37); staff has concerns regarding proposed veneer materials matching stone on the existing wall.
2. Staff has asked the applicant to provide the following additional information for review:

    - Clarification on FEMA EHP requirement to remove/relocate existing stone material
    - Example images of Hipps stone veneer walls (if available)
    - Thickness of proposed veneer
    - Approximate length of fencing to be replaced

The standards for Fences and Walls found on pages 37-38, Landscaping and Trees on pages 40-41 and Archaeology on pages 32-33 of the Montford Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted April 14, 2010 and amended December 11, 2019, were used to evaluate this request.

Staff Recommendation - Staff recommends approval of the request for the following reasons, provided concerns are addressed:

1. Existing wall was damaged beyond repair by Helene.
2. Due to existing cemetery site conditions, new wall must be constructed of concrete with a stone veneer; replacement materials for new wall will match the original in design, configuration, texture, material, and color as closely as possible.
3. New chain link fencing is replacing existing chain link fencing, and will be dark in color and set back from top of retaining wall.

2. Certificate of Appropriateness - 345 Montford Avenue (PIN 9649040738) - Replacement of existing partially collapsed stone retaining wall. Applicant: Patrick Haramija

Historic Resources Planner Alex Cole presented the following staff report and oriented the commission to the property.

Owner/Applicant: City of Asheville/Patrick Haramija
Subject Property: 345 Montford Avenue (Montford Park)
Hearing Date: March 11, 2026
Historic District: Montford

PIN: 9649040738
Zoning District: RM8

Property Description: 4.28 acre parcel containing Montford Park.

Certificate of Appropriateness Request: Repair/replacement of approximately 185' long x 4' tall section of existing stone retaining wall adjacent to western edge of tennis courts damaged by Tropical Storm Helene; wall will be reconstructed of concrete; existing stone material will be reconstructed immediately in front of concrete so that the wall retains its current pre-damaged appearance. All work will be in accordance with attached and approved drawings and plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

HRC Staff Concerns per the Applicable Standards & Submittal Requirements:

1. Staff has asked the applicant to clarify on the need for a concrete wall versus rebuilding the wall as-is with existing stone.
2. Staff has asked the applicant to provide the following additional information for review:

    - Stone sample for any new material required to repair the wall

The standards for Fences and Walls found on pages 37-38 and Archaeology on pages 32-33 of the Montford Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted April 14, 2010 and amended December 11, 2019, were used to evaluate this request.

Staff Recommendation - Staff recommends approval of the request for the following reasons provided concerns are addressed:

1. Wall will be repaired in existing location and configuration using existing materials.

Ms. Cole presented the applications for the replacement of an existing partially collapsed stone retaining wall at Riverside Cemetery (*53 Birch Street*) and Montford Park (*345 Montford Avenue*). She first oriented the commission to the Riverside Cemetery wall that had been damaged, noting that it was on the east side of the cemetery along the property boundary. She described the wall as being about 80' long. She reminded the commission that both of these projects are necessary due to damage from Tropical Storm Helene. Based on the feedback from the January meeting, the applicant had provided some alternative material options.

Ms. Cole reminded the commission that the new wall being built will need to be structural, which is complicated by the fact that there are grave sites in close proximity to the back of the wall. This factor limits the extent that the project team can excavate, leading to the new wall to be constructed to have a stone veneer. She then shared the revised plans with the commission that showed the retaining wall construction.

Switching to the Montford Park retaining wall, Ms. Cole said it was her understanding that the wall could be rebuilt with existing materials. She noted that instead of replacing the damaged section, they are now proposing to replace the entire section of the wall which would require structural wall construction. Ms. Cole noted her concerns about the level of disturbance this would cause, and questioned whether it was necessary.

Mr. Patrick Haramija, applicant on behalf of the City, began his presentation by clarifying that the need to replace the entire wall in Montford Park was due to the remaining portion having a drastic forward lean. This lean negated any ability to safely tie in a new wall to the remaining portion. This would increase the project scope to approximately 165 foot long wall replacement.

Vice-Chair Oliva questioned whether the project scope for Montford Park had changed, and Mr. Haramija confirmed that the intent was always to replace the entire wall, citing possible confusion stemming from the original FEMA report that only identified the portion that fell. Ms. Oliva then asked if the existing stone would be able to be reused. Mr. Haramija confirmed that most of the stone can be recovered and will be reused for this site, and matching stone will be used to fill in any gaps left by unusable existing materials.

In response to Mr. Mays, Mr. Haramija said that the wall at Montford Park would be constructed in front of a reinforced concrete wall; the concrete would not be visible. Mr. Haramija then responded to Ms. Bowen, and stated that the other section of damaged wall the park pre-dated Helene and was not included in the scope for FEMA repairs.

Mr. Mays questioned the stipulation that the contractor would build a mock-up of the proposed wall. Mr. Haramija explained that in order to maintain a consistent look throughout the park, the project bid would include some sort of experience criteria that would rank the level of experience and craftsmanship of each bidder. He added that he had already gone to stone yards in the area asking for recommendations for qualified masons who work in the city often. He made clear that he would still have to follow traditional bidding guidelines, and would not be able to hand pick any contractors. He then detailed the project scope and the ways that specifications and construction monitoring would ensure mortar color, mortar strength and spacing, stone sourcing, and stone spacing.

Ms. Humphrey noted her appreciation of the new information presented to the commission, but brought up concern over contractors not specifically being selected with historic preservation experience. Tracy Wyman, project manager, came to the podium to confirm that the bid would encompass historic preservation experience, adding that the bid documents will include a section in which the bidders will have to self-evaluate their experience on several criteria, including experience with historic preservation.

Ms. Humphrey followed up with concerns around the reinforced concrete retaining wall, noting that the sheet pile construction would necessitate large machinery driving on site. Mr. Haramija made it clear that they planned to repair section by section in order to negate any need for driving large machinery through the site.

Ms. Moxley then asked whether the proposed wall at the cemetery included a stone cap,

and Mr. Haramija clarified that there would be slightly different techniques used on each site, as the walls would be constructed slightly differently. Mr. Haramija noted that in Montford Park they plan to implement a solid stone top using the existing stones. At the cemetery, they planned to wrap the veneer over the top of the wall to show a consistent material between the front and the top.

Ms. Cole questioned what the thickness of the veneer would be, leading Mr. Haramija to bring his stone samples up for exhibit. He showed the typical thickness of the stone, noting that they do come in different thicknesses. Mr. Mays asked where the river rock would be implemented. Mr. Haramija confirmed that there would be a mix of both the more rounded river rock and a more angular stone type to match the existing wall per the recommendations of several local stoneyards.

