

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING

Proceedings held on Wednesday, May 28, 2025,
commencing at 1:04 p.m., at the Edward Ball Building,
Hearing Room 1002, 214 North Hogan Street, Jacksonville,
Florida, before Diane M. Tropia, FPR, a Notary Public in
and for the State of Florida at Large.

PRESENT:

MICHAEL MONTOYA, Chair.
ETHAN GREGORY, Vice Chair.
WILLIAM HOFF, Secretary.
JULIA EPSTEIN, Commission Member.
BECKY MORGAN, Commission Member.
THOMAS LOVE, Commission Member.

ALSO PRESENT:

ARIMUS WELLS, Planning Department.
CALEB ARSENAULT, Planning Department.
CARLA LOPERA, Office of General Counsel.

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THE CHAIRMAN: And just also for the
record, Commissioner Epstein is running a
little bit late. She should be here in about
five-or-so minutes (microphone failure) --
(Reporter inquiry.)
THE CHAIRMAN: You couldn't hear me? I'll
lean in a little bit.
Just for the record, Commissioner Julia
Epstein is running a little bit late, but
she'll be here in a while.
Let's go ahead and get started. Just some
general things. As a courtesy, we ask everyone
to please silence your cell phones.
Additionally, we ask for no public displays of
support or opposition. Please keep any private
conversations very low so the meeting is not
disrupted. If the meeting goes on for over two
hours, we'll take a ten-minute break every two
hours.
For those of you that wish to speak before
the Commission today, including applicants who
are present, you must fill out a speaker's card
and give it to staff. Please mark on the card
whether you are for or against the item.
These proceedings are being recorded by a

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P R O C E E D I N G S
May 28, 2025 1:04 p.m.
- - -
THE CHAIRMAN: Welcome, everyone. We'll
go ahead and start the meeting.
I hereby call this meeting of the
Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission
to order and welcome each of you attending
today.
Let the record show that it's now 1:04,
May 28th, 2025.
We'll start with some introductions and
begin with staff on my left.
MR. WELLS: Arimus Wells, Planning
Department.
MS. LOPERA: Carla Lopera, Office of
General Counsel.
THE CHAIRMAN: Michael Montoya, Chair.
COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Ethan Gregory,
commissioner.
COMMISSIONER HOFF: William Hoff,
commissioner.
COMMISSIONER MORGAN: Becky Morgan,
commissioner.
COMMISSIONER LOVE: Thomas Love,
commissioner.

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court reporter, so it's important that you
speak clearly into the microphone, not like I
was doing a moment ago. When you come forward
to speak, please state your name and address
into the mic, and -- for the record, and wait
to be sworn in.
Only one person may speak at a time. We
also ask that you be focused and concise, that
you limit -- to the criteria upon which our
decision must be based.
Each person will have three minutes to
speak unless there's been a request and
approval for a longer amount of time. The
timers are in view, and we will keep time.
At the end of your three minutes, if
you're in the middle of a sentence, you're
certainly welcome to conclude your sentence,
but please no more.
(Commissioner Epstein enters the
proceedings.)
THE CHAIRMAN: If you're providing
materials today for the commissioners to
consider, a minimum of ten copies need to be
provided to the Commission staff.
Any tangible materials submitted with a

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1 speaker's presentation, such as documents,
2 photographs, plans, drawings, et cetera, will
3 become part of the public record and will be
4 kept by the Commission staff. Therefore,
5 please retain a copy of anything submitted for
6 yourself (microphone failure) needed.

7 That's the end of the general
8 announcements.

9 We have some minutes for today's meeting.
10 We'll hear a motion regarding the minutes.

11 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Motion to approve
12 the minutes from the April 2023rd [sic] 2025,
13 JHPC meeting.

14 COMMISSIONER HOFF: I will second that.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?

16 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Let it known -- let it be
18 known that the meeting minutes were approved.

19 So let's go on to the agenda itself.

20 (Discussion held off the record.)

21 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm so sorry. Forgive me,
22 Commissioner Epstein.

23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Commissioner
24 Epstein is now present.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Very good.

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1 items, you're free to stay for the rest of the
2 meeting, but you're also free to go. They're
3 hereby approved with the conditions.

4 Now, we're going to move on to -- we're
5 going to mix it up just a little bit here.
6 We're going to move on to Item F, under
7 Historic Designations, and we have LM-25-03 at
8 1435 Atlantic Boulevard.

9 I'll open the public hearing if anyone's
10 here to -- is anyone here today to comment on
11 this?

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward.

