

Feb 2, 2026 – Historic District Commission Zoom Meeting

Call to order, 7:01 pm

- Roll call
- Present: Diana McCain, Colleen Darnell, Ryan Chabbot, Claudia O'Connell; Alternates: Josh Eddinger
- Seating of Alternates: Diana moved to seat Josh Eddinger, Claudia seconded, all approved.
- Public comment: none
- Review and acceptance of agenda: Diana moved, Claudia seconded, all approved.
- Review and acceptance of minutes from November 3, 2025 meeting: Diana moved, Colleen seconded, all approved.
- Public Hearing APCOA #476 Town of Durham, complete demolition and removal of 51 Main Street: Diana moved to open public hearing, Ryan seconded, all approved.

Brendan Rae discussed background. Early 20th century Sears kit, age unknown, no septic system and lots of wetlands for consideration, town liability, Fire Co. wants use of land (not structure) and uses driveway. Carriage House was an older concept, retain historic look of facade? Zoned residential. Was going to be part of town complex for emergency responders.

Josh: Suggested that this application include a plan for what will be done to maintain streetscape on Main St. Suggested public garden (Garden Club to maintain?).

Diana: Agrees that this would be nice, but suggests that our commission can only make recommendations for post-demo, but not require anything specific be done with the property. That would come through a separate application.

Diana moved to close public hearing, Claudia seconded, all approved.

Diana: Diana moved to approve APCOA #476 with strong recommendation that, once the building is demolished, that plans be made that it not be left just as a grassy, empty lot. Claudia seconded.

Josh opposed, Colleen abstained, Claudia, Diana and Ryan voted in favor. APCOA #476 approved.

Further discussion with Brendan Rae: Demolition costs roughly \$25-35K and could be done this summer if it can be approved by town with this year's budget.

- Old business: none

- New business:

Bob Guynn request for HDC support of engineering survey of United Churches of Durham:

Bob said they have an application in progress for a grant that will match \$20K for needed repairs and engineering plans. Lime ricky booth has been a good fundraiser and the Church is prepared to spend the matching funds. They would like our commission to provide a letter of support (they provided an example of basic info for letter). They also asked for our counsel from our commission throughout their process with any recommendations/expertise we might like to offer. John Hogarth (Trustees Chairman for Church) was also present. Recommended repairs will need to be done in stages and engineers will help to build out timeline for efficiency. Lengthy process; could take a couple of years.

Diana moved to approve that Colleen will draft a letter of support and circulate to commission for input. Claudia seconded, all approved.

Colleen suggested Meeting Dates for 2026: Mar 2, April 6, May 4, June 1, July 13 (altered due to holiday), Aug 3, Sept 14 (altered due to holiday), Oct 5, Nov 2, Dec 7.

Motion to accept dates made by Diana, seconded by Claudia, all approved.

Colleen reserved Durham Public Library to hold our March 2 meeting in-person.

- Public comment: none
- Adjournment: Chair called for meeting close at 7:46 pm

Respectfully submitted, Claudia O'Connell