City of Cape May Historic Preservation Commission 2026 Alignment Workshop #2

Thursday 30 July, 10:00-2:00 . . . @ City Hall Auditorium

Workshop Purpose

To align around revised content and a process for updating HPC's Historic Design Standards and Applications,

In a way that encourages all commission members to serve as valued co-creators who inspire and unite our community to steward Cape May's historical, cultural, and natural resources for the benefit of all,

So that present and future generations continue to express the unique quality of life we share in this place we love.

Workshop Products / Targeted Outcomes

Functional

1. Identify and propose revised content for HPC's Historic Design Standards associated with the following:
    - Revised Period of Significance: 1730-1948 (via motion approved on 7/17/2025)
    - Codify recent shift in appropriate materials for roof replacement
    - Use of vinyl and textured (wood grain) vinyl siding
    - Window repair evaluation and replacements for Contributing Properties
    - Pools in the Historic District
    - Artificial turf
    - Definitions regarding visibility and appropriate screening methods for various conditions
    - Clarifications to screening of HVAC equipment
    - Clarifications to signage requirements and Uniform City Signage Appendix
    - Solar panel visibility and appropriateness
    - Flood mitigation implications and limits to raising first floor elevation height
    - Criteria for allowing parking beneath structures
    - Clarifications to issues associated with size, scale, scope, and style of Additions
    - Clarify size, scale, scope, and style (false sense of history) of New Construction
    - Clarifications for accessory and accessory structures (sheds, showers, etc.)
    - Criteria for allowing parking beneath structures
    - Address extent to which HPC should regulate color palates
2. Identify revisions and clarifications to HPC Application materials and requirements
3. Clarify the process for adopting proposed modifications to HPC's Historic Design Standards

Being (The nature of the Energies and Spirit We Seek to Generate)

1. Understand, with humility, our primary duty as helpful public servants.
2. Grow and inspire our collective communal spirit in service to honoring, sustaining, and harmonizing our unique ecological and built environments in this special place.
3. Genuinely develop a caring interface with all community stakeholders that elevates the effectiveness of HPC through education, outreach, and open communication.

Will (The Governing and Determining Force Behind Our Function and Being)

1. Build HPC's capacity to ensure that Cape May continues to express its authentic essence indefinitely.

Opening: The Special Meeting of the City of Cape May Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was called to order by Chairman John Boecker at 10:02 pm.

Roll Call

Mr. Boecker, Chair	Present
Mr. Testa, Vice Chair	Present
Mr. Carroll	Present
Mr. Stevenson	Absent
Ms. Pessagno	Present
Ms. Wilson Stridick	Absent
Ms. Decker	Present
Mr. Hammeran (Alternate I)	Present
Mr. Kurtz (Alternate II)	Present

Also Present: Chris Gillin-Schwartz, Esq., HPC Solicitor, Lauren Emerick, HPC Secretary, Councilmember Lorraine Baldwin.

Agenda: 30 July 2026 . . . 10:00 – 2:00

9:45 Arrival time

10:00 Welcome and Opening Remarks: Why are we here and what are we caring about?
- Open with Context Question and Exercise

10:10 Revise Period of Significance (1750-1948?)
- Motion to recommend this to Planning Board passed on 07/17/2025; however:
  - Area survey to identify certain periods throughout history to inform appropriate end date?
  - Research to determine extent of properties that would be affected?
- Identify process and timeframe for making this revision

Discussion:
- Current Standards on page 12 identify 1750-1948; therefore, this Period of Significance has already been adopted and approved by City.
- Ask Steven Smolyn to update Standards throughout, as necessary, to reflect this consistently, including, if needed, the dates in the Style descriptions on pp 88-91.

10:25 Roofing issues
- Codify “Roof Replacement Clarifications for Common Interpretation” from JB 14 March 2025 Memo
  - Add language for conditions allowing synthetic wood shingle roofs where wood shingles are no longer present
- Period and style appropriateness of standing seam accent roofs?
  - Turn-down or 45 degree cut-off at leading edge

Discussion:
- Ask Steven Smolyn to update Standards for conditions allowing synthetic wood shingle roofs and on p. 15 regarding composite materials, as necessary, and update roofing specifics on pp. 16-21
- Don’t need to make any revisions regarding metal roofs, leaving open to interpretation on a case-by-case basis, including leading edge conditions

10:35 Exterior cladding issues

- Use of vinyl and textured (wood grain) vinyl siding?
- Consider exploring issues associated with appropriateness of composite materials

Discussion:

- Leave texture to Board's discretion regarding vinyl texture on Non-Contributing properties, based upon presentation of samples by applicants.
- Not willing to approve composite materials for Contributing properties (except wood shingle roofs); may be open to emerging technologies of engineered impregnated wood at some point.

10:50 Window issues

- Window repair evaluation and replacements for Contributing Properties?
  - Criteria for repair vs. replacement
  - Design a template in Applications for window replacements
  - Consider requiring an evaluation of potential repair vs. replacement
    - Create list of recommended local window repair entities?
  - Create list of HPC approved manufacturers: Jeld-Wen, Marvin, Sierra Pacific. Pella. Others?

