



# Historic Preservation Board Regular Meeting Minutes

**October 15, 2025 at 9:00 AM**

City Hall Commission Chambers  
401 S. Park Avenue

## **Present**

John Skolfield, Kelsey Wolfe, Lee Rambeau, Kim Burst Wood, Margie Bridges, Rhett Delaney, Cynde Norris

## **Absent**

None

## **Staff Present**

Director of Planning and Zoning Allison McGillis, Planner I Corinna Lundgren,  
Administrative Coordinator Mary Bush

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Skolfield called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

### **2. Discussion Item**

- a. Workshop with applicant team for the El Cortez demolition request (COR 25-07 for 210 E Morse Blvd.)

The Board, city staff, and the applicant's representatives, Attorney Rebecca Wilson and Scott Zimmerman, discussed the proposed demolition request for 210 E. Morse Boulevard. The discussion focused on balancing architectural authenticity, aesthetic quality, and financial feasibility. A significant part of the conversation centered on ceiling heights, roof pitches, and interior volumes. It was noted that first-floor ceilings around 10–12 feet and second-floor ceilings of 9–10 feet achieve a sense of luxury and openness while still accommodating site constraints and height limitations. In addition, roof slopes are constrained by a 40-foot height limit, which affects traditional steep Victorian gable forms. There was also a strong emphasis on verticality in window and facade design to maintain a statuesque, refined look, consistent with Victorian inspiration but adapted for the Florida vernacular.

Extensive discussion then ensued regarding exterior details, particularly the significance of entry portals, door materials, window profiles, and trim. A recurring theme was that tactile and visual details—such as wrought iron railings, substantial mahogany doors, and accentuated trim—create a first impression that communicates quality and luxury. It was indicated that these elements are seen as critical in elevating the perceived value of a property beyond mere square footage. Windows were discussed in depth,

with a preference for wood or aluminum-clad profiles over vinyl, highlighting durability and aesthetic integrity. Sketches and tracing overlays were used to experiment with gable treatments, pediments, and decorative siding, reflecting a careful study of proportions, historical references, and visual impact on the streetscape.

The conversation also addressed the balance between historical authenticity and creative interpretation. While there was acknowledgment that replicating exact historical Florida or Victorian forms may not be strictly authentic, the aim was to create buildings that harmonize with their surroundings and enhance the character of Winter Park. Strategies were also discussed, such as varying townhouse portals slightly to create visual individuality, preserving the rhythm and scale of façades, and maintaining setbacks or courtyards to reduce perceived mass. The goal was to avoid creating monotonous, “Disneyfied” versions of historic architecture while still delivering a product that is visually compelling and contextually appropriate.

Discussion ensued regarding the tension between maximizing square footage and maintaining aesthetic quality, with examples illustrating how high-quality detailing can appeal to affluent buyers willing to pay premiums for perceived authenticity. While there was some support for bold exterior design and generous detailing, there was also recognition that financial constraints may dictate compromises, such as slightly lower ceiling heights or reduced building mass. The need to achieve a careful balance between visual richness, historical sensitivity, and market viability was emphasized.

The discussion also focused on the importance of context and community impact. It was emphasized that townhouses are not meant to dominate the streetscape but to complement the synagogue, neighboring historic buildings, and the broader urban fabric. Maintaining a sense of individuality for each unit, preserving visual corridors, and considering pedestrian-level experiences were highlighted as essential design goals. It was stressed that preserving or thoughtfully replacing contributing elements within the historic district is a civic responsibility, balancing aesthetic ambition with respect for Winter Park’s heritage. It was also emphasized that while creative adaptation is acceptable, the final design must honor the locality’s character, retain architectural integrity, and provide a sense of authenticity that resonates with both residents and the broader community.

Discussion continued regarding the idea that Spanish-Moorish Mediterranean architecture, with careful attention to authentic exterior details, massing, and articulation, aligns best with the neighborhood context and market expectations. Proper courtyards, reliefs, and high-quality finishes were highlighted as critical to creating homes that feel integrated, comfortable, and visually appealing. It was pointed out that preserving neighborhood character requires attention to scale and street views, not just individual facades.

The conversation also addressed unit layouts and parking. It was indicated that larger units may increase parking requirements, but they command higher market value, and careful site planning, particularly around traffic-sensitive areas like schools, can mitigate impacts. It was stressed that mass and scale must read appropriately from the street, reinforcing the importance of proportional design in historic districts. Documentation of interiors, even if preservation is not possible, was suggested as a way to maintain architectural knowledge and guide future development.

Practical construction considerations were also discussed. The value of investing in high-quality materials and proper installation was emphasized, noting that upfront costs, such as waterproofing or precise framing techniques, prevent expensive repairs and reinforce long-term durability. Collaboration with the city's building department and adherence to manufacturer protocols were seen as essential to ensure craftsmanship meets design intent.

It was suggested that visual and factual examples of Spanish-Mediterranean-Moorish architectural elements be compiled and shared with the applicant to clarify expectations without injecting personal opinion, ensuring new construction respects precedent while enhancing neighborhood quality. Overall, the discussion underscored the importance of thoughtful oversight, transparency, and documentation to maintain Winter Park's historic character while allowing high-quality development.

### **3. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

ATTEST:

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/s/ Mary Bush, Recording Secretary