

PROCEDURAL MANUAL
FOR
MEETINGS OF
THE CHATHAM COUNTY
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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PROCEDURAL MANUAL

Pursuant to Article 5 Historic Preservation Commission of the *Chatham County Zoning Ordinance*, meetings of the Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission (hereinafter referred to as the CCHPC) shall be governed by the following policies. No policy shall be established which is in conflict with a provision of the CCHPC Bylaws. Where a policy is found to be in conflict, the provisions of the CCHPC Bylaws shall govern.

I. MEETINGS

The CCHPC conducts two types of meetings, as follows:

- Regular Meetings
- Special-Called Meetings

All CCHPC meetings are held in the offices of the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC), 112 East State Street, Savannah, Georgia, unless advance notice to the contrary is given.

These meetings are described as follows:

1. Regular Meetings:

Formal meetings, identified in the Bylaws, may be held on the first Wednesday of every other month beginning in January of each year at 3:00 P.M. in the Metropolitan Planning Commission Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room, for the purpose of conducting the business of the CCHPC. At such meetings the CCHPC hears applications for Designation of Historic Districts and Historic Properties, applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, and conducts the normal business of the CCHPC. Regular meetings are publicized in accordance with the Georgia Open Meetings Law.

2. Special-Called Meetings:

Formal meetings, identified in the Bylaws, called according to the procedure set forth in the Bylaws and held at the location identified in the call of the meeting. Special-Called Meetings are of two types:

- A. Rescheduled Regular Meetings: Due to a lack of a quorum at a previously scheduled meeting.
- B. Special-Called Meetings: Other than rescheduled meetings, called for the purpose of addressing a specified issue(s) identified in the call of such meeting. Any gathering called by the CCHPC or its Staff, at which a quorum could reasonably be anticipated, shall be considered a Special Meeting. All Special Meetings shall be held in accordance with the Georgia Open Meetings Law.

3. Meeting Notices:

Regular Meetings: The media shall be apprised of the time, place, and subject of the meeting at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

Special-Called Meetings: The media shall be apprised of the time, place, and subject of the meeting at least 24-hours in advance of the meeting.

II. AGENDAS

Meeting Agendas shall conform to the following criteria and policies:

1. Regular Meetings:

There are three types of Regular Meeting Agendas, as follows:

A. Tentative Agenda

The Tentative Agenda is the informal list of issues and applications

scheduled for a meeting following the posted application deadline. The Tentative Agenda is emailed to CCHPC members.

B. Preliminary Agenda

The Preliminary Agenda is the formal list of issues scheduled for a meeting (the accumulation of all Staff reports, related correspondence, and data). The Preliminary Agenda is published on the MPC website at www.thempc.org and emailed to the CCHPC members at least four (4) days prior to the scheduled meeting.

C. Final Agenda

The Final Agenda is the list of issues scheduled for the meeting, published on the MPC website at www.thempc.org the morning of the meeting, reflecting any items requested to be removed from the Preliminary Agenda by a Petitioner or for other cause, along with any items added to the Agenda since publication of the Preliminary Agenda. Once published, no additional action items can be added to the Final Agenda. Also, once published, items requested to be removed from the Final Agenda are not formally removed until action to do so is taken by the CCHPC.

2. Special-Called Meetings:

A. The Agenda for a Special-Called Meeting, other than a rescheduled Regular Meeting, shall consist solely of the item(s) or issue(s) identified in the Notice of the call of the meeting.

B. The Agenda for a rescheduled Regular Meeting shall consist of the Agenda established for the meeting which the Special-Called Meeting replaces.

3. Policies Concerning Regular Meeting Agendas:

A. The CCHPC will vigorously enforce a Policy of preventing redundant/repetitious testimony and testimony which does not pertain directly to an issue under consideration. This Policy exists to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to present new information germane to the issue being discussed.

B. Agenda items shall be organized according to the following categories:

- (1) Call to Order and Welcome
- (2) Sign Posting
- (3) Consent Agenda
- (4) Adoption of the Agenda
- (5) Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
- (6) Item(s) Requested to be Removed from the Final Agenda
- (7) Continued Agenda
- (8) Request for Extension
- (9) Regular Agenda
- (10) Approved Staff Reviews
- (11) Notices, Proclamations, and Acknowledgements
- (12) Other Business
 - Unfinished Business
 - New Business
- (13) Adjournment

