

# METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY



Metropolitan Historical Commission  
Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission  
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## METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC) MINUTES APRIL 21, 2025

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held its regular meeting at the Howard Office Building, Sonny West Conference Center on April 21, 2025, with Chair Linda Wynn presiding.

### Attendance

Commissioners: Menié Bell, Dr. Don Cusic, Dr. Erica Hayden, Jim Hoobler, Dr. Jane Landers, Dr. Bill McKee, Sandra Parham, Dr. Marisa Richmond, Vice Chair Laura Rost, Tom Wood, and Chair Linda Wynn were **present**.  
Dr. Clay Bailey, John Bridges, and Dr. Celso Castilho were **not present**.

Staff Members: Tim Walker, Caroline Eller, Jessica Reeves Fitzpatrick, Bryan Gilley, Russell LeSturgeon, Scarlett Miles, and Dustin Summers were **present**. Ann Mikkelsen (Metro Legal) was **present**.

County Historian: Dr. Carole Bucy was **not present**.

Guests: Bret G. Wilson, Program Manager, Wishing Chair Productions  
Natalie Robbins, PSM, Program Manager, Vanderbilt Institute for Spatial Research (VISR)  
David Greider, Executive Director, Preservation Society of Nashville

### I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND WELCOME – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Linda Wynn called the meeting to order at approximately 12:03 p.m. and verified that a quorum was present after a roll call of attendance. One commissioner arrived after roll call.

### II. REVIEW OF MARCH MEETING MINUTES – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Wynn presented last month's meeting minutes for approval. Commissioner McKee moved to accept the March 2025 minutes. Commissioner Bell seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

### III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Wynn opened the floor for Public Comment. No members of the public requested time to speak.

### IV. HISTORICAL MARKERS – *Jessica Reeves Fitzpatrick*

Jessica Fitzpatrick presented three historical markers for review.

1. Black Bottom: The MHC approved this marker at a previous meeting, but shortly after, staff discovered that some of the information was incorrect, and the location of the neighborhood should be more narrowly defined. The text has been altered slightly to limit the area to Mercy Hospital, Pearl School, and St. Paul AME. The marker committee reviewed the text changes at its meeting this month. Commissioner Cusic moved for approval. Commissioner McKee seconded, and the commission voted unanimously to approve the revised Black Bottom historical marker.
2. Dr. Lloyd C. Elam: Privately funded by Meharry Medical College, this marker will be placed within the campus, near the mental health center bearing his name. It will have text on one side and a photo with a caption on the other. Commissioner Richmond moved for approval. Vice Chair Rost seconded, and the commission voted unanimously to approve the Dr. Lloyd C. Elam historical marker.
3. Thomas Hager Tichenor (1938-1988): Privately funded by the Nashville Public Library Foundation, this marker will be placed at the corner of Church Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue North by the Nashville Public Library. It will include text on one side and a photo of Tichenor with a photo identification caption on the other. Commissioner Hoobler asked if Tichenor died the same year he retired. Bret Wilson of Wishing Chair Productions clarified that Tichenor began working with the library in 1938, retired in 1988, and transitioned in 1992. The dates on the marker reflect Tichenor's work dates. Commissioners recommended changing the dates to his birth/death dates and noting his 50 years of service within the text. Commissioner McKee moved for approval of the marker with corrections. Commissioner Hoobler seconded, and the commission voted unanimously to approve the Thomas Hager Tichenor historical marker with corrections.

Ms. Fitzpatrick reported that the Grassmere at Nashville Zoo marker has been reinstalled and the Old Hickory Works marker that was damaged has arrived and will be reinstalled soon. New marker installations include the Werthan Bag Company, Neuhooff House, and J.W. Frierson, with dedication ceremony dates to be determined.

Markers take 6-8 months or even up to a year in production; photos and differing text add to the production time. Ms. Fitzpatrick is working with a few new

inquiries about markers as well as plans for the remaining marker for the South Nashville portion of the participatory grant funding. Additionally, the committee will be updating marker guidelines in the coming months to formally adopt a style guide for text.

V. **UPDATED NOMINATION TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES – *Scarlett Miles***

Scarlett Miles presented Additional Documentation for the Omohundro Water Filtration Complex District listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Located at 1400 Pumping Station Road, Omohundro was listed in the NRHP on May 13, 1987 as part of a multiple property listing (Omohundro Waterworks System). The Additional Documentation is a comprehensive update providing an updated resource count and detailed discussion about the district's significance. The project is the result of a Memorandum of Agreement and mitigation for new construction at the site. The EPA is providing partial financing to Metro Dept of Water and Sewerage Services for Process Advancements pursuant to the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), a federal credit program for eligible waste/water infrastructure projects, an undertaking requiring compliance with Section 106 of NHPA of 1966 (RS2024-229). In 1987, Omohundro was determined locally significant under Criterion C (Architecture and Engineering). After reevaluation, the significance now includes Criterion A (Government) for the role of the complex in the development of Nashville's municipal water service and thus, the city's growth and development. The period of significance was originally 1887-1936 but has been expanded to 1888 to 1963. Additionally, the new study increased contributing resources from five to eight and determined twelve resources as non-contributing, clearing up some discrepancies from the 1987 listing. Laken Cole, architectural historian with Jacobs, prepared the nomination. The Tennessee State Review Board will consider the nomination on May 16, 2025.