Ms. Bowen brought up the fact that reusing the stones in the cemetery may not be feasible due to the existing stones being three-dimensional stones, compared to the veneer stone. Mr. Haramija confirmed that the existing stones would be too large to be repurposed for this project. Mr. Mays added that it was due to the inability to dig any further back for reconstruction without damaging grave sites. Mr. Haramija agreed, noting that there were some graves as close as three feet from the damaged wall. Ms Bowen and Ms. Cole wondered whether the stones would be repurposed elsewhere if the materials were still viable. Ms. Cole mentioned the FEMA requirement noted in the application for removal and relocation of the existing materials. Ms. Wyman confirmed that after several site visits, FEMA investigators made it clear that the existing stone will need to be removed from the site. The City must notify where the stones are dumped, and that it has to be somewhere allowed by FEMA EHP. Ms. Cole noted that they could make this a condition of approval to require the intentional reuse of the stones that will be removed from the cemetery, hoping that the FEMA EHP would be open to these conditions.. Ms. Bowen confirmed she would prefer that the stones be reused in some other public project, as these stones will be historic and should be repurposed. Ms. Wyman agreed, and said she would follow up with staff as the process becomes more clear.

Ms. Bowen asked for clarity on the retaining wall and chain link fence processes for the cemetery, and Mr. Haramija explained in further detail the proposed retaining wall construction. He added that they would have a cast-in-place concrete wall, and behind the wall would be chain link fencing poured into a concrete footing. He confirmed that, similar to Montford Park, the concrete wall would not be visible due to the configuration. Mr. Mays confirmed that the chain link fence would match the existing fence around the property. Both Mr. Mays and Ms. Bowen confirmed that there would not be any chicken wire on the retaining wall.

Ms. Bowen noted that not using a sheet piling technique would limit disturbance for Montford neighbors, and negate the need to drive equipment onto adjacent properties, which was confirmed by Mr. Haramija. She then asked whether any trees would be lost in this process, and Ms. Cole confirmed that several trees had already been removed.

Ms. Cole asked about the chain link fence, and Ms. Wyman noted that the existing fence is approximately 4-5 feet tall, black vinyl coated, and relatively new. This led her to believe that the existing fence likely matched the district's current standards. Mr. Mays confirmed that a fence runs along the perimeter. Ms. Cole noted that the replacement fence would need to be no taller than six feet and dark in color to meet the standards.

Vice-Chair Oliva opened the floor for public comment at 4:34 p.m., and when no one spoke, she closed the floor for public comment.

There was no further discussion on the application.

MOTION TO APPROVE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (53 Birch Street)

Chairman, based upon the evidence presented to this Commission, including Exhibit A - application (2 pages); Exhibit B - project description (3 pages); Exhibit C - proposed wall material options (8 pages); Exhibit D - site map (1 page); Exhibit E - revised application & project description (11 pages - received January 21, 2026); Exhibit F - revised stone specifications (6 pages - received January 21, 2026); Exhibit G - additional stone image (1 page - received January 27, 2026); Exhibit H - revised application and project description (11 pages - received February 23, 2026); Exhibit I - stone sample images (4 pages - received March 11, 2026) and the Commission's actual inspection and review of subject property by all members;

I move that this Commission **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness based on the following:

1. That the application is for the replacement of approximately 80' long x 6' tall section of existing stone retaining wall adjacent to eastern property boundary damaged by Tropical Storm Helene; replacement wall will be constructed of concrete faced with a Hipps stone veneer and stone cap; four (4) mature trees will be removed to accommodate wall replacement; 80' long section of existing chain link fencing will be replaced with new dark color metal matching existing to accommodate wall replacement. All work will be completed in accordance with approved and attached drawings and plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

2. That the standards for Fences and Walls found on pages 37-38, Landscaping and Trees on pages 40-41 and Archaeology on pages 32-33 of the Montford Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted April 14, 2010 and amended December 11, 2019, were used to evaluate this request.

3. This application **does** meet the design standards for the following reasons:

    a. Existing wall was damaged beyond repair by Helene.
    b. Due to existing cemetery site conditions, new wall must be constructed of concrete with a stone veneer; replacement materials for new wall will match the original in design, configuration, texture, material, and color as closely as possible.

4. That the action and improvements proposed in the application before us for a Certificate of Appropriateness **are** congruous with the special historic character of the Montford Historic District.

Motion by: Ms. Moxley
Second by: Ms. Bowen
Vote for: Unanimous
Vote against: None

Based upon the foregoing findings and for the reasons set forth therein, I move that a Certificate of Appropriateness be **issued** with the following conditions:

1. Relocation/reuse details of existing stone material being removed will be confirmed with staff.
2. Fence specifications will be submitted for staff review and approval.

Motion by: Ms. Moxley
Second by: Ms. Bowen
Vote for: Unanimous
Vote against: None

A copy of the written decision approving the Certificate of Appropriateness is attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

MOTION TO APPROVE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (345 Montford Avenue)

Chairman, based upon the evidence presented to this Commission, including Exhibit A - application, site map, project description & photos (5 pages); Exhibit B - proposed wall material options (8 pages); Exhibit C - additional site photos (3 pages - taken by staff January 14, 2026); Exhibit D - revised application (5 pages - received January 21, 2026); Exhibit E - revised application and project description (9 pages - received February 23, 2026); Exhibit F - additional stone images (received March 11, 2026); and the Commission's actual inspection and review of subject property by all members;

I move that this Commission **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness based on the following:

1. That the application is to repair/replace approximately 185' long x 4' tall section of existing stone retaining wall adjacent to western edge of tennis courts damaged by Tropical Storm Helene; wall will be reconstructed of concrete; existing stone material will be reconstructed immediately in front of concrete so that the wall retains its current pre-damaged appearance; any new stone will match existing. All work will be completed in accordance with approved and attached drawings and plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

2. That the standards for Fences and Walls found on pages 37-38 and Archaeology on pages 32-33 of the Montford Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted April 14, 2010 and amended December 11, 2019, were used to evaluate this request.

3. This application **does** meet the design standards for the following reasons:

    a. Wall will be repaired/rebuilt in existing location and configuration using existing materials.

4. That the action and improvements proposed in the application before us for a Certificate of Appropriateness **are** congruous with the special historic character of the Montford Historic District.

Motion by: Ms. Bowen
Second by: Mr. Holt
Vote for: Unanimous
Vote against: None

Based upon the foregoing findings and for the reasons set forth therein, I move that a Certificate of Appropriateness be **issued**.

Motion by: Ms. Bowen
Second by: Mr. Roberts
Vote for: Unanimous
Vote against: None

A copy of the written decision approving the Certificate of Appropriateness is attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

3. Certificate of Appropriateness - 101 Santee Street (PIN 9639855198) - Construction of a new driveway. Applicant: Carole King

Historic Resources Planner Alex Cole presented the following staff report and oriented the commission to the property.

Owner/Applicant: POLLACK MICHAEL;KING CAROLE/Carole King & Michael Pollack
Subject Property: 101 Santee Street
Hearing Date: March 11, 2026
Historic District: Montford
PIN: 9639855198
Zoning District: RS8

Property Description: 0.14 acre parcel containing a two-story structure constructed in 2022.