Discussion:

- Board will continue to recommend applicants make reasonable effort to repair windows; prioritize repair but remain relatively lenient regarding window replacement when applicants make a case (level of deterioration), particularly regarding energy efficiency.
- Invite window repair craftspeople to present to HPC to inform us regarding repair implications.
- Create a window replacement template as part of the Application packet beyond the current checklist for window replacement on Contributing properties, including a window schedule for exiting vs. new windows – what needs to be replaced and why.
- No need to revise current Standards pertaining to windows.
- Do not publish list of providers (repair and new) since these can change and could be misinterpreted as an endorsement, but informally offering options that have received approval in the past is acceptable for informational purposes with an appropriate disclaimer (HPC does not endorse any particular providers or products) as sidebar informal conversations when asked.

11:05 Porch and entrance issues

- Seasonal enclosures

Discussion:

- Should remain at the Board's discretion on a case-by-case basis. Recommend requesting of Paul and Enforcement Officer some additional participation on City's part for enforcement of seasonal enclosure removal from 15 September – 15 May.

11:20 Sites and Streetscape issues

- Clarify issues associated with pools – permitted in LHD under what conditions?
- Clarify visibility definitions (page 12) and appropriate screening methods for various conditions
- Artificial turf restrictions

Discussion:

- It was agreed to Revise HPC's Standards to prohibit pools in side yards, since pools qualify as a particular type of intrusive feature in the Historic District (voted 8-1).
- Revise Standards' definition of "Not Visible" on page 12 to eliminate language that prohibits vegetation, seasonal foliage, and fencing from complying; instead, insert revised definition language such as "Not able to be seen by a person standing in the street in any public thoroughfare; this can be accomplished via a combination of barrier elements to visibility above eye height to be maintained for the duration of the existence of what needs to screened"; this does not require a

deed restriction, since HPC resolutions transfer with the land, but there may be enforcement implications to consider.
- Artificial turf is prohibited throughout the City already via Zoning Ordinance, but this should also be stated in HPC's Standards.
- Agreed to prohibit gravel or crushed stone in yards except for pathways and driveways

11:35 Signage issues
- Clarifications to signage requirements?
- Uniform City Signage Appendix update

Discussion:
- Current signage Standards are adequate; however, Standards should clarify that one-off monument signs should be brought before the full commission for approval.
- Uniform City Signage Appendix draft to be presented to HPC for review in September.

11:45 Mechanical and Utility Equipment
- Solar panel visibility and appropriateness
- Clarifications to screening of HVAC equipment

Discussion:
- Revise the Standards to allow options for emerging solar technologies that adequately emulate traditional materials and are deemed appropriate upon review by the full Commission of physical samples.
- Revise language on p. 50 to read "should not be visible from any public right of way".

12:00 Break to grab food for Working Lunch (and bio-break)

12:15 Flood Mitigation issues
- Flood mitigation implications and limits to raising first floor elevation height
  - NJ currently requires two feet of freeboard beneath structure to base flood elevation
  - Create absolute flood standard to prevent manipulation by applicants to gain more height?
    - Consider first floor elevation a maximum of four feet above base flood elevation
- Criteria for allowing parking beneath structures?

Discussion:
- Agreed to evaluate maximum raising of first floor elevations on a case-by-case basis, but elevating the first floor any higher than the minimum height defined by current legal requirements (local or state, whichever is higher) is generally not permitted.
- Delete "Inappropriate" image on p. 52 of Standards.
- Revise Standard #5 on p. 52 to read that garage doors on the primary structure are not permitted to face any public right of way; provide language clarifying allowance for street-facing garage doors on detached garage structures in back yards, recognizing emulation of traditional carriage houses located toward the rear of lots.
- No additional language necessary to address or prohibit parking beneath structures, since this can be addressed on a case-by-case basis for projects complying with the above requirements.

12:35 Additions issues
- Clarifications to issues associated with size, scale, scope, and style of Additions?

Discussion:
- Agreed that current Standards are sufficiently clear and balance well stringency with interpretation on a case-by-case basis.

1:00 New Construction issues

- Clarify size, scale, scope, “fit”, and style (false sense of history) of New Construction?
- Maximum permitted height should be the exception, not the norm?
- Clarifications for accessory and accessory structures (sheds, showers, etc.)

Discussion:

- Agreed that current Standards are sufficiently clear and balance well stringency with interpretation with interpretation on a case-by-case basis.
- Consider adding a statement about not creating a false sense of history with a brief explanation.

1:20 Address extent to which HPC should regulate color palates.

Discussion:

- Agreed for now to not regulate color, but will reserve this topic for further discussion.