14 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good afternoon.

16 Sheri Weber, San Marco Preservation
17 Society.

18 I'm listed as the applicant on this
19 because Aspire Church San Marco which does
20 business as Southside Baptist Church reached
21 out to the Preservation Society for assistance
22 with their landmarking application.

23 So the application was submitted in
24 preparation for applying for the REHAB grant
25 for a steeple restoration. Very costly, very

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1 So we'll start with the next part of our
2 agenda, the deferred items. For the record, we
3 have COA-25-32025 at 2568 Herschel Street.

4 And then the consent agenda, we have two
5 items: COA-25-32158 at 3750 Riverside Avenue
6 and COA-25-32278 at 3562 Oak Street.

7 Is there anyone here today to speak in
8 regard to these items on the consent agenda?

9 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

10 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. I'll entertain
11 a motion.

12 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Motion to approve
13 the consent agenda.

14 COMMISSIONER MORGAN: Second.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Any discussion among the --
16 amongst the commissioners?

17 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

18 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?

19 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Those opposed?

21 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

22 THE CHAIRMAN: So let it be known that the
23 two items on the consent agenda have been
24 approved.

25 If you're here in regards to one of those

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1 extensive.

2 Happy to answer any questions that you may
3 have about the restoration itself. It's
4 fascinating.

5 Due to the restoration being completed
6 ahead of schedule and also due to a delay in
7 the reopening of the REHAB grant application,
8 Aspire's project was already, you know,
9 completed and was rendered ineligible for the
10 grant funding, so they have asked that their
11 landmarking application be withdrawn so that
12 they may reconsider when they would like to
13 apply in the future.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

15 MS. WEBBER: And I'm here for any
16 questions that you may have.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

18 Let's see if anyone else is here to speak
19 today and we may call you up.

20 MS. WEBBER: Uh-huh.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anyone else here
22 today that wishes to speak in regards to this
23 landmark application?

24 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

25 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. I'll close the

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1 public hearing. And since there's no -- since
2 there's -- there are no other people here to
3 speak to the landmarking of this and the
4 applicant wishes to withdraw, I'm going to ask
5 for assistance from legal counsel here so we
6 can just (microphone failure).

7 (Reporter inquiry.)

8 THE CHAIRMAN: We're going to hear from
9 legal counsel and -- give us some -- some input
10 on how to move forward since no one else came
11 to speak about the landmarking.

12 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to the
13 Commission, so this item, the applicant has
14 requested a withdrawal. And if you feel so
15 inclined, someone can move to approve the
16 withdrawal of this application.

17 You are not obligated to do so. If you do
18 want to take it up as a landmark, it is within
19 your control as a body to make whatever
20 decision you choose to to dispose of this.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

22 And just some additional information. If
23 there had been other people here to speak in
24 favor of the landmarking, then there would have
25 been more discussion in that regard or possibly

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1 LM-24-04 seeks to designate the subject
2 property located at 964 St. Clair Street as a
3 local landmark. The property's primary
4 structure is a one-story masonry Colonial
5 Revival building with multiple additions.

6 Constructed in 1916, the original portion
7 of the building is characterized by its hipped
8 with intersecting gable roof, its brick
9 exterior, and its Colonial Revival
10 architectural elements as well as Neoclassical
11 elements, including its symmetrical form, its
12 recessed, rounded, arched entryway with brick
13 pilasters and quoins, a triglyph frieze, and a
14 triangular pediment, its paired 9-over-6 sash
15 windows with wide sills and its group of
16 6-over-6 windows with fixed six-light windows
17 above them.

18 The building has had many documented
19 additions since its construction, but these
20 have not significantly detracted from the
21 character of the original structure and most of
22 the alterations are compatible with the
23 architectural style and design of the original
24 building.

25 In preparing the application, the Planning

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1 a deferral until next month. But since there's
2 no one here to speak to it and the owner's
3 explained -- the applicant has explained the
4 situation for (microphone failure), I'll
5 entertain a motion.

6 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Motion to approve
7 the withdrawal of LM-25-03 at 1435 Atlantic
8 Boulevard.

9 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Second.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Any discussion?

11 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

12 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?

13 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

15 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

16 THE CHAIRMAN: So let it be known that the
17 withdrawal is approved.

18 Thank you.

19 Now we're going to move on to Item Number
20 2, Historic Designations, LM-25-04 at 964
21 St. Clair Street.

22 I'll open the public hearing.

23 Is there a report?

24 MR. ARSENAULT: Thank you.

25 Through the Chair to the Commission,

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1 Department has found the application to meet
2 four of the seven criteria. The four criteria
3 include A, its value as a significant reminder
4 of the cultural, historical, architectural or
5 archaeological heritage of the city, state or
6 nation.

