

Salisbury Historic District Commission

January 28, 2025

The Salisbury Historic District Commission met in regular session on Wednesday, **January 28, 2025**. The meeting took place at 125 N Division St, Room 301, with attendance as follows:

COMMISSIONERS

Brenden Frederick – Chairman – *Present*
Matt Auchey – Vice Chairman – *Present*
Margaret Lawson – Commissioner – *Present*
Lisa Gingrich – Commissioner – *Present*
Brad Philips – Commissioner – *Absent*
Harvey Evans – Commissioner – *Present*

CITY OFFICIALS

Laura Ryan – City Attorney – *Present*
Henry Pearson – Associate Planner – *Present*
Zack White – Associate Planner – *Present*
Betsy Jackson – City Planner – *Present*
Nick Voitiuc – DID Director – *Present*

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – **Mr. Brenden Frederick** called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL** - Each member of the Commission introduced themselves for the record. The Chairman explained the meeting procedure to all applicants and administered the oath en masse to all persons intending to testify.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – **Ms. Margaret Lawson** made a motion to approve the October minutes, seconded by **Ms. Harvey Evans**. The motion was brought to vote and approved.
4. **PUBLIC INPUT** – Members of the public are welcome to comment, subject to a time allotment of two (2) minutes per person.
5. **CONSENT DOCKET** – **None**.
6. **OLD BUSINESS** – **None**
7. **NEW BUSINESS** –

Case #26-01 – 108 Walnut S. – Alterations – Column Replacement

Mr. Henry Pearson read the staff report. The applicant was seeking retroactive approval for columns he had installed on his porch at 108 Walnut St. The applicant had previously come before the commission in November 2024 to request approval to replace the porch and porch columns at the property. At this meeting, the commission recommended that the applicant replace the columns with milled columns that replicated the originals. It was noted that the commission allowed the applicant to forego the more expensive tongue-and-groove flooring due to the cost of procuring milled columns. The applicant instead installed non-milled wooden columns on the porch. Staff recommended **denial** of the application due to the fact that the milled columns were one of the most important historical features of the house.

Mr. Kelly Pullen stated that he had contacted five suppliers in search of milled columns and each one said that they could not provide them. He stated that he installed the closest wood columns that he could find.

Mr. Matt Auchey stated that the railings on the porch were installed backwards. **Mr. Pullen** agreed and stated that he spoke with the city building inspector and that he would turn them around. **Mrs. Lisa Gingrich** stated that she did not believe the railings matched the originals. **Mr. Auchey** stated that they were original, but needed to be reversed.

Mr. Auchey asked if the applicant had looked for the columns at salvage yards. **Mr. Pullen** stated that he had only contacted suppliers. **Mr. Harvey Evans** stated that the applicant could take one of the original columns to a woodshop and have them make it, or buy a lathe and do it himself. **Mr. Pullen** remarked that that would be too expensive. **Mr. Evans** asked if the applicant had been able to find any replicas. **Mr. Pullen** stated that he had not.

Mrs. Gingrich asked if the applicant had attempted to ask suppliers to replicate the columns. **Mr. Pullen** stated that he had contacted multiple suppliers and all of them had told him that they could not make them. **Mr. Auchey** stated that he is not OK with what has been done, but he is willing to find a pre-manufactured option that works. **Mrs. Gingrich** asked for clarification on all of the materials and products that the applicant had supplied. **Mr. Pullen** responded that he provided the product literature that was given to him by the supplier, and that not all of the material provided in the application was used.

Mrs. Gingrich stated that she was not a fan of what has been installed, and that the existence of the same type of columns on other homes does not imply that the applicant is allowed to install those columns. She referred back to some of the options provided in the application and stated that those would be preferable. She stated that the applicant had previously agreed to get the columns milled to match the originals.

Mr. Frederick stated that they either needed to find a compromise or require that the applicant find a woodworker to mill the columns. He acknowledged that this would be expensive but that the commission does not necessarily need to consider the cost. **Mr. Auchey** stated that the existing columns have too much detail and are not at all accurate. He stated that the old columns were wider than the existing columns.

Mr. Evans asked if the applicant was able to find any composite or synthetic columns that matched. **Mr. Pullen** responded that he had not been able to find any.

Mr. Auchey stated that he will vote to deny what has been installed but is open to finding another option that mimics the simplistic nature of the original columns. **Mr. Pullen** stated that he did not want to play a guessing game or buy something that he can't use. He asked that the commission give him ideas or options for what he can do. The commissioners deliberated on various types of materials, shapes, and sizes. **Mr. Auchey** summarized the commissions' opinion that they are OK with 5-inch wide round or square columns with a decent bottom and top. **Mrs. Gingrich** stated that she would prefer round columns. **Mr. Pullen** replied that he would prefer square columns as they are easier to install.