C. Agenda categories shall consist of the following (See Appendix A for Chairperson's Remarks):

- (1) Call to Order and Welcome: This section shall consist of a general welcome by the Chair to those in attendance, acknowledgment by the Chair of special guests present in the meeting, identification of the physical location of the printed Agendas for those wishing to follow along during the meeting, a brief explanation of the format of the Agenda, and a statement of any ground rules established for the meeting.
- (2) Sign Posting: This section shall consist of the identification of any project that was not properly posted. Such project shall be removed from the Agenda and rescheduled.
- (3) Consent Agenda: This section shall consist of those Agenda items found by Staff to have apparent consensus between Staff, the Petitioner, and the affected public. Consensus by the public shall consist of the absence of any known objections, including the likelihood, based on Staff's experience, of no objections being raised to the issue in question. Regular Agenda items which previously did not warrant Consent Agenda status but which, according to Staff have achieved Consent Agenda status since publication of the Final Agenda, may be verbally added by the Chair to the Consent Agenda with the unanimous consent of the CCHPC. Staff shall not place an item on the Consent Agenda for which a Staff report was not provided to the CCHPC.
- (4) Removal of Item from Consent Agenda to Regular Agenda: At the

meeting, the Chair shall identify all items on the recommended Consent Agenda. If any Commission member expresses a concern regarding any specific item on the Consent Agenda, then he/she may motion that the item be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed where it would ordinarily fall by consecutive petition number.

- (5) Adoption of the Agenda: Chair calls for a motion to adopt the Agenda.
- (6) Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting: This section shall consist of approval or correction of minutes from prior meetings.
- (7) Item(s) Requested to be Removed from the Final Agenda: This section shall consist of items requested to be removed since the publication of the Preliminary Agenda.
- (8) Continued Agenda: This section shall consist of those Agenda items in which the Petitioner has requested a continuance to the next meeting or a date certain; or in which Staff has requested that the item be continued due to an incomplete submittal.
- (9) Request for Extension: This section consists of requests for six (6) month extensions of previously approved applications. Only one (1) such extension shall be granted and only providing that no change in the ordinance, context, or petition has occurred. If the initial twenty-four (24) month Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) approval period elapses with no extension requested, the approval is void and the applicant must reapply to the CCHPC for a new approval.

- (10) Regular Agenda: This section shall consist of continued or amended items from a prior meeting and items not previously heard, including any items removed from the Consent Agenda.
- (11) Approved Staff Reviews: This section shall consist of those applications approved by Staff and any revisions to previous petitions required by the CCHPC for Staff approval prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- (12) Notices, Proclamations, and Acknowledgments: This section shall consist of any special notices by the Chair, reading of any proclamations or acknowledgment of any honors or special achievements by Commission members, Staff, or others warranting notice by the CCHPC; or other special announcements deemed by the Chair to be of importance to the CCHPC or the general public.
- (13) Other Business: This section shall consist of Unfinished Business from previous meetings, New Business brought to the attention of the CCHPC by a Commission member or Staff and items which are time sensitive.

Unfinished Business:

- Requests for clarification of previous decisions.
- Motion for reconsideration of an issue only if made by a member of the prevailing side at the same meeting.

New Business:

- Requests for special studies and evaluations.
- Introduction of new items for discussion dealing with

CCHPC policies, procedures, Bylaws, etc. Items of a housekeeping or continuing nature.

- Non-Agenda items raised by a member of the general public provided a request to address the CCHPC is submitted to Staff or the Chair in writing, and unanimous consent to hear the request is obtained.

(14) Adjournment: This section shall contain the formal closure of the meeting and the announcement of the date of the next scheduled meeting or meetings.

D. CCHPC Staff prepares an annual table identifying the cut-off date for submittal of a petition for CCHPC Regular Meetings. This schedule is to be followed. All complete applications submitted in accordance with the published CCHPC cut-off dates shall be placed on the next scheduled meeting Agenda.

III. POSTING OF SIGNS

1. Posting of Property: Property shall be posted in accordance with the *Chatham County Zoning Ordinance, Article V Historic Preservation Ordinance, Public Notice section*.
2. *Public Notice* section of the ordinance shall be printed and attached to the signs for the Petitioner's instruction. (See "Appendix B" for form.)

IV. PROCEDURE FOR PRESENTATIONS TO THE CCHPC

The following procedures shall govern all issues before the CCHPC (See Appendix A for Chairperson's Remarks):

1. The Chair calls the application by number and address according to the Agenda.
2. Staff makes a presentation/recommendation.

3. The CCHPC asks questions of Staff.
4. The Petitioner makes his/her presentation.
5. The CCHPC asks questions of the Petitioner.
6. The Chair inquires as to the number of persons from the public desiring to speak about an issue. Where there are many potential speakers or where there is the likelihood of protracted discussion, the Chair may set time limits on the debate. In this case, no side of the issue shall be afforded less than five (5) minutes for a presentation, nor more than thirty (30) minutes.
7. Members of the public may be allotted up to two (2) minutes to speak. The maximum amount of time afforded shall be a function of the number of persons desiring to speak and the complexity of the issue. The CCHPC, upon a finding that the allocated time is insufficient to fully address the issue, may, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, elect to suspend the rules to allow a greater length of time for debate. Each side shall be allotted the same length of time. However, no side is required to utilize their full allotted time. Time not used by one side cannot be allocated to an opposing side. Adherence to time limits shall be enforced.
 - A. Rebuttal to public comment by the Petitioner.
 - B. The CCHPC asks questions of persons from the public, the Petitioner, or Staff.
 - C. The CCHPC goes into deliberation. To provide further clarification on CCHPC discussion, the Chair may address CCHPC questions to interested parties.
 - D. The CCHPC acts on the issue.