7 Annie R. Morgan Elementary School,
8 Woodstock Park, School Number 21, is
9 significant in part because of its relationship
10 to the immediate relationship of Woodstock.

11 It also meets criterion D. It is
12 identified as a master builder, designer or
13 architect whose individual work has influenced
14 the development of the city, state or nation.

15 The original structure and subsequent
16 additions are associated with several prominent
17 Jacksonville architects and builders, including
18 Rutledge Homes, Mellen C. Greeley, the O.P.
19 Woodcock Company, Jefferson Powell, and Henry
20 John Klutho. The Annie R. Morgan Elementary
21 School is one of the few intact buildings
22 documented to have been designed by Rutledge
23 Homes.

24 To keep up with the growing population,
25 the elementary school received a significant

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1 addition of six classrooms and a boiler room in
2 1926. The architect was documented to be
3 Mellen Greeley and the builder was O.P.
4 Woodcock. In 1928, another significant
5 addition was made, designed by Jefferson
6 Powell.

7 One of the last documented alterations to
8 the original structure was a four-classroom
9 addition in the early 1950s designed by
10 prominent Jacksonville architect Henry John
11 Klutho.

12 The property also meets criterion E for
13 its value as a building is recognized for the
14 quality of its architecture and it retains
15 sufficient elements showing architectural
16 significance.

17 The primary structure at 964 St. Clair
18 Street is a one-story masonry building that was
19 constructed in the Colonial Revival style with
20 Neoclassical architectural elements.

21 Generally, most of the additions are
22 compatible with the original structure,
23 mimicking the materials, window designs, and
24 form, or otherwise remaining compatible with
25 the original building style.

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1 findings of this report and consideration of
2 the Ordinance Code, the Jacksonville Planning
3 Department recommends that the Jacksonville
4 Historic Preservation Commission approve the
5 designation of 964 St. Clair Street, LM-24-04,
6 as a City of Jacksonville landmark.

7 Staff would like to mention that we did
8 receive two letters, the first from Connie
9 Thomas and the second from Ray Richardson,
10 which are in front you. These were both in
11 support of the designation, as well as we have
12 a letter from the representative of the owner,
13 Randall Gallup, which is included for your
14 review as well.

15 Thank you.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Caleb.

17 Are there any questions for staff?

18 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Is the applicant here?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CLARK-MURRAY: Yes.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward.

22 (Council Member Clark-Murray approaches
23 the podium.)

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CLARK-MURRAY: Good
25 afternoon.

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1 And, finally, criterion G, for its
2 suitability for preservation or restoration.
3 964 St. Clair Street has not been altered in a
4 manner that has destroyed its architectural or
5 historical significance. The building
6 currently operates as a school and does not
7 show signs of significant exterior
8 deterioration or long-term neglect.

9 Many of the alterations that have taken
10 place during the building's operation as a
11 school have gained significance in their own
12 right for their association with the growth of
13 Woodstock Park, the influence of prominent
14 Jacksonville architects and their designs which
15 are generally compatible with the general
16 structure. 964 St. Clair Street may be
17 reasonably rehabilitated and preserved for
18 continued and compatible use.

19 Since the property owner is against the
20 designation, at least four of the seven
21 criteria must be met pursuant to Section
22 307.107(j) of the Ordinance Code.

23 In reviewing the application, the Planning
24 Department has found the application to meet
25 four of the seven criteria. Based on the

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1 My name is Tyrone Clark-Murray. My
2 address is on file. I am the City Council
3 representative for District 9, the district in
4 which this particular school/landmark
5 designation application is before you.

6 He -- Mr. Arsenault read the -- basically,
7 the factual or the legal reasons why this
8 particular building should be -- should receive
9 landmark status. I'm going to talk about some
10 of the subjective reasons, and those who are
11 with me here supporting this particular bill
12 will also talk about some of the subjective
13 reasons.

14 First of all, I live in that community,
15 and I see the building every day. When --
16 during the summer and on the weekends when the
17 fire alarm just happens to go off, I'm the one
18 who's called 911 to make sure that it's maybe
19 just some kind of malfunction or something.
20 I'm the one who hears that bell in the morning,
21 when all the little children are coming by my
22 home and they're getting assistance from the
23 crossing guard to go into the building, and
24 that's for the past 28 years.