Certificate of Appropriateness Request: Construction of a new concrete driveway/parking area in front yard; driveway will have 10' apron per City standards and two (2) 18" concrete

strips spaced 60" on center; area between strips will be planted with ground cover. After the fact approval to install square painted lattice trash enclosure; enclosure to be relocated from existing location adjacent to the street to top of new driveway/parking area. Installation of flagstone paver area between driveway and existing steps. After the fact approval to install a dark color metal handrail along east side of steps. Construction of a 40' long concrete retaining wall connecting from street to end of existing wall along western property boundary; new landscaping to be installed in area of driveway and wall. All work will be in accordance with attached and approved drawings and plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

HRC Staff Concerns per the Applicable Standards & Submittal Requirements:

1. Staff has asked the applicant to provide the following additional information for review:

    - Revised site plan drawn to scale and showing proposed landscaping
    - Clarification on whether a new handrail is proposed along west side of steps
    - Height of proposed retaining wall
    - Landscaping plan with planting species identified

The standards for Walkways, Driveways and Off-Street Parking found on pages 50-51, Fences and Walls on pages 36-37 and Landscaping and Trees on pages 40-41of the Montford Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted April 14, 2010 and amended December 11, 2019, were used to evaluate this request.

Staff Recommendation - Staff does recommend approval of the request for the following reasons, provided concerns have been addressed:

1. New driveway will be concrete and compatible with the site and district in terms of dimension, configuration, materials, color and texture.
2. Driveway/parking area will be located so that the topography of the site is retained; there is no access to the rear yard due to the slope of the land and there is no room in the rear yard.
3. New wall will constructed of concrete and sited in a location that is compatible with the traditional historic relationship of fences and walls to historic properties in the district.
4. Landscaping between new and existing wall will be planted to maintain screening in front of Verti-Block wall.

Ms. Cole explained that the subject property was a small, pie shaped lot located on the northern edge of the district. She added that another street made a dead end immediately in front of the property, making it tricky to safely park cars on Santee Street. Ms. Cole said that the site plan had been revised quite a bit to address concerns about the site and topographical constraints. She noted that the plan showed a new Verti-block wall to match the existing. She explained that the existing section of Verti-block wall had only been approved because it was constructed prior to CA approval, and there was no way it could be removed because it was so large and located behind the house that was constructed. She said the new section of wall would need to be consistent with the materials identified in the standards rather than Verti-block.

She showed the revised plan which illustrated the driveway entering the side yard versus terminating in the front yard as it was previously shown. She said she needed clarification from the applicant as to whether or not the new handrail along the steps was still being proposed.

Property owner Carole King reminded the commission that her car had been hit while parked on the street, so the driveway was partly needed for safety. She also noted that in attempts to resell the house, they continued to hear that buyers did not want to walk up the steps, nor park on the street.

Teresa Rogerson, project designer, noted that this plan included the requisite ten foot driveway apron, with the driveway apron not exceeding 11% slope. She added that there was one short, steep section that would have a 17.6% slope. Ms. Rogerson clarified that in building a new retaining wall, they would have the opportunity to remove invasive vines, and replant with native plants and shrubs. She added that the handrail along the steps previously questioned was no longer necessary due to the revised parking location. She then addressed concerns regarding the Verti-block wall and that they would instead pour concrete to match the curvature of the concrete stairs.

Mr. Mays asked whether the new wall would be poured concrete or Verti-block. Ms. Rogerson said the wall wouldn't be taller than ten feet and would be concrete. Ms. Rogerson added that there would be native plantings between the two concrete driveway strips, contributing to a more natural feeling. She said she could add more trees to the upper section in order to better hide the new wall. Ms. Rogerson confirmed that the wall would run alongside the property line.

Vice-Chair Oliva asked the commission if they had any questions or discussion points, and Ms. Bowen and Ms. Humphrey both questioned what the retaining wall would be made out of, and if the driveway would be made out of concrete strips or paver blocks with grass in between. Ms. Rogerson confirmed that the driveway would be made out of concrete strips, as paver blocks were not appropriate for use on sloping surfaces.

Vice-Chair Oliva opened the floor for public comment at 4:55 p.m., and when no one spoke, she closed the floor for public comment.

Mr. Mays once again brought up concern over how high the retaining wall would be, though the use of concrete was allowed and he would be okay with it, especially if it was screened with vegetation. Ms. Roberson stated that the highest point would be nine feet or less, gradually sloping down to approximately six feet.

Vice-Chair Oliva questioned Ms. Rogerson about the landscaping, and Ms. Rogerson explained that some of the existing landscaping would be relocated on the site for screening.

There was no further discussion on the application.

MOTION TO APPROVE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Chairman, based upon the evidence presented to this Commission, including Exhibit A - application and project description (4 pages); Exhibit B - photos and proposed site plan (4 pages); Exhibit C - driveway photos (10 pages - received February 2, 2026); Exhibit D - revised site plan (1 page - received February 6, 2026); Exhibit E - revised photos and plans (9 pages - received February 19, 2026); Exhibit F - revised site plan (1 page - received March 9, 2026); and the Commission's actual inspection and review of subject property by all members;

I move that this Commission **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness based on the following:

1. That the application is for the construction of a new concrete driveway/parking area; driveway will have 10' apron per City standards and two (2) 24" concrete strips spaced 60" on center; area between strips will be planted with ground cover. After the fact approval to install square painted lattice trash enclosure; enclosure to be relocated from existing location adjacent to the street to top of new driveway/parking area. Installation of flagstone paver area between driveway and existing steps. After the fact approval to install a dark color metal handrail along east side of steps. Construction of a new concrete retaining wall connecting from street to end of existing wall along western property boundary; new landscaping to be installed in area of driveway and wall. All work will be in accordance with attached and approved drawings and plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

2. That the standards for Walkways, Driveways and Off-Street Parking found on pages 50-51, Fences and Walls on pages 36-37 and Landscaping and Trees on pages 40-41of the Montford Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted April 14, 2010 and amended December 11, 2019, were used to evaluate this request.

3. This application **does** meet the design standards for the following reasons:

    a. New driveway will be concrete and compatible with the site and district in terms of dimension, configuration, materials, color and texture.
    b. Driveway/parking area will be located so that the topography of the site is retained; there is no access to the rear yard due to the slope of the land and there is no room in the rear yard.
    c. New wall will be constructed of concrete and sited in a location that is compatible with the traditional historic relationship of fences and walls to historic properties in the district.
    d. Landscaping between new and existing wall will be planted to maintain screening in front of Verti-Block wall.

4. That the action and improvements proposed in the application before us for a Certificate of Appropriateness **are** congruous with the special historic character of the Montford Historic District.