V. ACTION ON APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

CCHPC meetings operate under Roberts Rules of Order. The following rules for CCHPC action apply:

1. A quorum shall consist of three (3) members. Where a quorum has been lost and such loss of quorum is brought to the attention of the Chair, the Commission may continue to hear and vote on Agenda petitions upon a unanimous positive vote of those members present and voting, provided not less than two (2) members are present and, provided that the Chair shall advise all in attendance that such vote is merely an opinion of those members present and, that the issue in question will have to be reviewed by a full quorum of the Commission at its next Regular Meeting, and that a formal decision of the Commission will not be issued until after such ratification. A re-presentation of the issue is required at the next Regular Meeting. Under such circumstances, no additional public notices will be given. The finding that a quorum is absent will not affect the validity of a prior action.

2. The form of a motion may be as follows:

A. Approve as Submitted:

“I move that the Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission approve the petition of (applicant name, petition number, and address) as submitted because the petition is in compliance with the Visual Compatibility Criteria and Standards as set forth in the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance.”

B. Approve with Conditions:

“I move that the Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission approve the petition of (applicant name, petition number, and address) with the following

conditions (list) because the petition is otherwise in compliance with the Visual Compatibility Criteria and Standards as set forth in the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance.”

C. Deny:

“I move that the Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission deny the petition of (applicant name, petition number, and address) based on the incompatibility of the project with the following Visual Compatibility Factors (list) and Standards (list) as set forth in the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance.”

D. Continue the Petition:

(A motion to continue shall be made to a date certain identified in the motion).

“I move that the Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission continue the petition of (applicant name, petition number, and address) until (date) because (state reason for a continuance).”

E. Table:

(A motion to table shall mean that the issue is being continued until later in the same meeting.)

“I move that the Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission table the petition of (applicant name, petition number, and address).”

When ready to address the matter, a motion must be made to take the questions from the table. The motion must be seconded; however, it is not debatable, amendable, or able to be reconsidered.

VI. MINUTES

Minutes shall be taken for all meetings of the Commission.

1. Regular and Special-Called Meetings:

Minutes of such meetings will capture the discussion pertinent to the action and record any actions taken but need not be verbatim. Minutes are not final until approved by the Commission at its next Regular Meeting and signed by the Preservation Professional.

APPENDIX A

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call to Order and Welcome.

“We would like to welcome you to the (insert current date) meeting of the Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission. The purpose of the Commission is to promote the educational, cultural economic, and general welfare of the unincorporated areas of Chatham County.”

“This Commission is appointed by Board of Commissioners and is not affiliated with any for-profit or non-profit organizations.”

“Development Standards as set forth in the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance, and Visual Compatibility Factors and Design Standards developed for each District of Property as set forth in each District or Property’s Zoning Ordinance are used by the Commission to determine the compatibility of proposed changes and new development, visible from the public right-of-way (including streets, lanes, and sidewalks), within the Districts or Properties.”

“The Commission cannot consider criteria not specifically identified within the ordinances. Items such as land use, landscaping, parking availability, traffic, noise, impact on property values, and interior arrangement of structures are not within the Board’s purview and cannot be a factor in the issuance or denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness. Similarly, personal preferences will not be the basis for decisions.”

“Please turn off all cell phones.”

2. Sign Posting.

“Members of the Commission receive an electronic agenda the week before the meeting and individually visit the sites of the projects. If a project is not properly posted

it is removed from the Agenda and rescheduled. Commissioners were any projects not properly posted this month?”

3. Consent Agenda.

“These agenda items have been found by the Preservation Professional to be in accordance with the Visual Compatibility Factors and Standards and have apparent consensus with no known objections from the public. Is there any member of the public or a Commission member who wishes to remove an item from the Consent Agenda to the Regular Agenda?” If no projects are removed, ask for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

If there are projects removed, state the projects to be removed. Then ask, “Is there a motion for approval of the Revised Consent Agenda?”

4. Adoption of the Agenda.

“Is there a motion to adopt the agenda?”

5. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.

“Minutes from the previous meeting are attached to the agenda. Are there any additions or corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting?” If not, ask for a motion to approve the minutes.