25 I've watched how the numbers of the

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1 children who attend that school go from several
2 hundred to just a few hundred now.
3 I have an affinity for architecture, and I
4 always -- when I entered that building -- and
5 my two children went there as well. I always
6 admire, first of all, that facade. It's
7 beautiful, on the approach. And you're not
8 going to get that type of building anymore.
9 The brick is superb. I live in a brick
10 home, so, yes, I am biased as well. And once
11 you enter the building, there's just a
12 different feel that you're not going to get
13 with a modern building. You have those two
14 wings to the left and to the right. The
15 library is exquisite; it needs to be preserved,
16 it needs to be protected.
17 And one of the things that's just obvious
18 to me as a native of Jacksonville -- I'm going
19 to talk about Norwood Avenue, Norwood
20 Elementary, which is off of Golfair or Norwood
21 Avenue, how I went to that school as a
22 pre-kindergartner and the state of disrepair
23 that it's in now. And I'm not blaming the
24 school board or the current owner, but I don't
25 want that to happen to this school.

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1 address --
2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Frederick Pinkney --
3 THE CHAIRMAN: -- (inaudible) and she will
4 swear you in.
5 THE REPORTER: I'm sorry, sir, please
6 state your name again.
7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Frederick Pinkney,
8 P-i-n-k-n-e-y.
9 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
10 And your address, please.
11 MR. PINKNEY: 924 St. Clair Street.
12 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
13 I'm going to swear you in. If you would
14 raise your right hand for me, please.
15 MR. PINKNEY: (Complies.)
16 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
17 testimony you are about to give will be the
18 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
19 truth?
20 MR. PINKNEY: I do.
21 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
22 MR. PINKNEY: All right. I'm here to
23 speak just to ask a few ques- -- not questions,
24 but I'm the pastor of Joshua Christian Faith
25 and also the -- the founder of Joshua Christian

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1 And, once again, it's within eyeshot of
2 me, of my home, and so I wanted to be
3 proactive, and not necessarily disregarding
4 the -- the owner, who happens to be Duval
5 County Public Schools, but this building
6 belongs to the public, and I want it preserved
7 for the public and for the community. It means
8 so much to decades of students who went there,
9 and some are going to speak today as to what it
10 meant to them.
11 And a couple of weeks ago, we had a kind
12 of final good-bye, a closing for this school.
13 You should have seen the tears on the children
14 who attend their now.
15 (Timer notification.)
16 COUNCIL MEMBER CLARK-MURRAY: And so I'll
17 leave it with that.
18 Thank you.
19 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
20 Is there anyone else who is here to speak
21 to this landmark application today?
22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)
23 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward.
24 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
25 THE CHAIRMAN: Please state your name and

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1 Academy, right next to Annie R. Morgan School.
2 So my question or concern is that, will -- will
3 that school maintain its ability to be able to
4 serve the community? Will this ruling have
5 anything to do with changing that?
6 We have been in that community for
7 30 years. When we came in there in 1995, we
8 purchased that -- our -- the building from
9 (inaudible) Baptist Church and eventually
10 started Joshua Christian Academy. And our
11 purpose for being there is to serving [sic] the
12 community. So with this school beginning to
13 close, we want to make sure -- or just ask the
14 question, would this ruling and this approval,
15 will that change that? Will it -- will the
16 school be used for that building, be used to
17 make sure that it's servicing the community?
18 Because that is our purpose, and we want to
19 make sure that is met.
20 So we are not here to disrupt, but I am --
21 I'm -- I just wanted to know, what would this
22 do as far as being -- that building being able
23 to service this community and the children?
24 Because that is what we do. We came and -- in
25 that -- and when we opened our school, our

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1 concern was the community, and that's all there
2 was.

3 We invested in that community for
4 30 years, no expense from the City, from the
5 school board. We invested. We would have
6 carnivals. We would have various things to
7 involve the community. And now that that
8 particular school is no longer going to be open
9 as far as the school is concerned, will this
10 designation change that whatsoever? Because we
11 want to make sure that that community is
12 serviced and the children and the adults in
13 that community are serviced.

14 So that is my concern, and that is just
15 all I wanted to say about that.

16 Okay. Thank you.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

18 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to the
19 Commission, the Chair has asked me to address
20 the speaker's questions, so -- and to the
21 audience, for your benefit as well.

22 So a landmarking application acts to
23 preserve the exterior. So if any changes to
24 the exterior are requested by the owner, that
25 would have to come before this body for

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1 approval. It does not affect how the building
2 is used, whether it is used or not used, or
3 what it is used for. It also doesn't affect
4 any changes to the interior of the structure.

