

# Historic Preservation Commission

## Regular Meeting Minutes

June 10, 2025

Community Room, City County Complex, 414 E. Callender Street  
3:30 PM

Chair Tom Blurock called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

### 1. Roll Call

Present: Chair Tom Blurock, Vice Chair Jack Luther, Lindie Gibson, Elijah Isaly

Absent: Vanderland

Staff present: Jennifer Severson, Planning Director

A quorum was present.

### 2. Approval of Minutes

March 11, 2025 Minutes: Commissioner Luther noted corrections related to survey status of properties along Park Street and the north side of Callender Street. Specifically, 217 W. Park Street had not yet been surveyed and needed to be completed, while other buildings along Callender between Main Street and B Street had been surveyed. **Motion to approve minutes with corrections by Gibson. Second by Luther. Motion passed unanimously.**

April 8, 2025 Minutes: No corrections were noted. **Motion to approve by Gibson. Second by Isaly. Motion passed unanimously.**

February 11, 2025 minutes will be considered for approval at the next regular meeting.

**3. General Public Comment** - No public comment was received.

**4. Design Review-** There were no design review items on the agenda.

### 5. HPC Role Following State Legislative Changes (SB 214)

City Manager Grant Gager presented an overview of recent state legislation that removed the Historic Preservation Commission's authority to approve or deny design review applications, making design review an administrative function performed by City staff. Grant reviewed the original ordinance establishing the Commission in 1982 and outlined the six historic powers and duties contained in City Code Chapter 31, noting that those related to mandatory permit review and approval are no longer legally permissible.

Gager explained that while the Commission can no longer serve as a decision-making body for permits, several functions remain appropriate under state law, including establishing

preservation criteria, commenting on broader planning efforts, providing preservation information to the public, assisting with surveys and documentation, and offering advisory guidance when requested by property owners or City staff.

Commissioners discussed the shift from a regulatory role to an advisory role and expressed concern about losing influence over major changes within the historic district. Questions were raised about whether City staff could request Commission input even if applicants did not voluntarily seek guidance, and staff clarified that review by an external board cannot be required, but advisory input may still be sought when appropriate.

Discussion emphasized the value of historic preservation to Livingston's character and economy, with several commissioners noting that rehabilitated historic buildings often hold greater long term value than new construction. Commissioners expressed interest in remaining active by providing design guidance, assisting with historic surveys, and participating in larger planning efforts such as the zoning code update and future growth policy revisions.

Staff suggested potential expanded roles including helping complete commercial building surveys when funding is limited, developing preservation guidelines for City staff to use during administrative review, creating a more formal historic preservation plan to guide future efforts, and supporting community education such as historic walking tours or improved preservation resources on the City website.

Meeting frequency was discussed, with consensus leaning toward continuing regular meetings in a flexible advisory format, potentially quarterly with special meetings as needed when projects or planning updates arise.

## **6. Old Business**

There was no old business.

## **7. Board Comments**

Commissioner Gibson announced her intention to step down from the Commission due to personal commitments. Commissioners and staff expressed appreciation for her years of service and contributions to historic preservation in Livingston.

Additional discussion addressed the importance of keeping the Commission involved in major downtown projects, maintaining awareness of demolition or redevelopment activity, and ensuring historic resources continue to be documented and protected to the greatest extent allowed under state law.

## **8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned.