

HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION

Jonesborough Town Hall – Board Room
123 Boone Street, Jonesborough, TN
November 13, 2025 – 6:00 PM
Minutes

Members Present: Frank Collins, Nita VanTil, Matt Kehn, Rebecca Moss, Marcy Hawley, Chad Hylton, Herman Jenkins

Members Absent: Michael Kieta

Call to Order

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

Additions to Agenda

Chairman, Frank Collins, requested that 120 S. Cherokee Street be added to the agenda.

Motion: Nita VanTil made a motion, seconded by Matt Kehn, to add 120 S. Cherokee St. to the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Item I: Public Comments

No comments made.

Item II: New Business

To protect historic properties in the Jonesborough H-1 and H-2 overlay zones, the HZC periodically identifies properties that show neglect that compromises the long-term viability of historic structures. Once identified, the HZC asks the Building Inspector to give a report about the property to get a professional opinion about issues impacting the property. The HZC then invites the owner to attend a meeting to discuss plans and a timetable to address significant issues with the property. The HZC sent property owners of 512 W. Main St., 204 W. Main St., 111 E. Main St., 209 W. Main St., and 129 E. Main St. letters inviting them to attend tonight's meeting to discuss their properties. This provides the owner with an opportunity to share their plan and timetable to address the issues identified in the Building Inspector's report.

512 W. Main St. – Owner/Presenter(s): Marie Nelson and Steve Guthrie

The historic wood frame main house was built around 1910. It has significant peeling paint and vegetation damage, on the East and West sides and in the soffits. The roof has rust spots that indicate potential failure. The chimneys have mortar issues. The gutter on the West side has fallen off. Lack of proper drainage could cause foundation issues.

Owner, Marie Nelson, and her son, Steve Guthrie, attended the meeting. Mr. Guthrie reported that the property has been in his family for years. His mother is on a fixed income so that will dictate how quickly some of the projects can be completed. A contractor visited the property earlier in the day to provide an estimate on the gutters. Mr. Guthrie expects to receive the estimate within the next week, and although the roof looks to be in poor condition it is not leaking and is stable. The window that was identified as broken in the Building Inspector's report was broke within the last couple of months and will be fixed. Painting will need to wait until after winter. Mr. Guthrie stated that within the next 30 days the window will be fixed, vegetation will be cleaned up and the broken light bulb will be replaced. He will give the Chairman a progress report within 3 months.

Nita Van Til will share contact information for a group that may be able to assist with repairs due to Ms. Nelson being on a fixed income.

204 W Main St – Owner/Presenter: Donald Dale & Elizabeth Fox

The historic two-story wood frame house was built by Charles W and Sarah A Meek in 1862. It has a stone foundation. The porch was added around 1895. The brick outbuilding was constructed around 1960.

The brick building along McCall Ave. is missing 25% of the roof and is overgrown with vegetation inside and outside. The wood frame main house has an open hole in the rear, peeling paint, and vegetation overtaking the East side of the frame structure. Donald Dale attended the meeting and agreed that peeling paint needs to be repainted and that some gutters need to be cleaned out and replaced. He has struggled to find someone to clean the high gutters. Nita Van Til will share contact information for the person that cleans her high gutters. Mr. Dale plans to find someone to help with clearing the vegetation, fixing the hole on the main house and replacing the gutters. Herman Jenkins will get Mr. Dale the contact information for a person that he uses for multiple projects.

Initially Mr. Dale was going to request permission to demolish the brick outbuilding at the back of his property. After discussion Mr. Dale would like to explore alternative options, possibly removing the roof and interior walls, leaving a brick shell, opposed to demolishing the outbuilding. Herman Jenkins' contact will be able to provide alternative solutions.

Mr. Dale will provide the Chairman a progress update in the Spring.

120 S. Cherokee St. – Owner/Presenter: Ralph Billington

Ralph Billington requested approval to add stairway from lower deck to upper deck in rear of property. Fire code requires there to be two forms of egress. The staircase will be built of pressure treated lumber and extend out 3½ feet.

Motion: Matt Kehn made a motion, seconded by Rebecca Moss, to approve adding a stairway from the lower deck to the upper deck in rear of property as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

103 First Ave. – Owner/Presenter: Herman Jenkins

Herman Jenkins recused himself from the vote.

Request to extend tobacco stick fence on the right-side property line from the current end point. Owner acquired additional lot that reaches to McCall Ave. The extended tobacco stick fence will continue to the edge of McCall Ave.

Motion: Nita Van Til made a motion, seconded by Chad Hylton, to approve extending the tobacco stick fence on the right-side property line as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

312 W. Main St – Owner: Academy Hill Condos Presenter: Frank Collins

Frank Collins recused himself from the vote. Nita Van Til presided over the vote.