5 So that's what landmarking acts to do. If
6 anyone has any questions, happy to answer.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, and just to add to
8 that, there's a -- there's a desire and a
9 belief, frankly, that these historic structures
10 are part of the urban fabric of our -- not just
11 our city, but our communities, and they so
12 serve an active role in reminding us of who we
13 are and where we came from. And so when we --
14 when we hear or entertain and vote on the
15 landmarking of a historic structure that may
16 potentially not be in an historic district,
17 this is a way to make sure that the building
18 isn't heavily modified and its -- its historic
19 structure and nature aren't degraded. And so
20 that -- that is a big part of the intent of it.

21 Is there anyone else here today to speak
22 to this landmarking?

23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward.

25 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Please state your name and
2 address into the microphone and she'll swear
3 you in.

4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good afternoon.

5 I'm Doris Le Prell. I'm a native of
6 Jacksonville and a native of the Woodstock Park
7 community, and I think that I'm in a unique
8 position to address you today.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: You need to state your
10 name --

11 MS. LE PRELL: Do you need my address?

12 THE CHAIRMAN: -- and your address and
13 she'll swear you in.

14 MS. LE PRELL: Okay.

15 THE REPORTER: I need your address for the
16 record, please.

17 MS. LE PRELL: 14233 Crystal Cove Drive,
18 Jacksonville, Florida.

19 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

20 If you would raise your right hand for me,
21 please.

22 MS. LE PRELL: (Complies.)

23 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
24 testimony you are about to give will be the
25 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the

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1 truth?

2 MS. LE PRELL: Yes.

3 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

4 MS. LE PRELL: As I said, I feel like I'm
5 in a unique position to address you today
6 because I'm a native of Jacksonville and was
7 born in the Woodstock Park community. I'm 78
8 years old. I'm a baby boomer.

9 And if you want to talk about history, I
10 can take you back -- and I don't want to dwell
11 on going back, but I am in support of
12 designating Annie R. Morgan as an historical
13 preservation site because the school is more
14 than just the bricks of the site. It is who
15 came through that school and what they went on
16 to do and what the school means and has meant
17 to the community.

18 I said I'm in a unique position because I
19 have been principal at three of the schools
20 that were -- Duval County Public Schools
21 designated to demolish or close. I've been
22 principal at Annie R. Morgan. I've been
23 principal at Atlantic Beach Elementary,
24 principal at Fishweir Elementary. I've also
25 been principal at Mt. Herman, and I think they

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1 want to put that one on the chopping block too.
2 So out of all of those schools, the ones
3 that seem to be the easiest to keep open were
4 Atlantic Beach and the one at Avondale,
5 Fishweir. And I felt like I had to be here
6 today because those schools, from my
7 experience, have power, they have the money,
8 they have the influence, they have the posters,
9 and they have the T-shirts.

10 And my school, where I was a student in
11 that community, is different today. There is
12 not the power, the money, or the influence that
13 there should be to go back and say we want to
14 preserve this school as a historical site.

15 I brought my picture. This is me
16 (indicating) as a student and me when I came
17 back to be principal in that school. And I
18 could not have been prouder to do that because
19 we have, in that community -- it was a
20 community, when I was born and went to school
21 there, of many veterans that came back after
22 World War II. They built those houses and
23 helped the school through the GI bill. They
24 raised kids that had patriotic values and had
25 the support of a very tight-knit community.

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1 today in regards to this landmarking?

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward.

4 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

5 THE CHAIRMAN: And again, state your name
6 address and she'll swear you in.

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Ronnie Kelly, 3842
8 Rancho Road, Jacksonville, Florida.

9 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
10 right hand for me, please.

11 MR. KELLY: (Complies.)

12 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
13 testimony you are about to give will be the
14 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
15 truth?

16 MR. KELLY: I do.

17 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

18 MR. KELLY: Hello, Council [sic] members.

19 My name is Ronnie Kelly. I'm a long-life
20 resident of the Westside and spent much of my
21 childhood in the Woodstock neighborhood. I
22 lived at various addresses in the area,
23 including at the corner of Detroit and
24 Columbus, right across the street from Annie R.
25 Morgan Elementary School. That's where I went

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1 I want to see that school be a landmark so
2 that we can bring back those things and make it
3 a tight-knit community. I see a lot of things
4 that could go on in there to unite the
5 community.