Vice Chair Rost made a motion supporting the submission of Additional Documentation for the Omohundro Water Filtration Complex District to the National Register of Historic Places. Commissioner Richmond seconded, and the commission voted unanimously to approve the Additional Documentation for Omohundro.

VI. **REPORT OF FINDINGS: CALHOUN CEMETERY GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY – *Natalie Robbins, PSM, Program Manager, Vanderbilt Institute for Spatial Research (VISR)***

Caroline Eller introduced Natalie Robbins with VISR and provided background on the project which originated out of concerns about damage at the cemetery due to grading work on an adjacent parcel. Preservation Society of Nashville (PSN) provided funding for VISR's ground penetrating radar (GPR) study of the cemetery and Nashville Historical Foundation funded the public presentation of the work. David Greider with PSN is here today in the audience.

Natalie Robbins is the program manager for VISR, a geospatial and geophysical consulting entity under the umbrella of Vanderbilt University. Calhoun Cemetery is located in the Lake Providence community along the busy Nolensville Pike corridor, between a shopping center that is undergoing renovation and a used car lot. The site was deeded to Oliver Ensley, Fountain Maxwell, and James Kinnard in the late 1800s. Over the years there have been several unhoused encampments at the site. Find-A-Grave notes 100 memorials at Calhoun, but that number has changed since she has been working on the project and will likely continue to change. There have been several surveys of the cemetery over the years, including the Fulcher survey in 1986, the initial Davidson County Cemetery Survey (DCCS) in 2003, and the recent DCCS update survey in 2022, with the number of visible marked burials decreasing with each iteration.

Ms. Robbins provided a brief explanation of the tools and methods VISR used for the investigation, including a general overview of GPR technology and associated indicators, patterns, and anomalies particular to cemetery features. Ms. Robbins then explained the team's GPR collection process as it applied to the Calhoun Cemetery. A surface study of the site documented 13 monuments with readable inscriptions, 10 depressions, 4 broken or unreadable monuments, 2 fieldstones, 2 features dubbed 'grave boxes,' 13 trees, and 2 concrete markers. The oldest legible inscription appears to be from 1866. The geophysical survey found 62 burial reflections, 10 of 62 associated with marked burials, 2 potential stacked burials, and noted concentration of burials in the middle portion of the parcel. She explained how the GPR results indicate burial reflections. Ms. Robbins also provided recommendations for preservation and protection of the cemetery, including additional fencing and placement of permanent metal markers (the team marked burials with wood stakes).

Ms. Robbins presented this work at Sunnyside last month as part of the "Beneath Nashville" community education event.

Commissioners asked questions about ownership of the cemetery, continuation of burials, maintenance plans, and potential explanations for the presence of an outlying marker. Ms. Eller and Ms. Robbins confirmed that Calhoun Cemetery is a historic African American cemetery; they have been working with descendant Henry Maxwell. A portion of the site is heavily overgrown; it should be cleared and surveyed before any ground disturbance in the area in case of additional burials.

## VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT– *Tim Walker*

Director Walker reported that the office will host several interns this summer. We continue to work with Master Gardeners and Metro Parks to complete landscaping around Sunnyside (trees, flowers, bushes) and to seek designation for Sevier Park as an arboretum. We will host some public planting days in the coming weeks. Regarding the MHC budget, the Mayor must submit his budget to Metro Council by April 30, so we should have a better idea of the outcome of our

budget requests by that time. Commissioners should have received an invitation to the State of Metro Address on May 1 at the Nashville Public Library. Chair Wynn encouraged everyone to read the Director's Report to stay informed.

#### VIII. HISTORIC ZONING REPORT – Robin Zeigler

Historic Zoning Administrator Zeigler was not present at the meeting, so Commissioner Bell, who is the MHC's representative to the MHZC, provided an update. Marlin Meadows is progressing toward designation as a Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay District and Lockeland Springs-East End has updated its design guidelines. Commissioner Bell also reported on the transition of MHZC staff to the Planning Department. Planning Director Lucy Kempf and Assistant Director of Strategic Integration and Program Development Joni Williams attended the April MHZC meeting, where they spoke to the commission and shared their vision for the transition. MHZC staff members have met with Dir. Kempf and other Planning Department staff and management to begin the transition.

#### IX. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

#### X. ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice Chair Rost mentioned an email from Mark Schlicher and concerns about the WSM transmitter building, which she assumes most MHC members also received. Jessica Fitzpatrick mentioned that the building is near the MHC's William Edmondson Homesite marker, which will be cleaned for National Historic Marker Day this coming Saturday. Commissioner Hoobler mentioned that he will be speaking with WKRN about the Tulip Street Methodist Church next week. Commissioner Hoobler and Oliver Arney (NCCA President) recently met with a member of the mayor's staff to discuss funding needs for the City Cemetery. Additionally, he recently met with representatives from the Walpole Society and a descendant of the Marquis de Lafayette who visited Nashville on separate occasions.

#### XI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner McKee moved to adjourn; Commissioner Cusic seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted Monday, May 19, 2025.  
Scarlett C. Miles