Request to replace rotten pressure treated decking on the second-floor deck with Trex Enhance Basics Grooved Composite Deck boards from Lowes. The color is "Saddle". The deck was built in 1980 when Academy Hill was converted to condos. The deck is on the rear

of the building, and the flooring cannot be seen from the ground. One must enter the building and go up to the second floor to reach the deck and see the flooring. The flooring is inside of the railing and posts, therefore it is not necessary to remove the railing or posts.

Also requesting approval to replace a rotted board near a downspout on the front of the building next to the East side of the Portico. The rot is about 2 to 3 feet wide and the board is about 5 or 6 feet long. The same material (wood) and paint color (white) will be used.

Motion: Herman Jenkins made a motion, seconded by Chad Hylton, to approve replacing the decking with “Saddle” colored Trex Enhance Basics Grooved Composite Deck boards and replacing the rotted board near the downspout on the front of the building next to the East side of the Portico as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

209 W. Main St. – Owner: Gemma Velasquez & Murray Cruickshank

In 1821 Samuel D. Jackson, a Revolutionary War soldier, built this Federal style multi-dwelling residence. Sisters Row townhouses were supposedly built for the daughters of Samuel D. Jackson. It was used as a parsonage for the United Methodist Church from 1904 to 1996.

The Building Inspector's report detailed poor shape of roof covering, damaged/loose gutters, water damage to fascia and soffits, rotting separated porch stairs, rotten porch deck, raccoons living in the property, and 8-10 inches of raccoon feces in the porch ceiling.

Owners were in contact with the Chairman prior to the meeting as they reside in California and were unable to attend the meeting. Ms. Velasquez reported that they are working with a contractor who will be in contact with the Building Inspector to ensure that all items are corrected according to code. She stated that all issues addressed in the Building Inspector's report will be corrected.

The HZC will re-evaluate this property at their January 22, 2026, meeting.

111 E. Main St. – Owner: Steve Bacon

This historic brick business operated as a grocery store in the late 1800s. After a remodel inside and out “Hilbert 1944” was added to the brick façade. The building is currently leased to multiple businesses. The rear of the building has a broken window with a rotted window frame, and bricks that have fallen and have open areas. Several bricks are missing mortar. The condition of the gutters has led to rotting fascia. The HVAC units are leaning. Customers of adjoining businesses enter through the rear and view the dilapidated condition.

Steve Bacon contacted HZC Chairman stating that all the issues in the Building Inspector's report would be addressed. The brick work is planned for February 2025. Owner and Chairman have questions about the ownership of the parking lot retaining wall. Mr. Bacon plans to contact the owners of the Antique Store to see if they own the retaining wall.

129 E. Main St. – Owner: Jeff Gurley

On October 21, Jeff Gurley met with the HZC Chairman and Building Inspector. The building has several major brick failure issues including large cracks due to separation in the rear of the building. There are loose bricks that could potentially fall on pedestrians. The lateral restraint strap on the upper rear of the building is failing. Squirrels were observed living in the brick cracks and ceilings of the second floor. Mr. Gurley stated he was scheduling a meeting

with Jim Cantrell of Tri-Cities Custom Masonry and would invite the Chairman and HZC Advisor Bill Kennedy to the meeting.

Mr. Gurley plans to address all the issues detailed in the Building Inspector's report. He plans to have the brick work completed by March 15, 2026. The Chairman hopes to provide the Commission an update on the brick work by the next meeting.

Item III: Old Business

No discussion.

Item IV: Expedited Approval

119 E. Main St. – Verselets – Morgan & Dallas Crouch

Request to add small white letters at the top of the display window next to the door and over the door that reads, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105". Sent a comment by Herman Jenkins that it may look better to have two lines on the window instead of a continuation over the door. Expedited approval granted by Frank Collins and Michael Kieta.

208 E. Main St. – Owner: Curtis & Marilyn Buchannan

Request to repaint shed roof dormer the same gray color as before. Expedited approval granted by Frank Collins and Michael Kieta.

Item V: Property Designation Committee

PDC lead Nita VanTil reported that the committee is making great progress and will continue reviewing properties.

Item VI: Demolition by Neglect Update

Properties that will be discussed at a future date include the neglect at 102 W. Woodrow Ave., neglect at 306 S. Cherokee St., and a construction update for 140 Boone St.

Item VII: Future Items – No update/discussion.

Item VIII: Commissioner Comments

There was discussion about if there is a need to have a Historic Zoning Commission email address. Multiple commissioners could help monitor the email. This could be a better solution than the Chairman using his personal email address. Chairman, Frank Collins, will discuss this with Town Administrator, Glenn Rosenoff and report back to the group.

Item IX: Approval of Minutes – October 23, 2025 Minutes

Motion: Matt Kehn made a motion, seconded by Marcy Hawley, to approve October 23, 2025 minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair, Frank Collins, adjourned the meeting.