



Historic Preservation Board Work Session Minutes

June 10, 2026 at 9:00 AM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present

John Skolfield, Kelsey Wolfe, Kim Burst Wood, Margie Bridges, Rhett Delaney, Cynde Norris, Anne Mooney

Absent

None

Staff Present

Director of Planning & Zoning Allison McGillis, Planner I Corinna Lundgren

1. Meeting Called to Order

Chairman Skolfield called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

2. Discussion Item (s)

- a. Preliminary discussion regarding Commission's direction for HPB to look at historic preservation ordinance revisions and development of new historic preservation incentives

Mrs. McGillis began discussion on reviewing the Historic Preservation Ordinance in response to City Commission direction to identify ways to reduce the demolition of historic homes through ordinance changes, incentives, and other preservation strategies. The use of several future work sessions to develop a broad list of ideas before narrowing them into formal recommendations for the Commission was suggested. Discussion ensued about reviewing previous versions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, particularly the 2014–2015 ordinance, to understand what provisions previously existed, why they were changed, and what legal or policy lessons could be applied today. Board members also discussed consulting the City Attorney when appropriate and studying successful preservation ordinances from other communities.

Emphasis was placed on educating Board members, homeowners, real estate professionals, commissioners, and the broader community about the benefits of historic preservation, available incentives, insurance and financing options, adaptive reuse opportunities, and the realities of owning designated historic properties. Discussion then ensued about expanding outreach through city communications, social

media, local publications, educational seminars, Casa Feliz, the Morse Museum, and presentations by nationally recognized preservation experts. Also discussed were incentives that could encourage preservation rather than demolition. Ideas included property tax incentives, tax abatements and credits, development and density incentives, transferable development rights, expedited permitting, priority inspections, dedicated preservation staff assistance, FAR flexibility, streamlined ADU approvals, reduced or waived city fees, grants, CRA funding opportunities, and insurance education. Members agreed that incentives should help make preservation financially competitive with redevelopment while remaining legally defensible.

The Merrywood property at 1020 Palmer Avenue and other threatened historic homes were discussed extensively. Board members explored potential ways to preserve Merrywood through lot splits or other development arrangements while recognizing legal and political limitations. They also discussed the importance of documenting historic properties that are likely to be demolished through professional photography, detailed architectural documentation, and 3D virtual tours so that a permanent archival record would remain.

The discussion also covered concerns about public attitudes toward preservation, misconceptions regarding property values and return on investment, the influence of redevelopment pressures, and comments made during recent Planning and Zoning and City Commission meetings. Board members expressed concern that elected officials and portions of the public misunderstand the Historic Preservation Board's role and the economic benefits of preservation.

Recommendations and action items included reviewing and distributing prior versions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance; researching preservation incentives and successful programs used in other cities; compiling educational resources, books, and supporting materials; preparing a comprehensive list of potential ordinance changes and incentives for future discussion; researching insurance providers, financing options, and preservation-related vendor resources; exploring partnerships with museums, educational institutions, and preservation organizations for public outreach; investigating whether nationally recognized preservation economist Donovan Rypkema could be invited to speak; exploring a community survey regarding historic preservation; researching economic data supporting preservation; coordinating future work sessions with the City Commission; scheduling additional Board work sessions to accelerate development of recommendations; compiling all Board members' ideas before the next meeting; investigating funding and procurement requirements for professionally documenting endangered historic homes such as Merrywood and the Wooten House; obtaining estimates from photographers and exploring partnerships with Full Sail, Rollins College, or volunteer professionals; and determining appropriate archival storage and future public access for the documentation.

3. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:24 a.m.

ATTEST:

/s/ Mary Jean, Recording Secretary