

Fairhope Historic Preservation Commission (FHPC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 10, 2025, 3:30 p.m.
Fairhope Museum of History
24 N. Section Street, Fairhope, Alabama 36532

Members in Attendance:

Mara Kozelsky-Hunter, Chair; Amy Molyneux, Vice Chair; Gary Gover; Ginger Golson, (Arrived 3:39 p.m.); Skip Jones; Dannie Mixon; Susan Stein; Erik Cortinas, Building Official/Staff Liaison; and Jenny Opal Wilson, FHPC Secretary, Jay Robinson, Councilmember, absent.

Guest:

James Watkins, Reporter, Fairhope Times.

Meeting Called to Order:

Mara Kozelsky-Hunter, Chair, called meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

Approve Minutes:

Mara Kozelsky-Hunter asked FHPC to review the August 20, 2025 minutes. Mara requested to eliminate line in Chair Report: Sign on Magnolia Avenue – Vatan Development – send comment from the Historic Preservation Commission. Skip Jones motion to approve the minutes of August 20, 2025 with eliminating line, second by Susan Stein, motion carried unanimously.

Chair's Report:

Mara Kozelsky-Hunter gave Chair Report.

At our last meeting, both Gary and Ginger reminded us that their term expires this year. I would like to say something here to review our first year, and to talk about how appointments are handled in the Commission, which for those who have served on the committee, is different.

Annual Review

In terms of what we have done this year:

- About half of us went on a training course to New Orleans.
- Others on-boarded here in Fairhope at our early meetings, which involved an introduction to city systems and procedures, historic preservation writ large (for those who are new) resources in Fairhope, as well as the Building Department's historic role in informing the community about historic properties.

Fairhope Historic Preservation Commission Minutes – September 10, 2025

- We developed bylaws and procedures.
 - Our first take involved applying for CLG status, which passed the state level quickly, but for which we were denied in December at the federal level. We are still awaiting to learn what the City Attorney and City Council have agreed on to resubmit application.
 - In addition to the CLG, we have also been working on several major initiatives: Updating Fairhope’s data on historic buildings, which we have made progress by incorporating the Fairhope Single Tax Colony (FSTC) archival record into the building process, as well as getting a more up-to-date Shield and Banner records.
- We have discussed and laid the ground work for bringing in a consultant to help with a survey and are developing our own process for contributing to that survey with volunteer labor.
- We have run a pilot survey related to historical preservation tourism here in Fairhope. The vast majority of respondents indicated that historical charm contributed to their overall experience and enjoyment of Fairhope.
 - We have also authored the Demolition Review proposal, debated it, and presented on multiple times to the City Council. The fact that we are working on the proposal in house, I would like to point out, means we are saving the city thousands of dollars rather than having to outsource it.
- So we have had a very busy first year. As opposed to the pre-existing city bodies, like the planning commission, which has long established duties and procedures, we are actively creating the Fairhope Historic Commission for the future. Everyone here from Erik to Jenny and Lisa Hanks, the Mayor and City Council, and especially all of us, are founders of this commission and are building its future. So I would like to thank all of you for everything you have done this year: your commitment has tremendous meaning.

Gary Gover

- I would especially like to recognize Gary Gover, who has dedicated himself to establishing the Fairhope Historic Commission for several decades before it finally materialized. Gary has been a tireless defender of preservation and carries years of experience. He has researched laws, drafted several ordinances, faithfully attended not just our meetings, but city council and planning commission meetings where preservation issues have arisen. Gary is an early founder of our mission, a dedicated laborer on preservation’s behalf, a key contributor of important ideas, and our institutional memory.

Fairhope Historic Preservation Commission Minutes – September 10, 2025

- Gary will be recognized by Mayor Sherry Sullivan at the City Council Meeting on September 22, 2025 in honor of his service.

Commission Applications

Mara Kozelsky-Hunter referenced Ordinance No. 1797 to establish a Historic Preservation Commission in the City of Fairhope and for other purposes; Section II: Creation of a Historic Preservation Commission; B. Commission Members: Number, Appointment, Terms, Compensation and Rules and Standards. Currently we have two (2) members Gary Gover and Ginger Golson with terms expiring September 2025. Mara reviewed three (3) applications received with commission. Mayor Sherry Sullivan will nominate two (2) members that will be appointed by City Council on September 22, 2025.

Gary Gover proposed additional Auxiliary Structure for the Fairhope Historic Preservation Commission. Mara Kozelsky-Hunter suggested to table for discussion at later time.

CLG Status

Erik Cortinas discussed he had spoken with Attorney, Chris Williams and the CLG status is with City Council authority and the National Park Service. Erik suggested to revisit City Council first of year.

Survey Sheet

Mara Kozelsky-Hunter tabled the Survey Sheet to next meeting.

Demolition Review Discussion

Mara Kozelsky-Hunter thanked Erik Cortinas for the Demolition Review Presentation at the City Council Work Session on August 25, 2025. Mara commented Erik did a great job. She additionally thanked Skip Jones and Gary Gover for attending. Erik commented he is awaiting comments back from City Council. Councilman Corey Martin has reached out with comments. Erik said we will amend with comments and present back to City Council with final version.

Reports from Commission Members/Calendar for 2025:

- **Annual Report**

Mara Kozelsky-Hunter will prepare the Annual Report due to the State Historical Association in October.

- **Public Meeting / November**

No discussion.

**Fairhope Historic Preservation Commission
Minutes – September 10, 2025**

▪ **History Day**

Ginger Golson discussed History Day for the Fairhope Middle School and Fairhope High School students. Students would prepare a History Day project. Mara suggested presenting awards. Erik Cortinas to check on permission of awards from the budget. A motion would be required at next month's meeting.

▪ **DAR**

Amy Molyneux, Vice Chair, discussed working with the Daughters of American Revolution (DAR) on Essay Contests. Mara Kozelsky-Hunter asked Amy to work with Ginger Golson on History Day.

Amy Molyneux spoke with Mike Bunn, member, Baldwin County Commission Historic Development Commission on the 250th Anniversary of the United States in celebrating the 250th anniversary along with other cities in our county.

▪ **Art Walk**

Susan Stein suggested buying historical building painting from Art Walk as award.

New Business

Erik Cortinas commented the Historic Review Admin. Fee of \$100.00.was included in the Draft Ordinance to Alter the Schedule of Fees for Construction and Building Permits at the City Council Work Session on September 8, 2025. Ordinance to go before City Council for adoption.

Erik Cortinas announced the Old Fairhope Hardware/People Cooperative at 301 Fairhope Avenue is in the process of being taken down.

Public Comment – Time Permitting:

No public comment.

Adjourn:

There being no further business, Susan Stein motion to adjourn, seconded by Skip Jones, motion unanimously carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:58p.m.

Submitted by Jenny Opal Wilson, FHPC Secretary