6. Items Requested to be Removed from the Final Agenda. If there are items listed, ask for a motion to approve removal.

7. Continued Agenda.

“These items have been continued or deferred to the next meeting or a date certain, or that Staff has determined incomplete at this time.” Ask for a motion to approve the Continued Agenda.

8. Request for Extension.

If there are any items, ask, “Is there a motion to approve the Requests for Extensions?”

9. Regular Agenda.

“Applications that are submitted monthly appear on the Regular Agenda.”

“Let’s begin the Regular Agenda. Staff will present the application with a recommendation. The petitioner will then have the opportunity to respond to the recommendation. The Commission asks that the petitioner limit their presentation to ten (10) minutes or less and only address items identified as inconsistent with the ordinance and questions raised by the Commission. The public will then have the opportunity to comment, after which the petitioner may respond to public comment. The Commission will then go into Commissioner discussion at which point no further testimony is received unless specifically requested of, and granted by, the Chair. We will structure Commissioner discussion by calling on each Commission Member for two rounds of two-minute comments (or less); Commissioners members are not required to comment.”

“The first application is [state the application number, name, address, and scope].”

[Staff will present their recommendation.]

“Are there any questions for staff?” (directed to Commissioners)

“Will the petitioner please come forward and state your name for the record?”

[Petitioner will present and/or comment.]

“Are there any questions for the petitioner?” (directed to Commissioners)

“Are there any members of the public that would like to comment? Please state your name for the record before you speak.” (Remarks should be addressed to the Commission and should be confined to the facts of the petition. Group demonstrations, such as a show of

hands in support of or opposition to a petition, are not in order.)

“Would the petitioner like to respond to public comment?”

“We will now enter into Commission discussion. At this time all public debate is closed, and no further comments will be accepted. I will call on each Commissioner two times to speak for two-minutes or less.”

[After Commission discussion] “We will now entertain a motion.”

[Repeat the motion after it is made.]

“Is there any discussion on the motion?”

[Repeat the motion again after discussion.]

[Vote]

Follow the process set forth in **Section IV Procedures for presentations to the CCHPC.**

The Chair is permitted to stop the Commissioners and members of the public from deviating from these procedures.

10. Approved Staff Reviews.

“A list of Staff Reviews is attached to the agenda. Are there any questions of the Staff regarding the Approved Staff Reviews?” After any discussion, ask, “Is there a motion to acknowledge the approved Staff Reviews?”

11. Notices, Proclamations, and Acknowledgments.

“Staff, do we have any notices, proclamations, or acknowledgements today?”

12. Other Business.

“Staff, do we have any additional business today?”

(This section shall consist of items not previously on the agenda, but which are brought

to the attention of the CCHPC by a Commissioner Member, the Preservation Professional, or the MPC Executive Director. Items which may be considered under this section include issues which are time sensitive, but which were not known in time to be placed on the Final Agenda. Examples of such items include the following:

- (1) Motions for reconsideration of an issue from the previous Regular Meeting;
- (2) Requests for clarification of previous decisions;
- (3) Requests for special studies and evaluations;
- (4) Introduction of new items for discussion dealing with CCHPC policies, procedures, Bylaws, etc.;
- (5) Items of a housekeeping or continuing nature;
- (6) Non-agenda items raised by a member of the general public, provided a request to address the CCHPC is submitted to the Staff or the Chair in writing and unanimous consent to hear the request is obtained.
 1. Unfinished Business
 2. New Business

13. Adjournment.

State the date and location of the next meeting.

“Is there a motion to adjourn?”

APPENDIX B
POSTING SIGNS

PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

- ❖ ***Remove this sign within 30 days following the hearing***

SIGNS, ADVERTISING THE MEETING, MUST BE POSTED 15 DAYS PRIOR TO THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE SITE OF EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING READILY VISIBLE FROM ALL PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY. STAFF WILL DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF SIGNS NEEDED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. ALL SIGNS PROVIDED MUST BE DISPLAYED. SIGNS ARE WEATHERPROOF AND SHOULD NOT BE PLACED IN THE INTERIOR OF A WINDOW NOR BE OBSCURED BY ANY FENCING, SCAFFOLDING, VEGETATION, ETC.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE POSTING REQUIREMENTS MAY RESULT IN A CONTINUANCE TO THE NEXT MEETING TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE PUBLIC NOTICE OF THE PETITION.

- ❖ **If the sign is stolen or damaged, it must be replaced immediately. Please contact the MPC at 651-1440 for a new posting sign in the event that yours is damaged or removed.**
- ❖ **Continued petitions will receive new public posting signs with updated corresponding hearing dates or you may be asked to change the dates on your sign.**
- ❖ **Following the date of the hearing, please remove and dispose of the public posting sign(s).**