Motion by: Ms. Moxley
Second by: Mr. Mays
Vote for: Unanimous
Vote against: None

Based upon the foregoing findings and for the reasons set forth therein, I move that a Certificate of Appropriateness be **issued**.

Motion by: Ms. Moxley
Second by: Mr. Mays
Vote for: Unanimous
Vote against: None

A copy of the written decision approving the Certificate of Appropriateness is attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

4. Certificate of Appropriateness - 265 Cumberland Avenue (PIN 9649045369) - Alteration of existing retaining wall in front yard. Applicant: Jennifer & Andrew Ayala

Ms. Bowen made a motion to move the application to later in the meeting, as the applicant was not present to speak. The motion was seconded by Mr. Skouby and carried unanimously.

Ms. Cole then said she had received an email during the meeting that the applicant would not be able to attend, and had requested a continuance until the April 8, 2026 meeting. Mr. Mays made a motion to continue the application to the April meeting; the motion was seconded by Mr. Holt and carried unanimously.

5. Certificate of Appropriateness - 9 Kitchin Place (PIN 9647697834) - Replacement/modification of existing storefront and replacement of existing windows on rear elevation. Applicant: Dawn Dorn Hurkis Harris Design Assoc.

Historic Resources Planner Alex Cole presented the following staff report and oriented the commission to the property.

Owner/Applicant: KITCHIN PLACE LLC/Dawn Dorn Hurkes Harris Design Assoc.
Subject Property: 9 Kitchin Place
Hearing Date: March 11, 2026
Historic District: Biltmore Village
PIN: 9647697834
Zoning District: Community Business II

Property Description: 0.04 acre parcel containing a one-story brick commercial building with recessed entry and large display windows; constructed ca. 1929.

Certificate of Appropriateness Request: Replacement of existing storefront consisting of knee-height bulkheads, glass display windows and wood pedestrian door within recessed entry; new storefront will have full-length glass display windows and double-entry doors with glass framing with black metal panel above; replacement of existing green fabric awning with new black fabric awning and installation of three (3) new gooseneck light fixtures on front elevation; replacement of two (2) existing multi-lite ____ windows with new _____ windows, and replacement of existing _____ pedestrian door with new _____ pedestrian door on rear elevation; existing wood window and door trim/framing on rear elevation to be retained, repaired, and repainted as needed with any new material matching existing in dimension, configuration and material. All work will be in accordance with attached and approved drawings and plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

HRC Staff Concerns per the Applicable Standards & Submittal Requirements:

1. Staff has concerns regarding replacement of existing storefront and replacement storefront configuration; when replacing glass or restoring windows, maintain the original size and shape of the storefront opening (#18, p. 11).
2. Staff has concerns regarding the proposed contemporary black aluminum glazing system and hardware; window frames should have a painted or bronzed finish (#21, p. 12).
3. Staff has concerns regarding the metal material above the storefront; preserve the transom (clerestory) where it exists (#22, p. 13).
4. Staff has asked the applicant to provide the following additional items/clarification for review:

    - Existing material information and more detail on need for replacement for windows and door on rear elevation; manufacturer specifications for new windows and door
    - Manufacturer specifications for light fixtures and awning
    - Paint color specifications for window and door trim on rear elevation

The Standards for Color found on pages 43-44 of Chapter 7 and Illumination on pages 45-46 of Chapter 8 of Book 1, and the General Standards for Rehabilitation found on pages 5-10 of Chapter 2 and the Standards for Rehabilitation of "Commercial Type" Structures found on pages 11-16 of Chapter 3 of Book 2 of the Biltmore Village Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted October 1, 1988, were used to evaluate this request.

Staff Recommendation - Staff does recommend approval of the request for the following reasons, provided concerns have been addressed:

1. The original size, shape and configuration of the storefront is being maintained and restored.
2. Existing windows and doors on rear elevation are damaged beyond repair; new windows and doors will be _____ and similar to those materials and design employed historically.
3. New light fixtures are simple and are appropriate to the period of the building.

Ms. Cole explained that the building had sustained damage from Tropical Storm Helene; the scope of work included repairing damaged storefront, doors, and windows. She explained that the proposed work included fully removing the existing, intact storefront configuration and replacing it with a contemporary storefront, which she was not supportive of. She also noted that if there was existing historic material behind the shingle siding, it would be important to maintain and preserve those materials.

Ms. Cole pointed out the neighboring building was built in the 1960s, and shouldn't be used as a direct comparison since the subject building had been constructed in 1929. She said additional information regarding the need for replacing the windows and door on the back of the building was needed, and that if the commission were supportive of replacing them, the specifications would be needed.

Ms. Cole noted to the commission that the signage shown on the plans was not included in this application, and would be reviewed by staff via minor work application at a later date. The light fixtures, however, were part of the current application; manufacturer specifications would need to be submitted for review.

Ms. Humphrey asked about the application, noting that the design resembled the Lululemon storefront several buildings down the block. Ms. Cole said the proposed door hardware was the same, though she did not know when that building may have been modified. It could have been prior to the historic district's existence. She reiterated that since the configuration of the subject storefront still exists, it should be retained and preserved versus replaced.

Mr. Roberts asked about the material behind the shingles on the knee wall and above the entrance, and Ms. Cole said she wasn't sure of the material underneath, but hoped that the original material may be underneath the shingles.

Vice-Chair Oliva took a moment to swear in members of the public who were not present during the initial swearing in.

After being sworn in, the applicant and architect, Dawn Dorn addressed the commission. She addressed Ms. Cole's comments regarding the storefront modification, and explained that the need for displaying mattresses in the interior had dictated their desire to remove the recessed entry. Ms. Dorn then showed the commission a recently drawn plan that provides a more rectangular entry, giving a somewhat recessed appearance, while still allowing Temperpedic's original layout to fit.

Mr. Mays asked how recessed the newly designed entrance would be, and Ms. Dorn responded that it would be 3 feet, 2 inches, just beyond the size of the doors when open.

Ms. Humphrey asked whether there were any historic images or drawings of the building, and Ms. Cole responded that she hadn't been able to locate any. However, she said this type of recessed entry was very common to early twentieth century commercial buildings.

Ms. Bowen noted that in her role with Buncombe County Special Collections, she was not permitted to go look for resources on her own, but if requested by Ms. Cole or an applicant she would be able to dig into the archives.

Ms. Dorn referenced other building entrances on the same block, noting that other buildings such as Jos. A. Bank had unrecessed entryways, unlike that at 9 Kitchin Place.

Mr. Mays asked whether everything underneath the awning would be entirely glass, and Ms. Dorn added that today was her first time seeing the building in person, and had to rely on images for design. She stated that the overall storefront was approximately ten feet tall, with the glass portion being 8 feet, 2 inches. Additionally, there was a roughly 24 inch panel above the glass portion that currently had shingles over it that were damaged during Tropical Storm Helene.

