



# METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION

METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

## METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC) MINUTES OCTOBER 20, 2025

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held its regular meeting at the Fort Negley Visitors Center and Park, Theater, 1100 Fort Negley Blvd, on October 20, 2025, with Chair Linda Wynn presiding.

### Attendance

Commissioners: John Bridges, Gary Burke, Dr. Don Cusic, Dr. Erica Hayden, Jim Hoobler, Kaitlyn Jones, Dr. Jane Landers, Dr. Bill McKee, Sandra Parham, Betsy Phillips, Dr. Marisa Richmond, and Chair Linda Wynn were **present**.

Dr. Clay Bailey, Vice Chair Laura Rost, and Tom Wood were **not present**.

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

County Historian: position vacant

Guests: Nancy VanReece, former Metropolitan Council Member (Madison) Representing Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.; Robbie D. Jones, Principal Senior Architectural Historian/Branch Manager; Sydney Schoof, Senior Architectural Historian; Mary Cate Mosher, Architectural Historian

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

Chair Linda Wynn called the meeting to order at approximately 12:00 p.m. She welcomed two new commissioners, Kaitlyn Jones and Betsy Phillips, to their first MHC meeting and verified that a quorum was present after the roll call of attendance. Two commissioners arrived after roll call.

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

[This item taken out of order, following item V.] Chair Wynn presented last month's meeting minutes for approval. Commissioner Hoobler moved to accept the September 2025 meeting minutes. Commissioner Hayden seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Wynn opened the floor for Public Comment. Former Council Member Nancy Van Reece, who represented Madison from 2015-2023, spoke in favor of the historical marker for the Nashville Business College Basketball Team, recognizing the groundbreaking achievements of this outstanding women's basketball program.

IV. *Nashville's African American Residential Districts, 1946–1975 -*

Robbie D. Jones and Sydney Schoof, Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.

Caroline Eller introduced the Underrepresented Communities History Project, a two-year project funded through a competitive grant from the National Park Service, which resulted in a multiple property documentation form (MPDF) for the architecture, social and developmental history of mid-20th Century African American districts in Nashville and Davidson County and the nomination of one historic residential neighborhood associated with the MPDF, both to be submitted for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Robbie D. Jones, Principal Senior Architectural Historian and Branch Manager with Richard Grubb & Associates, introduced the team members (MHC staff, RGA staff, and an advisory committee) and reviewed team's process for researching and preparing the MPDF and district nomination, which also included a significant community engagement component. He explained the historical context for the project, highlighting trends in housing, education, planning, and transportation, and the intersection of race and socioeconomics, occurring between 1946-1975. The project considered national trends as well as local history. The project studied thirteen African American neighborhoods in Davidson County, recommending four as eligible for listing in the National Register, including the Haynes Heights neighborhood, which is being nominated as part of the project (the remaining neighborhoods may be eligible with additional research).

Sydney Schoof, Senior Architectural Historian, reviewed the nomination for Haynes Heights Subdivision, which was developed between 1955 and 1969. The neighborhood contains about 125 houses across 155 acres. It was developed by Herschel Lynn Greer, Neil Herman Barker, Sr., and Kossie Gardner, Sr., and named for Rev. William Haynes. It attracted African Americans from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, including prosperous members of Nashville's Black

community, medical staff from Riverside Hospital, and professors from nearby colleges and universities. It is also notable for its mid-century architecture.

Commissioners asked questions about the development team and Chair Wynn remarked that she is familiar with the history of these neighborhoods as she lived through this period of residential development in Nashville. [Links to the recorded presentation and accompanying slides are available through the MHC's Grants and Special Projects webpage: <https://www.nashville.gov/departments/historic-preservation/grants-and-special-projects>]

V. HISTORICAL MARKERS – *Jessica Fitzpatrick*

- a. Central Tennessee College (Participatory Budget) – This marker will be placed near Chestnut/1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South. Ms. Fitzpatrick expressed appreciation to Commissioners Parham and Hayden and staff member Trevor Porter for bringing together the stories of three universities. Commissioner Richmond made a motion to approve the historical marker for Central Tennessee College. Commissioner Cusic seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- b. Nashville Business College Basketball Team (Privately Funded) – This marker will be placed at the Municipal Auditorium. The team practiced at the YMCA, which no longer stands, and played in various venues, but the big games were played at Municipal. Commissioner Bridges made a motion to approve the historical marker for the Nashville Business College Basketball Team. Commissioner Cusic seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Ms. Fitzpatrick announced that this marker is the 300<sup>th</sup> Historical Marker to be approved by the MHC. It will take about a year to fabricate.

Ms. Fitzpatrick provided updates on upcoming marker dedications: October 21, Dr. Robert Boyd at Meharry Medical College, 2pm; November 8, First Masonic Hall. Additionally, she hopes to present the final two historical markers funded by the participatory budget for South Nashville in November and December. MHC staff members are researching a few potential topics.

VI. RECOMMENDATION TO MAYOR ON DAVIDSON COUNTY HISTORIAN - *Chair Wynn*

After last month's meeting, MHC staff distributed CVs for the four nominees for Davidson County Historian (Dr. Lea Williams, Jeff Sellers, Dr. Tara Mitchell Mielnik, and Dr. Katie O'Bryan) to MHC members for review. Today's vote concerns submitting the group of four nominees to the mayor's office for review and appointment of the next Davidson County Historian. Commissioner McKee made a motion to send the recommended list of nominated individuals to Mayor O'Connell for the appointed position of Davidson County Historian. Commissioner Richmond seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

VII. REVISIONS TO BYLAWS AND POLICIES – *Chair Linda Wynn*

Chair Wynn confirmed that commissioners had received and reviewed the draft changes to the MHC's bylaws and policies regarding the composition of the executive committee as distributed by MHC staff. Commissioner Bridges moved to accept the revised bylaws and policies. Commissioner Hoobler seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner McKee asked when the changes would go into effect; Chair Wynn responded that they would be effective immediately. In order to clarify the timing, Commissioner McKee moved to accept the revised changes to the MHC's bylaws and policies effective immediately, October 20, 2025. Commissioner Richmond seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

VIII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – *Tim Walker*

Director Walker asked commissioners to complete and return the key card application form from ITS, along with a photo, as soon as possible. This will grant commissioners access to the parking garage at the Fulton Campus for MHC meetings in the Sonny West Conference Center. Construction at the campus should be concluded soon and the MHC hopes to return to its meeting space in January.

Director Walker also brought new Sunnyside brochures for all commissioners and expressed appreciation to Russell LeSturgeon for his work on the document. Mr. LeSturgeon is also working on interpretive signage for the summer house.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business presented for discussion.

X. ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner McKee congratulated Commissioner Hayden for her book review in the recent *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*.

Chair Wynn thanked Commissioner Phillips for nominating her as Nashville's Best Historian. *Nashville Scene* readers recently voted to bestow this honor upon Chair Wynn.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Richmond moved to adjourn; Commissioner Hoobler seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted Monday, November 17, 2025.  
Scarlett C. Miles