

HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION

Jonesborough Town Hall – Board Room
123 Boone Street, Jonesborough, TN
August 28, 2025 – 6:00 PM
Minutes

Members Present: Frank Collins, Nita VanTil, Matt Kehn, Marcy Hawley, Herman Jenkins, Colton Brasure

Members Absent: Rebecca Moss, Chad Hylton, Michael Kieta

Call to Order

Chair, Frank Collins, called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Addition to Agenda

Chair, Frank Collins, asked for a motion to add 103 Fox Street to the agenda.

Motion: Nita VanTil made a motion, seconded by Herman Jenkins, to add 103 Fox St. under new business. Motion passed unanimously.

Item I: Public Comments

No comments made.

Item II: New Business

103 Fox St – Owners: Anna Floyd

Presenter: Frank Collins

Owners requested approval to add a metal grate for kitchen equipment venting on the existing brown plywood door. The owners plan to replace the plywood door in the future.

Motion: Nita VanTil made a motion, seconded by Matt Kehn, to approve installing a metal grate into the plywood door for kitchen ventilation as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Item III: Old Business

No old business discussed.

Item IV: Expedited Approval

121 W Main – Owners: Christ Church, Bobby Roberts

Requested expedited approval for metal frame sandwich board, 36" tall by 24" wide. The design image is gold on a white background. The image has a cross with the words "Christ Church, Jonesborough, Worship

Item V: Advertising Standards and Guidelines Discussion

Chairman, Frank Collins, communicated with town officials, and they are receptive to hearing proposals by the HZC about amending the municipal code to allow string lights during defined holiday periods during the year. Currently the municipal code does not allow string lights that are affixed to a building as advertisement.

Jonesborough Municipal Code (1991), Chapter 12, Business and Advertising Signs:

11-1207. Prohibited signs. The following signs are prohibited from being erected or maintained in any zoning district and in any area of the Town of Jonesborough:

(1) Any lighting arrangement by exposed tubing or strings of lights, outlining any portion of a building or structure or affixed to any ornamental feature thereof.

(7) Any animated sign that by movement or by other method or manner of illumination, flashes on or off, winks, strobos, blinks with varying light or color intensity.

The HZC can recommend changes to the municipal code but cannot change the municipal code. To help businesses and to add clarity to the HZC Advertising Standards and Guidelines regarding lighting, the HZC would like to add Section 8 to the Advertising Standards and Guidelines. After gathering feedback and input from the community and business owners, including those who participated in the August 14, 2025, open session meeting Section 8 will read:

8. Projected Images, String Lights, and Flashing Lights

1. Projected images or signs on a building are not permitted.
2. String lights on the exterior of businesses or directly behind business display windows are not permitted. The Historic Zoning Commission allows an exception for the display of String Lights during the following holiday periods – the Friday before Thanksgiving to January 31 and from June 28 to July 11. During these periods, string lights can be displayed behind storefront windows as long as they are not excessively bright (light floods onto sidewalk, or light makes it difficult to see store items inside the window).
3. Flashing lights on the exterior of businesses or behind business display windows are not permitted. See Municipal Code 11-1207.

Motion: Herman Jenkins made a motion, seconded by Matt Kehn, to approve Section 8 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion on changing the requirements on lighting signs to include halo lit signs if the light is a soft glow and compatible with the era of the building however after further discussion the HZC agreed to table the topic.

In August 2024 and again in June 2025, the HZC adopted new wording in the Advertising Standards and Guidelines regarding Portable Signs. Currently all sandwich boards in Jonesborough are no larger than 42" tall and 24" wide with the exception of one which was not approved and does not meet other criteria (white dry ink backing). With 14 sandwich boards visible on one side of Main Street from the Chester Inn to Noelle, it would be prudent to assure any future sandwich boards approved are no larger than the ones that are currently displayed. The location of sandwich boards is determined by the Outdoor Use Permit process therefore, the HZC does not need to address sandwich board locations. To address and clarify sandwich board/portable signs the following changes were presented for approval:

6. Portable Signs and Exterior Furnishings

6A – Construction

1. Portable signs shall be no more than 42 inches tall and 24 inches wide.
7. Exterior furnishings and portable signs made of plastic are prohibited.

6B – Display

3. Portable signs shall be displayed only during the hours of business operation when staff are present at the location.

6C – Location

4. A business, organization or other such entity is required to obtain an Outdoor Use Permit to utilize a portion of town sidewalks or rights-of-way on an on-going basis to carry out a business or other such other activity along streets within the historic district that requires the regular use of town property. Permits must be approved by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. The exact placement of a portable sign is determined by town staff through the Outdoor Use Permit process to assure safety, walkway access, ADA compliance and insurance coverage.

Motion: Nita VanTil made a motion, seconded by Colton Brasure, to approve changes to 6A, 6B, and 6C as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Members of the community have expressed concern about leaving items for sale or other items outside of a business when the business is not open. To address these concerns the following was presented for consideration and approval:

9. Outdoor Display of Items for Sale

1. Items displayed outside of a business shall follow the same guidelines and requirements as provided in Section 6. Portable Signs and Exterior Furnishings.
2. Items for Sale shall be displayed outside only during the hours of business operation and shall not be displayed outside when the business is closed.

Motion: Marcy Hawley made a motion, seconded by Herman Jenkins, to approve section 9 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Item VI: Property Designation Committee

Nita VanTil reported that a meeting will be scheduled. She created updated versions of the forms that are used to determine if a property is contributing or non-contributing and/or reviewing properties that have not been previously reviewed. The last time properties were reviewed was in 2002 and 2003.

Item VII: Demolition by Neglect Update

There are four or more properties that came before the HZC more than a year ago that have made little or no progress with addressing significant issues with their properties. Chairman, Frank Collins, will send letters to the owners of 102 Woodrow Ave, 117 Spring St, 239 E Main St, and 215 Woodrow Ave inviting them to attend the September 11 HZC meeting and provide an update on their property. The update provided will allow the HZC to determine if the property will be included in the demolition by neglect process.

Item VIII: Future Items – No update/discussion.

Item IX: HZC Database with Maps

Frank Collins met with Glenn Rosenoff to discuss a few discrepancies on the H-1, H-2 overlay zone map that the county digitized in 2023. The 2023 map did match maps that the town and county published in 2004, 2009, and 2014. In 2023, nine properties were omitted, eight did not follow property lines (included the house but not the back yard), three H-1 properties were split between the H-1 and H-2 overlay zones, and one extra property was included as H-1. Once the issues have been resolved, we will work with the town to publish

the HZC ARCGIS database. Once issues have been resolved the Board of Mayor and Aldermen will recertify the maps to correct the boundaries.

Item X: Commissioner Comments

The stairs constructed at Brian Ponder's event venue look very nice.

Item XI: Approval of Minutes – August 14, 2025 Minutes

Motion: Herman Jenkins made a motion, seconded by Marcy Hawley, to approve August 14, 2025 minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair, Frank Collins, adjourned the meeting.