Mr. Skouby asked about the damage caused by Tropical Storm Helene, and Ms. Dorn confirmed that the non-tempered windows and frames were not salvageable due to the storm. Mr. Skouby questioned why staff were opposed to the changed entrance configuration, as the massing to him still seemed to visually appear the same. Vice-Chair Oliva remarked that the intent was to keep the historic nature of the building intact.

Ms. Dorn then noted that the proposed storefront was a matte black as Temperpedic's store standard and as a way to differentiate from the Jos. A. Bank storefront next door. She then detailed the new proposed awning, sharing that it would be the same size and configuration as the previous awning, but black instead of green. Mr. Roberts sought clarity as to the necessity of the awning and whether it was there to provide shade. Ms. Dorn responded that it was not necessary for shade, but was intended to match the awning over the storefront prior to Helene. She added that since it was not necessary for shade, they could consider removing that from the proposal. Mr. Roberts commented that perhaps removing the awning would allow them to have a more modern look without having to alter the historic character of the building.

Ms. Cole reiterated her concerns regarding the proposed storefront modification. In addition to her concerns regarding the replacement of the storefront, the proposed new storefront was very contemporary, almost like new construction. Ms. Dorn agreed and noted that the rendering materials may be contributing to that, as the brick looked lighter and less aged.

Mr. Skouby noted that the knee wall and angle of the entry appear to be very important to the front elevation design.

Mr. Roberts added that learning what was behind the shingles was important, as oftentimes people would cover existing materials with plywood.

Ms. Dorn passed around a photo of the inside of the building. Ms. Cole and Mr. Roberts both noted that the original glass transom appeared to still be present. Mr. Roberts then noted that the shingles underneath the knee wall may have the original materials underneath as well.

Ms. Humphrey noted that the standards for Biltmore Village state that the historic character of the storefront should be retained, so the commission would likely not support a new storefront with glass that goes to the ground. Mr. Skouby referenced page 7.1 of the proposed plans, and noted that the bottom right photo seemed more congruent with the design standards.

Ms. Dorn confirmed that more investigation into the existing materials beneath the shingles was needed. The commission suggested that this case be continued in order to gain more information, and Ms. Dorn agreed it would be a good idea. Mr. Roberts noted that if they find there are not original materials underneath the shingles, they could consider a new storefront material. However, if there are elements from the 1920s, they will need to maintain those materials.

Ms. Dorn then moved on to discuss the rear elevation of the building, and stated that their proposal included matching the existing materials with tempered glass windows with wood framing and muntins. Ms. Cole again questioned the need for replacing the windows and asked if someone had assessed them. Ms. Dorn stated that the door and one window had been damaged beyond repair, but that perhaps the other window could be retained.

Ms. Humphrey asked about the rear door, and Ms. Dorn noted that Tempurpedic's standards call for rear hollow metal doors for security, though she could work with them to get a wood door approved. Ms. Cole noted that the specific door materials will need to be shown in the application.

Mr. Roberts asked whether a contractor had been selected for this project yet, and Ms. Dorn responded that they were waiting to see how this meeting went before going to bid. Mr. Roberts made the point that working with a local contractor who is familiar with the Biltmore Village Design Standards would be helpful in moving forward. Ms. Dorn agreed, and noted that she has already spoken with the contractor who is working on the renovations next door at Jos. A Bank.

Ms. Dorn requested a continuance to the April 8, 2026 meeting. Mr. Mays moved that the application be continued. This motion was seconded by Ms. Bowen with a unanimous vote from the commission. Vice-Chair Oliva and Mr. Roberts suggested that it might be helpful for a contractor representing the project to attend the April meeting

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6. Certificate of Appropriateness - 207 Pearson Drive (PIN 9639943018) - Construction of a two-story, 450 square foot addition on rear elevation. Applicant: Sarah Brown & Bryan Clift

Historic Resources Planner Alex Cole presented the following staff report and oriented

the commission to the property.

Owner/Applicant: BROWN RICHARD A;EGGERTON SUSAN/Sarah Brown & Bryan Clift
Subject Property: 207 Pearson Drive
Hearing Date: March 11, 2026
Historic District: Montford
PIN: 9639943018
Zoning District: RM8

Property Description: 0.46 acre parcel containing the Galliard S. Tennent House - an early 20th-century two-story vernacular stucco dwelling with a recessed porch, bay window, clipped dormer, and simple details, constructed prior to 1907.

Certificate of Appropriateness Request: Removal of existing deck and addition on rear elevation and construction of a ~450 square foot two-story addition with pebbledash siding, wood brackets and asphalt shingle roof matching existing; five (5) existing wood windows will be reused and two (2) new wood diamond lite window will be installed on addition; one (1) pair of Pella Lifestyle wood single-lite doors will be installed on rear of addition; construction of 13' 5" x 19' 8" deck and stair with KDAT flooring and painted wood railing with 1" square pickets spaced 4" on center on rear elevation. All work will be in accordance with attached and approved drawings and plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

HRC Staff Concerns per the Applicable Standards & Submittal Requirements:

1. Staff has asked the applicant to provide the following additional information for review:

    - Screening material for deck
    - Lighting specifications should there be any new fixtures

The standards for Additions found on pages 88-89, Decks on pages 38-39 and Windows and Doors on pages 84-85 of the Montford Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted April 14, 2010 and amended December 11, 2019, were used to evaluate this request.

Staff Recommendation - Staff does recommend approval of the request for the following reasons:

1. New addition is sited as inconspicuously as possible and where historic character defining features will not be damaged, destroyed or obscured.
2. Addition is designed so as to be compatible with the existing building in height, massing, roof form and pitch.
3. Addition is limited in scale and size so as to reduce the visual impact on the historic building; new addition will not overpower the site or substantially alter the site's proportion of built area to green space.

4. Existing wood windows will be reused; new windows and doors will be wood and similar in design to those in the original structure in terms of proportion, spacing and materials.
5. New deck is sited on the rear elevation and is compatible in scale, proportion, materials and detail with the historic building; framing of deck will be screened with _____.

Ms. Cole explained that the project scope included removal of an existing addition and deck on the rear elevation and construction of a new addition and deck. She said she did not have any concerns. She noted that five (5) existing windows would be reused on the new addition. She adds that the new portion of the upper story roof will not be visible from the front of the house. She asked the applicant for screening materials for the deck, and the applicant confirmed it would be lattice.

Ms. Humphrey requested clarification on side setbacks and whether the addition was supposed to be set back from the rear building corner. Ms. Cole clarified there was an existing bumpout on the side elevation, and the new addition would be inset from that.

Sarah Howell, architect, and Sarah Brown, property owner, introduced themselves and offered to answer questions but did not have anything to add as Ms. Cole did not have any concerns about the project. Ms. Brown did note that she grew up in the house and worked closely with the architect to ensure compatibility with the historic character and neighborhood.

