



METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION

METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC) MINUTES AUGUST 18, 2025

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held its regular meeting at the Howard Office Building, Sonny West Conference Center, 700 President Ronald Reagan Way, on August 18, 2025, with Chair Linda Wynn presiding.

Attendance

Commissioners: Menié Bell, John Bridges, Dr. Don Cusic, Dr. Erica Hayden, Jim Hoobler Dr. Marisa Richmond, Vice Chair Laura Rost, Tom Wood, and Chair Linda Wynn were **present**.

Dr. Clay Bailey, Dr. Jane Landers, Dr. Bill McKee, Sandra Parham, were **not present**.

Staff Members: Tim Walker, Caroline Eller, Jessica Fitzpatrick, Dr. Adam Fracchia, Bryan Gilley, Scarlett Miles, and Dustin Summers were **present**. Hannah Zeitlin (Metro Legal) was **present**.

County Historian: Dr. Carole Bucy was **present**.

Guests: Lauren A. Walls and Dr. Lydia Simpson, New South Associates
Jane-Coleman Cottone, Cottone Cultural Consulting

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 the roll call of attendance.

II. REVIEW OF JULY MEETING MINUTES – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Wynn presented last month's meeting minutes for approval. Commissioner Rost moved to accept the July 2025 meeting minutes. Commissioner Hoobler 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 address the commission.

IV. COUNTY HISTORIAN'S REPORT – *Dr. Carole Bucy*

At Dr. Bucy's request, due to her need to leave the meeting early, this item was heard out of order from the posted agenda. Dr. Bucy stated that when Mayor Karl Dean appointed her as Davidson County Historian, she planned to step down when she turned 75. As she has now reached that age, her time in the position is coming to an end. Dr. Bucy recounted some of her early involvement in several Davidson County history projects prior to her appointment, including an oral history about the consolidation of Nashville and Davidson County which helped inspire the celebration of Metro's 50th anniversary. Although she has two unfinished projects, an update to a booklet about the Metro consolidation, and an update of John Edgerton's *Faces of Two Centuries: 1780-1980*, she is resigning her post as of today. She said this has been a great honor and she acknowledged some of the county historians who came before her. She plans to continue giving cemetery tours when possible.

Chair Wynn offered her congratulations and expressed appreciation for Dr. Bucy's service, particularly her inclusiveness, noting that the commission will miss Dr. Bucy but will likely continue to call upon her.

Commissioner Wood made a motion for a resolution honoring Dr. Bucy's service. Commissioner Bell seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

V. RECOGNITION OF RETIRING COMMISSIONERS – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Wynn acknowledged the recent retiring of Larry Woods and Dr. Celso Castilho from the MHC. She also recognized Commissioner Menié Bell, whose term ends this month. Commissioner Bell is one of the MHC's longest serving commissioners (24 years) and one of the MHZC's longer term commissioners due to her role as the MHC's representative to the MHZC (including service as MHZC chair). Commissioner Bell expressed appreciation to Mayor Bill Purcell for appointing her to the MHC and appreciation to former executive director Ann Roberts for her mentorship. It has been an honor for her to serve on both commissions. She has learned so much and fondly recalled those with whom she has served. She committed to staying involved in historic preservation in Nashville and is joining the board of the Nashville Historical Foundation.

VI. DAVIDSON COUNTY CEMETERY SURVEY, PHASE IV –
Lauren A. Walls, MA, RPA, New South Associates, Inc.

Lauren Walls, Branch Manager and Principal Investigator for Archaeology with New South Associates, Inc., provided an update on Phase IV of the Davidson County Cemetery Survey, which surveyed 131 cemeteries in the county subareas

of Antioch-Priest Lake and Donelson-Hermitage-Old Hickory. Since 2022, the project has surveyed a total of 476 cemeteries. As with previous phases, deliverables will include a Technical Memo, Survey123 Forms, GIS Data Delivery, and Cemetery Database Export. Ms. Walls highlighted several cemeteries, including the Collier-Harris Cemetery. With burials ranging from 1819-2012, this cared-for cemetery features hand-carved markers as well as burials marked with fieldstones and cinder blocks. Ms. Walls also noted the Longnett Cemetery, which was introduced to the team by a community member who spotted the group surveying at the nearby Collier-Harris Cemetery. Practically invisible, the Longnett Cemetery is uncared for, near development, and could very easily be lost. The Pigg Cemetery, which is near a long-term parking lot for the airport, is abandoned, thickly overgrown, surrounded by commercial and private landowners and development, and has no pedestrian access. Ms. Walls also spoke about the Old Central State Hospital Cemetery, Black Section. Access to the cemetery is restricted and the number of burials it contains is unknown. There's no evidence of gravestones or markers and depressions and mounding suggest locations of multiple burials and a possible mass grave. Its counterpart for whites does have markers, but they are damaged and displaced. Also surveyed as part of this phase, The Hermitage Enslaved Cemetery which made national news last year.

Phase V of the project will focus specifically on African American Cemeteries with limited field survey, optional GPR, potential repairs, archival research, oral histories, community outreach, and GIS data collection/mapping. Deliverables will include a technical report, map layers for MHC, a dedicated section in the County-Wide Preservation Plan, and will help meet an MHC goal to build an African American Cemeteries Coalition. Phase VI is the County-wide Preservation Plan.