Mr. Pullen stated that he could contact suppliers for options. **Mr. Auchey** asked if he could come back next month, to which **Mr. Pullen** said he could. The commissioners stated that they were comfortable with wood or non-wood material so long as the look more closely matched the original. **Mr. Frederick** stated that the columns should be simple and not take away from the rest of the house.

Public Comment: None

Motion and Vote:

Motion: **Mr. Auchey** made a motion to continue the case to next month and asked if the applicant would agree to come back next month with samples. **Mr. Pullen** agreed.

Second: The motion was seconded by **Mrs. Gingrich**.

Vote: The motion was brought to vote and approved unanimously.

Case #26-03 – 320 N Division St – Alterations – Window Closure

Mr. Pearson read the staff report. The applicant was seeking to remove a window from the first floor of the house. The window was not part of the original structure and was added with an addition in the 1940's. It was not a front facing window nor was it visible from the street. Staff recommended **approval** of the application as submitted.

Mr. Auchey stated that he had no issue with the application and that the removal of the window would be an improvement. **Mr. Frederick** agreed, stating that the window was competing with the five primary windows and was not aligned with them or the door frame.

Motion and Vote:

Motion: **Mrs. Gingrich** made a motion to approve the application as submitted.

Second: The motion was seconded by **Mr. Auchey**.

Vote: The motion was brought to vote and approved unanimously.

Discussion – Shore Walls Mural Festival – Brandon Bell

Mr. Pearson introduced **Mr. Brandon Bell** and the Shore Walls Mural Festival. **Mr. Bell** approached the table along with **Mr. Bret Davis**.

Mr. Bell read a prepared statement introducing the Shore Walls Mural Festival. He described the program as a non-commercial public art festival. They were not there to seek approval but just to gather feedback on the process. The dates will be May 26-30. They will be painting 3-4 properties in the downtown area. These were:

- 146 W Market St (Old Market St. Books)
- 100 E Main St.
- 100-110 Circle Ave.
- 308 E Main St.
- Interior Parking Garage Stairwell

Mr. Davis said that they are planning to do this festival every year. They plan to repaint some walls and find new properties to paint. The commissioners asked for details on which walls will

be painted and **Mr. Davis** clarified. The commissioners discussed the locations of the properties. **Mr. Davis** stated that they do not intent to paint the front facing facades of the buildings.

Mrs. Gingrich asked what the murals will consist of. **Mr. Bell** responded that they have not determined that, but they want to touch on the city's heritage and history. **Mr. Frederick** stated that art is subjective and it is not the purview of the commission to decide what art is acceptable. Their job is to determine what the canvas will be. **Mr. Auchey** stated that the specific location of the buildings is important. If the building had already been painted, it will be easier. **Mr. Frederick** suggested that they need to submit an application for each building and they will determine each one on its own.

Mrs. Gingrich said that she does not want every building in the area painted and she does not want to see neon colors. **Mr. Frederick** stated that they cannot control what colors are used. **Mr. Davis** asked if the properties they discussed are good candidates. The commissioners discussed the properties further. **Mrs. Gingrich** stated that murals should add to the historic character of downtown.

Mr. Davis discussed plans to have QR codes on the murals that will provide information about the mural and the historic nature of the buildings. The goal is to increase foot traffic in downtown. **Mr. Davis** said that they do not need more murals of water fowl. They want to pay homage to the history of the area but in a way that is more interesting.

The commissioners asked if they could paint a temporary material on the wall. **Mr. Davis** stated that the installation of material on a wall would be more damaging to the structure than paint.

Mr. Davis asked about painting a private sidewalk in the historic district. **Mr. Frederick** said that everything on a property within the historic district is within their purview. The commissioners discussed the concept of a downtown color palette. **Mr. Frederick** said that they do not want to do that as it is difficult to do properly and enforce. **Mrs. Laura Ryan** stated that they can talk to administration about removing the color palette from the city code. **Mr. Frederick** said that a sidewalk is technically in their purview but that they are not particularly interested in regulating concrete sidewalks.

Mr. Frederick asked what the ribbon-cutting date for the murals will be. **Mr. Bell** said it would be May 30. The commission discussed when **Mr. Bell** would return to apply, and the commission said he should come by April. **Mr. Pearson** asked whether each property would be a separate application. **Mr. Frederick** said he can do one application for all properties.

Mrs. Gingrich asked about enforcement of violations. The commission discussed and determined that it is a code enforcement issue that can be addressed through the city.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, **Mr. Auchey** moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by **Mrs. Gingrich**, which was brought to a vote and approved unanimously.

This is a summary of the proceedings of this meeting. Detailed information is in the permanent files of each case as presented and filed in the City of Salisbury Department of Infrastructure and Development.



Brenden Frederick, Acting Chairman

02/27/2026

Date



Henry Pearson, Associate Planner

2/27/2026

Date