The board did not have any questions, so Vice-Chair Oliva opened the floor for public comment at 5:44 p.m., and when no one spoke, she closed the floor for public comment.

Ms. Humphrey asked about the French doors on the rear elevation, and it was confirmed that the commission had approved these types of doors.

There was a discussion about diamond cased windows, and Ms. Howell said that all windows were being reused in this renovation. Ms. Brown was asked whether the diamond pattern windows were currently operable, and she confirmed that they were.

Ms. Humphrey acknowledged that it appeared Ms. Brown and Ms. Howell had worked hard on the design. Ms. Howell noted that she had also designed the carriage house behind this structure, so she had been studying the character of this house for quite some time.

There was no further discussion on the application.

MOTION TO APPROVE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Chairman, based upon the evidence presented to this Commission, including Exhibit A - application, project description, and owner affidavit (6 pages); Exhibit B - existing and proposed plans (9 pages); Exhibit C - material specifications (5 pages); Exhibit D - site photos (6 pages); and the Commission's actual inspection and review of subject property by all members;

I move that this Commission **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness based on the following:

1. That the application is for the removal of existing deck and addition on rear elevation and construction of a ~450 square foot two-story addition with pebbledash siding, wood brackets and asphalt shingle roof matching existing; five (5) existing wood windows will be reused and two (2) new wood diamond lite window will be installed on addition; one (1) pair of Pella Lifestyle wood single-lite doors will be installed on rear of addition; construction of 13' 5" x 19' 8" deck and stair with KDAT flooring and painted wood railing with 1" square pickets spaced 4" on center on rear elevation. All work will be completed in accordance with approved and attached drawings and plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

2. The standards for Additions found on pages 88-89, Decks on pages 38-39 and Windows and Doors on pages 84-85 of the Montford Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted April 14, 2010 and amended December 11, 2019, were used to evaluate this request.

3. This application **does** meet the design standards for the following reasons:

    a. New addition is sited as inconspicuously as possible and where historic character defining features will not be damaged, destroyed or obscured.
    b. Addition is designed so as to be compatible with the existing building in height, massing, roof form and pitch.
    c. Addition is limited in scale and size so as to reduce the visual impact on the historic building; new addition will not overpower the site or substantially alter the site's proportion of built area to green space.
    d. Existing wood windows will be reused; new windows and doors will be wood and similar in design to those in the original structure in terms of proportion, spacing and materials.
    e. New deck is sited on the rear elevation and is compatible in scale, proportion, materials and detail with the historic building; framing of deck will be screened with lattice.

4. That the action and improvements proposed in the application before us for a Certificate of Appropriateness **are** congruous with the special historic character of the Montford Historic District.

Motion by: Mr. Skouby
Second by: Mr. Holt
Vote for: Unanimous
Vote against: None

Based upon the foregoing findings and for the reasons set forth therein, I move that a Certificate of Appropriateness be **issued**.

Motion by: Mr. Skouby
Second by: Mr. Mays
Vote for: Unanimous
Vote against: None

A copy of the written decision approving the Certificate of Appropriateness is attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

7. Certificate of Appropriateness - 16 Short Street (PIN 9649119551) - Installation of fifteen (15) solar panels on south facing portion of roof. Applicant: Lily Ardrey

Historic Resources Planner Alex Cole presented the following staff report and oriented the commission to the property.

Owner/Applicant: S & R PRONOVOST FAMILY TRUST/Lily Ardrey
Subject Property: 16 Short Street
Hearing Date: March 11, 2026
Historic District: Montford
PIN: 9649119551
Zoning District: RM8

Property Description: 0.11 acre parcel containing a one-and-a-half story primary structure constructed ca. 2002.

Certificate of Appropriateness Request: Installation of fifteen (15) 67.87" x 44.65" x 1.18" black Solstice panel solar panels on south facing portion of roof and related power wall and equipment on _____ elevation; electrical equipment will be screened with _____. All work will be in accordance with attached and approved drawings and plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

HRC Staff Concerns per the Applicable Standards & Submittal Requirements:

1. Staff has concerns regarding the placement of the proposed solar panels; installation of solar devices on roof surfaces facing the primary public right of way shall be considered only when no other option is possible and there is not detrimental impact to the integrity of the neighborhood (#2, p. 81).
2. Staff has asked for the following additional information for review:

- Clarification of proposed location of power wall and related electrical equipment

The standards for Sustainability and Emerging Technology found on pages 80-81 of the Montford Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted April 14, 2010 and amended December 11, 2019, were used to evaluate this request.

Staff Recommendation - Staff does not recommend approval of the request for the following reasons:

1. Proposed panels would be highly visible from the public right of way and would be detrimental to the integrity of the neighborhood.

Ms. Cole noted that her main concern with the proposal were with the nine solar panels that were closest to the street, as they would be highly visible and may impact the historic character of the district. However she expressed her understanding that given the roof pitch and orientation, they were limited in terms of where the panels could be located so as to be less visible.

Property owner Stephen Pronovost addressed the commission, and noted that many other houses on his street have solar panels that are extremely visible, specifically calling attention to 47 Short Street. Vice Chair Oliva asked whether they had photographs of these other houses.

Solar representative for Renu Energy Solutions, Calli Hudgins, approached the podium to provide additional information, including the proposed placement of the battery and related electrical equipment. They showed the plans for the rear elevation of the house. This clarified that the power panel, battery, and conduit would not be visible from the street. Ms. Hudgins added that the Power Wall 3 would be blocked by the existing HVAC unit. They also showed photographs of houses in the districts that also have visible solar panels as precedent, specifically 155 Cumberland Avenue and 60 Cumberland Avenue. Ms. Hudgins noted that she has worked extensively with other historic districts in North Carolina, including a recent Tesla Solar Roof installation approved by this commission.

Mr. Skouby asked what the total offset would be, and Ms. Hudgins confirmed it would be 8,555 Kilowatt hours, allowing the owner to completely offset his electrical bill and tie into the Duke Energy Virtual Power Plant program.

Ms. Cole noted that the applicant would need to submit the additional photos shown of nearby homes with visible solar panels to staff for the record.

Mr. Mays wondered if they considered putting the panels on the dormers, and Ms. Hudgins said that in the historic district of Plaza Midwood in Charlotte, NC they had recently placed solar panels on dormers, but in this case she would not be able to fit the amount needed to provide enough output. She added that they could potentially fit three or four panels on the southern facing dormer, so long as it passed a structural integrity test. Mr. Mays asked about placing panels on the dormers on the other side of the roof, and Ms. Hudgins explained that those dormers were shaded by tree cover, and were also northwest facing which would not provide enough solar exposure.

Mr. Mays observed that he had not seen a similar case where the roof area was so small

leading to very limited options. Ms. Cole confirmed that she had not reviewed a solar application for a one-and-a-half story house where the panels would be so visible.