1:30 Identify revisions and clarifications to HPC Application materials and requirements:

- Design a template in Applications for window replacements
- Creation of a checklist of required items that must be included with applications (material cut sheets, existing and proposed elevations with dimensions, written confirmation of zoning officer's decision of by-rights approvals, etc.)
- Any omissions should render apps incomplete and prevent a hearing.
- Elimination of current supplemental roofing page
- Include language strongly recommending that applicants review the Historic Design Standards prior to submitting application
- Consider including a copy of the Standards with all applications; incorporate cost into fee?

Discussion:

- It was agreed to create a subcommittee to develop and propose revised application materials to include Jim, Kevin, JB
- Applications need to better demonstrate scale of structures in existing streetscape; revise application requirements for new construction and additions and provide sample of appropriate streetscape documentation.
- Applications must include comparative existing and proposed floor plans and elevations.
- Agreed to clarified policy on Application submission schedule:
    - All applications must be submitted to Lauren by COB on Monday two weeks prior to each HPC meeting to be reviewed for completeness and to qualify for being placed on the full Commission agenda.
    - Review Committee will review all applications for completeness and advise Applicants when additional documentation is necessary to qualify as a complete Application.
    - Applications that are not deemed fully complete by COB on the Monday prior to (one week before) HPC meetings will not be brought before the full Commission.
        - Motion to adopt the above Application submission requirements made by Jim Testa, seconded by William Kurtz, and passed unanimously.
    - Post this new policy as an HPC Notification just like notifications of meetings . . . Chris will compose this based upon content emailed from JB.
    - Initiate this Application submission schedule effective for the September 2026 HPC meeting.

2:00 Clarify the process for adopting proposed modifications to HPC’s Historic Design Standards

Discussion:

- Chris Gillin-Schwartz will draft a Professional Services contract for Steven Smolyn as Consultant for HPC as approved at 20 July 2026 HPC meeting.

- JB to meet with Steven to request fees for a menu of desired services that we can prioritize for implementing this year; use this to propose HPC's 2027 budget to Paul by mid-September.
    - Verification of properties for inclusion in Historic District map Amendment
        - Clarify Map amendment proposal for Public Meeting and City Council*
    - Property Reports and searchable database
    - Update HPC Standards
    - Recommendations on challenging applications

2:10 The process for proposing and adopting a Local Historic District Amendment was outlined as follows:

- Verify accuracy of existing Zoning Map of LHD; match w/ 11/22/2007 (Zoning) and 7/1/2006 (HP) Remington maps?
- Compare existing LHD map with proposed LHD boundaries and verify accuracy of proposed LHD boundaries
- Revise to include missing block 1098
- Revise to include beach side of Promenade to high water line
- Revise to include individually designated properties outside boundary
- Clarify status of Cape May Marina, and Roseman's Marina
- Meet w/ Paul to verify list of all properties – review tax assessment maps
- **Produce final list of all properties for inclusion**
- Produce Property Reports, as necessary, to verify status (Contributing vs. Non-Contributing) for all properties being proposed to be added for inclusion
- Identify date for next Special Public Meeting – mid-to-late November
- Prepare for next Special Public Meeting
    - Send revised Notice of Amendment (and cover letters) to affected property owners
    - Prepare and submit to City the agenda for this meeting for publication
    - Publish Legal Notice for LHD map amendment Public Meeting (14 days prior?)
    - Publish Press Release for LHD Map Special Public Meeting
    - JB to revise PPT and send out to HPC for review/comment
- HPC to propose another resolution to approve revised LHD map after public input
- Initiate Planning Board submission and subsequent City Council approvals to occur in 2027

2:25 Reflections and other Conclusions

- Consider adding to Standards a definition and example of Adaptive Reuse in order to inform such projects, particularly since this is an HPC Awards category.
- The updated Local Historic District Map should be added into the Standards once adopted.

2:35 Adjourn

Other potential 2026 HPC activities deferred for later discussion:

- Enforcement and Coordination with City Government
    - Status of Zoning amendment requiring Historic District location at real estate closings
    - HPC member on the Planning Board/ Master Plan Committee (as recommended by NAPC)
    - HPC representative on Environmental Commission in place
    - Revise Master Plan to update Section 7.0 "Historical Element"
    - Consider City tax deduction for significant historical renovations as a gesture?
- Update and Revise Bylaws
- Propose Carolyn Pitts Memorial (statue?) at Physick Estate
- Committee for creating a Preservation Plan – perhaps defer to next HPC Alignment Workshop

    - Get copy of prior Plan from 1991
    - Identify Purpose, Targeted Outcomes, and Process for creating such a Plan
    - Identify and resolve issues of scale, streetscape, etc. to guide HPC decisions
    - Follow up on the removal of contributing status on applicable properties, and consideration of restoration of said status on certain culturally important properties
    - Address Streetscape issues
    - Address on the future of Village Green and it's potential for eventual inclusion in the Local Historic District (as an example of a Levittown-type planned community)
    - Create publishable document of Plan for posting
- Reconvene Historic Preservation Awards Committee for 2027 nominations and awards
- Reconvene Community Engagement Committee to identify/propose activities
- 2026 Alignment Workshop #3 – late October/early November?