Commissioner Wood expressed concerns about Mount Olivet Cemetery. Dr. Lydia Simpson, Senior Historian with New South, commented that the team surveyed Mount Olivet in Phase II of the project. It's a massive cemetery and the team documented the conditions through a lot of representative photos. Ms. Walls stated that the preservation plan will be scalable for larger and smaller cemeteries, providing guidance on maintenance as well as reliable resources for funding, assistance and care.

[A recording of this presentation is available on the MetroNashvilleNetwork YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDbj095oSWo>]

VII. HISTORICAL MARKERS – *Jessica Fitzpatrick*

Jessica Fitzpatrick presented two historical markers for review. These are the last two markers for North Nashville funded through the participatory budget:

- a. College Hill – This marker for the College Hill neighborhood will be placed at Albion Street and 35th Avenue North. MHC staff member Trevor Porter prepared the text. Vice Chair Rost asked about the first sentence and wondered if the first and last clauses could be flipped. Ms. Fitzpatrick recommended splitting it into two sentences instead. Vice Chair Rost also inquired about the policy on the Oxford comma. Ms. Fitzpatrick explained that the Oxford comma is not used per the MHC's historical marker style guide. Commissioner Bridges made a motion to approve the historical marker for College Hill with the changes proposed by Ms. Fitzpatrick. Commissioner Cusic seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- b. North Branch Library – This marker will be placed at the library's location at 1001 Monroe Street. Ms. Fitzpatrick noted that a long-time employee at the branch helped finalize the text. Commissioner Richmond made a motion to approve the historical marker for North Branch Library. Vice Chair Rost seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Fitzpatrick provided updates on upcoming historical marker dedication ceremonies:

Mills-Zibart Bookstore, September 6, 11am

Primo Bartolini, October 4, 1pm (an international contingent is expected to attend, including the Mayor of Fanano, Italy, Bartolini's birthplace)

Compton-Burton House and Farm, October 8, 10:30am

VIII. NOMINATION TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES - *Scarlett Miles*

Scarlett Miles presented the nomination of the Capitol Hill Redevelopment District to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The district encompasses 112 acres along James Robertson Parkway and is significant at the state and local levels under Criterion A in the area of Planning and Development. The period of significance is 1952-1974. The district includes five properties previously listed in the NRHP, 53 contributing resources and 21 non-contributing resources.

Jane-Coleman Cottone of Cottone Cultural Consulting prepared the nomination. She spoke on behalf of the project noting that this would be the first urban renewal district to be listed in the NRHP. Although many of the properties are

also significant (and individually eligible) under Criterion C for architecture, the case for Criterion A was stronger for all properties.

Vote for this agenda item taken out of order. The MHC moved on to the next agenda item and then returned to this one for the vote. Commissioner Bell made a motion to approve the nomination of the Capitol Hill Redevelopment District to the National Register of Historic Places. Commissioner Richmond seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

IX. REVIEW PROPOSAL TO CHANGE MONTHLY MEETING LOCATION –
Chair Wynn

Due to parking complications brought on by construction at the Fulton Campus, location of the Howard Office Building/Sonny West Conference Center, commissioners would like to move as many meetings as possible to the Midtown Hills precinct, contingent upon availability. For the remainder of 2025, the precinct is available on September 15 and November 17. Bookings for 2026 will not be available until October. Commissioner Wood made a motion to move MHC monthly meetings to the Midtown Hills precinct whenever possible. Commissioner Hoobler seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

X. DIRECTOR'S REPORT– *Tim Walker*

Director Walker provided an update on MHC vacancies and reappointments. Commissioner Landers had her reappointment interview with Metro Council's Rules, Confirmations and Public Elections Committee. Mayor O'Connell has appointed Gary Burke to the MHC. Mr. Burke has had an interview with the committee. Commissioner Hoobler, elected by the MHC to serve as its representative to the MHZC, also met with the committee. All three will need to be confirmed by the council at its meeting tomorrow. The two-step process, separated by council meetings, is a new process, as is the confirmation of elected representatives from one commission to another. Commissioner McKee will also be reappointed but is delayed by one council meeting due to missing the committee meeting.

Director Walker also announced his plans to step down as Executive Director of the Metropolitan Historical Commission later this fall. He and Chair Wynn have met with Human Resources about the hiring process. Director Shannon Hall, and/or her representative, plans to attend a future MHC meeting to review the process with the commission. The goal is to have a new director in place at the start of the new year. Chair Wynn expressed that she felt good about the meeting. She thanked Director Walker for his almost 29 years of service. She has appreciated and enjoyed working with him through the MHC as well as the Nashville Conference on African American History and Culture, the Nashville

Historical Foundation, and other projects and events. The commissioners had a round of applause for Director Walker.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business presented for discussion.

IX. ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

No additional comments or announcements presented for discussion.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Hoobler moved to adjourn; Commissioner Cusic seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted Monday, September 15, 2025.
Scarlett C. Miles