Ms. Hudgins expressed curiosity about what was considered inconspicuous as far as panel location, and whether or not the commission could take into consideration the visibility further down the street. Mr. Mays cited the standards, which state that “solar energy collectors shall be located as inconspicuously as possible while allowing for reasonable use.” With that, he acknowledged that this proposed installation may fit that criteria, if the applicant can show the proposed plans are as inconspicuous as possible, while allowing for reasonable use.

Ms. Cole pointed out that one difference with this case versus the example shown by the owner of the other house on Short Street is that the subject property's roof shingles are much lighter in color. She noted that in addition to the standard read by Mr. Mays, the panels should not have a detrimental impact on the integrity of the neighborhood. She noted that it was important to consider the individual building site, visibility, and how the panel placement might impact the integrity of the district over time. Mr. Mays noted that the standard previously described by Ms. Cole is only talking about solar devices on roofs facing the primary public right of way, which he felt was not the case for this configuration, and therefore did not apply. He said this might be the most inconspicuous panel placement possible for this property, but added that it might be helpful for the commission to view alternatives if any were possible.

Ms. Hudgins noted that there were no Duke energy minimums, and it was up to individual homeowners to weigh their return on investment. Mr. Pronovost added that when he initially purchased the house five years ago, he looked into putting panels on the house, and studying the roof layout showed panels on the northwest side of the roof did not capture enough energy to be worth the investment. Mr. Mays sought clarity to the previously explored layout, explaining he was not suggesting all panels get moved to the northwest side of the roof, just some of them if possible. Ms. Hudgins noted that energy efficiency of panels has increased significantly in the past five years. Mr. Pronovost said he would be open to moving them if they were still able to provide the proper output.

Ms. Humphrey asked about moving the panels to the northwest side, installing them on some sort of armature where it is able to stand up and face the south. Ms. Cole noted that the panels being flush to the roof is a part of the standard, so raising them would not be permitted.

Ms. Humphrey then asked about replacing the shingles with a darker color that would better hide the panels placed closer to the street. Mr. Pronovost noted that the light colored shingles were brand new, having been replaced due to the hail storm that occurred in 2025.

Mr. Skouby asked whether moving the front nine panels to the dormers would approach 100% offset, and Ms. Hudgins reiterated that it would not achieve the output needed if moved to the northwest dormers

Mr. Pronovost pointed back to the image he'd shown looking up Short Street, and noted that the panels at #47 would be visible as one traveled up the street before you even got to his house.

Vice-Chair Oliva asked whether the applicant may want to continue his application, and

Ms. Ashley noted that before seeking a continuance, she wanted to ensure the applicant heard enough from each of the commission members and understood their interpretation of the standards.

Mr. Roberts stated that he was in support of the project, and Ms. Ashley reminded him that his favor must be given in context with the standards. Ms. Hudgins noted that the house in question was a non-contributing structure. Ms. Cole reiterated the standard that states there should be no detrimental impact to the historic integrity of the district. Ms. Cole encouraged the commission members to flesh out their reasoning for it not being detrimental to the overall character of the district. Mr. Roberts said that in his opinion, there did not appear to be other options for the applicant, and did not think it would be detrimental due to the existence of other solar panels on multiple houses throughout the street and district. He added that solar panels are becoming more common, and felt the commission should be embracing solar panels, emphasizing his support of the project.

Ms. Hudgins asked what the historical value of the house was, noting that it was newly built. The board confirmed that they were looking at the panels in the context of the entire district, not just the house.

Mr. Mays questioned whether the standards for non-contributing structures would apply to this, as solar installation falls under changes to existing buildings rather than neighborhood setting. Ms. Cole sought clarity on Mr. Mays' points, reminding the commission that the standards for sustainability and emerging technology apply to the overall character of the district, whether the panels were on a non-contributing structure or not. Ms. Ashley clarified that if it were a contributing structure they would still need to consider the impact to the historical integrity of the neighborhood.

Ms. Bowen also wondered if it would help if some of the panels could be moved to the dormer, which might lessen the impact, especially since the panels will appear more visible on the light colored roof.

There was continued discussion on how the panels might be located more inconspicuously. Mr. Mays said there was the question of whether or not the roof technically faced the primary public right of way. Ms. Humphrey and Ms. Bowen agreed that though the section of the roof does not technically face the street, it is still prominent and visible from the street.

Mr. Pronovost added that there were similarly low buildings surrounding his home, all built at a similar time by the same person.

Ms. Hudgins asked whether the roof color was relevant if the panels were covering the majority of the roof plane, and the northern, uncovered side of the roof was hidden by the existing trees then theoretically becoming majority black. Mr. Skouby noted that the porch roof and dormers would be uncovered and still in contrast to the proposed panels.

Vice-Chair Oliva asked whether the commission were in favor of the proposal, clarifying that they would not be voting today. Mr. Holt confirmed that he was in favor of the proposal. Mr. Skouby said he would be interested in knowing if a different configuration for the panels might

be possible. Ms. Hudgins said they could investigate to see if any alternative configuration might be possible, but it was up to Mr. Pronovost as to how much he was hoping to offset. Mr. Pronovost then added that his house was fully electric, and he wanted to build a network that allowed for power supply in the event of a widespread grid failure, such as during the cold temperatures this past winter. Ms. Hudgins noted that out of 11,000 systems installed in Western North Carolina, only nine did not operate correctly following Tropical Storm Helene.

Mr. Mays noted that though he wanted to approve the application, he felt the commission would need to see a few different roof configurations to show that this was the best layout for the panels, in order for the standard to be applied fairly. Ms. Hudgins offered to provide a drone shade report to understand the exact sun access on the specific roof in question. She added that it could be used to show an annual basis of what the production would look like based on moving the panel around. Ms. Bowen agreed that asking for a continuance would be wise in order to show what the difference in power would be with different configurations.

Mr. Pronovost noted that the design standards may need to be altered at some point. While the commission agreed that may be true, they couldn't change the guidelines at that moment, and were working to find a solution within the existing standards.

Mr. Pronovost then requested a continuance until the April 8, 2026 meeting. Mr. Mays made a motion to continue the application. The motion was seconded by Mr. Holt, and carried unanimously.

8. Certificate of Appropriateness - 51 Watauga Street (PIN 9639942542) - Replacement of foundation wall on south and east elevations; removal of existing retaining wall and construction of new retaining wall. Applicant: William Rabbino

Historic Resources Planner Alex Cole presented the following staff report and oriented the commission to the property.

Owner/Applicant: MCQUINN MICHAEL;MCQUINN ALLISON/William Rabbino
Subject Property: 51 Watauga Street
Hearing Date: March 11, 2026
Historic District: Montford
PIN: 9639942542
Zoning District: RM8

Property Description: 0.36 acre parcel containing the Dr. F. Webb Griffith House - an early 20th century two-story German sided dwelling with center gable portion with flanking wings constructed prior to 1917.

Certificate of Appropriateness Request: Removal of existing section of concrete retaining wall from side yard adjacent to east and south elevations; excavation and removal of existing brick foundation wall on east and south elevations and reconstruction of new CMU foundation

wall with brick veneer; exposure of new foundation wall will increase from 26" to ~5' maximum; area adjacent to front/south elevation will be backfilled and a new 5' tall CMU wall faced with stucco will be constructed in approximate location to wall being removed in front of the house. All work will be in accordance with attached and approved drawings and plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

HRC Staff Concerns per the Applicable Standards & Submittal Requirements:

1. Staff has concerns regarding the proposed brick material; if replacement of a large masonry surface or entire feature is necessary, replace it in kind, matching the original in design, detail, dimension, color, pattern, texture and material (#6, p. 65).
2. Staff has asked the applicant to provide the following additional information for review:

    - Landscaping plan for new foundation wall

The standards for Masonry and Stucco found on pages 64-65 and Fences and Walls on pages 36-37 of the Montford Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted April 14, 2010 and amended December 11, 2019, were used to evaluate this request.

Staff Recommendation - Staff does recommend approval of the request for the following reasons, provided concerns have been addressed:

1. Foundation wall is deteriorated and needs to be rebuilt, and will be replaced in kind, matching the original in design, detail, dimension, color, pattern, texture and material.
2. New wall will be sited in a location that is compatible with the traditional historic relationship of walls to historic properties in the district, and will be constructed of concrete and faced with stucco.

Ms. Cole explained that repair or replacement of foundation walls was typically reviewed by staff; however, in this case there was a need to replace the existing brick material with new brick, leading her to refer the application to the commission. In addition, the height of the foundation wall above ground at the front corner of the house would increase from 26 inches to five feet. Ms. Cole noted that she asked for clarity about whether they wanted to rebuild the retaining wall or have the foundation exposed, and the applicant responded that they did not want to rebuild the section of the wall and landscaped area that previously covered the foundation, instead choosing to expose the section where the foundation meets the ground.

Mr. Hart Rabbino, contractor, gave further context for the commission, detailing the failing retaining wall and the intention to replant in front of the foundation wall. Mr. Rabbino showed the commission the two proposed details for the foundation wall, one showing a thin brick veneer or a full thickness brick veneer. He added that the thin brick veneer would be closer in appearance to the existing conditions. Mr. Rabbino noted that the character of the existing retaining wall will be maintained through construction, replicating the aesthetic of the curve of the current retaining wall.

There was discussion about the existing retaining wall and whether the soil behind it would be removed. Mr. Rabbino responded that a majority of the soil will be maintained, with a small amount being removed to repair the foundation.

Ms. Humphrey noted that there appeared to be two retaining walls, to which Mr. Rabbino confirmed.

Mr. Mays asked if Mr. Rabbino had used the proposed brick veneer in the past, and Mr. Rabbino confirmed that he had used it. He added that the brick they had chosen would more consistently match the historic part of the house, versus the brick on the existing foundation wall, which had been constructed in the 1950s.

Ms. Cole questioned what the landscaping plan would look like, and Mr. Rabbino noted that the intention of the owner was to maintain the existing plantings by removing the majority of the plants and replanting following construction. Property owner Michael MiQuinn approached the commission to confirm he planned to replant everything that was removed. Ms. Cole said that a landscaping plan could be a condition on the approval.

Vice-Chair Oliva opened the floor for public comment at 6:43 p.m., and when no one spoke, she closed the floor for public comment.

When there was no further discussion on the application, Mr. Skouby made the following motion.

MOTION TO APPROVE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Chairman, based upon the evidence presented to this Commission, including Exhibit A - application and owner affidavit (3 pages); Exhibit B - site plans and survey (4 pages); Exhibit C - section drawings and brick specifications (5 pages); Exhibit D - site photos (13 pages); Exhibit E - 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (1 page - Added by Staff 3/5/26); and the Commission's actual inspection and review of subject property by all members;

I move that this Commission **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness based on the following:

1. That the application is for the removal of existing section of concrete retaining wall from side yard adjacent to east and south elevations; excavation and removal of existing brick foundation wall on east and south elevations and reconstruction of new CMU foundation wall with brick veneer; exposure of new foundation wall will increase from 26" to ~5' maximum; area adjacent to front/south elevation will be backfilled and a new 5' tall CMU wall faced with stucco will be constructed in approximate location to wall being removed in front of the house. All work will be completed in accordance with approved and attached drawings and plans. **All permits, variances, or approvals as required by law must be obtained before work may commence.**

2. The standards for Masonry and Stucco found on pages 64-65 and Fences and Walls on pages 36-37 of the Montford Historic District Design Review Standards, adopted April 14, 2010 and amended December 11, 2019, were used to evaluate this request.

3. This application **does** meet the design standards for the following reasons:

    a. Foundation wall is deteriorated and needs to be rebuilt, and will be replaced in kind, matching the original in design, detail, dimension, color, pattern, texture and material.
    b. New wall will be sited in a location that is compatible with the traditional historic relationship of walls to historic properties in the district, and will be constructed of concrete and faced with stucco.

4. That the action and improvements proposed in the application before us for a Certificate of Appropriateness **are** congruous with the special historic character of the Montford Historic District.

Motion by: Mr. Skouby
Second by: Ms. Humphrey
Vote for: Unanimous
Vote against: None

Based upon the foregoing findings and for the reasons set forth therein, I move that a Certificate of Appropriateness be **issued** with the following conditions:

1. Landscaping plan will be submitted for staff review and approval.
2. Exact brick sample/color will be verified with staff on site before construction begins.

Motion by: Mr. Skouby
Second by: Mr. Mays
Vote for: Unanimous
Vote against: None

A copy of the written decision approving the Certificate of Appropriateness is attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

Other Business

Ms. Cole said that Chair Hornaday has asked Vice-Chair Oliva and Mr. Holt to help nominate the new slate of officers for the upcoming executive committee election which may be in April, pending the scope of April's agenda. She added that a vote would need to take place by May or June so the new officers can take their seats on July 1, 2026.

Ms. Cole also noted that the commission needed to consider their nominations for the

annual HRC award, which was awarded to community members who by word or by deed had contributed in some way to historic preservation in the community. Ms. Cole said she would be sending information on the award and history of it to the commission members via email in order to provide more context. Ms. Cole added that Ms. Watkins had put forth a nomination for Rashida Hall, a Stumptown native who had done extensive work in Stumptown to try and elevate the history of that neighborhood. Ms. Cole believed the award will be given at the Preservation Society's annual Griffin Award event, which was typically held on the third Thursday in May. Ms. Cole said the commission would need to make the award at the April meeting so that staff had time to create the certificate to be given at the event.

Adjournment

At 6:51 p.m., Mr. Mays moved to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Mr. Holt and carried unanimously.