6 Norman Thagard is one of our Annie R.
7 Morgan students that went there when I was a
8 [sic] school. He's an astronaut. Why should
9 that school not even have a plaque that says
10 this was a school where Norman Thagard
11 attended?

12 Coach Tom Wasdin, who coached Annie R.
13 Morgan as a PE teacher, he went on to coach at
14 JU with Artis Gilmore. He wrote a book, *Once a*
15 *coach, Always a Coach*. And he brought those
16 kids -- the Pajcic boys, Gary and Steve -- Ron
17 Sellers. You know those names. The Pajcic
18 boys went on to be legislators.

19 (Timer notification.)

20 MS. LE PRELL: Please do not tear this
21 school down. Serve [sic] it as a landmark
22 because there's more than the bricks; it's the
23 history of the school.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

25 Is there someone else who wishes to speak

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1 to school, where I grew up, learned valuable
2 lessons, and made friendships that have lasted
3 a lifetime, with -- many of those friends are
4 here with me today.

5 Over its more than 100 years of operation,
6 Annie R. Morgan has the starting point for
7 countless stories like mine. It has shaped
8 generations of students and its doing so has
9 become a deeply rooted part of who we are, not
10 just individuals, but as a community.

11 Last year, I was heartbroken to learn that
12 the school would be closing. While many of us
13 understanding [sic] the changing dynamics
14 within Duval County Public Schools and the
15 reasons behind the closure, the building and
16 its spirit remain profoundly meaningful.
17 Thousands of people have called the Westside
18 and Woodstock home.

19 I strongly urge you to support Councilman
20 [sic] Clark-Murray's proposal to preserve the
21 historic school. Annie R. Morgan is not just
22 an old building, it's a symbol of community,
23 education and belonging. With your help, it
24 can be given a new purpose, continuing to serve
25 on [sic] a hub for connection, learning,

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1 community growth, just as it has done for
2 generations.
3 This is a vital part of Jacksonville's
4 history, the Westside's history, and for many
5 of us here today it's part of our family's
6 history. It deserves the opportunity to help
7 write the new chapter for the generations yet
8 to come, however it may be reposed.
9 Thank you for your time and your
10 thoughtful consideration.
11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
12 Is there someone else here to speak?
13 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can I just say something
15 just for a minute? We need --
16 THE CHAIRMAN: Ma'am, in order to be heard
17 you have to come to the microphone, you have to
18 state your name and address and be sworn in,
19 and have filled out a speaker's card.
20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I just want to say we
21 need a better speaker system so we can all hear
22 what everybody's saying.
23 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, I'm so sorry.
24 (Discussion held off the record.)
25 THE CHAIRMAN: She can give her something

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1 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
2 MS. THOMAS: As I said, I'm Connie Thomas,
3 and I am a former mayor and former town
4 councilwoman of the Town of Orange Park, and I
5 attended Annie R. Morgan Elementary School in
6 my early years. I was born in Woodstock Park
7 and went to the school up through second grade,
8 and then my family moved out to Clay County.
9 So my roots are here from a long time back. My
10 aunt was a charter nurse at St. Luke's Hospital
11 when it first opened back in the early 1900s,
12 not long -- around the time that Annie R.
13 Morgan was built.
14 Being that I've been on that other side of
15 the dais, there's been many things that I've
16 been able to partner with through the years in
17 regard to historic preservation, and I realize
18 that this is just one step in that right
19 direction, but it's going to be up to you to
20 make sure that we get that step into the right
21 direction so that we can make this truly
22 something that lasts long past all of us for
23 the community.
24 So I wanted to read for a minute. We had
25 a meeting and decided we wanted to create an

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1 to hear a little bit better.
2 (The reporter confers with the audience
3 member.)
4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
5 (Brief pause in the proceedings.)
6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thanks for your patience,
7 everyone.
8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes. Thank you.
9 THE CHAIRMAN: So again, state your name
10 and address and she'll swear you in.
11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay.
12 THE CHAIRMAN: Ma'am, can you hear us now?
13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes, that's great.
14 THE CHAIRMAN: Excellent.
15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good.
16 I'm Connie Thomas, and my address is 2322
17 Carnes Street, Orange Park, Florida 32073.
18 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
19 right hand for me, please.
20 MS. THOMAS: (Complies.)
21 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
22 testimony you are about to give will be the
23 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
24 truth?
25 MS. THOMAS: Yes, I do.

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1 alliance called the Annie R. Morgan Alliance,
2 and so we're just kind of starting with a broad
3 vision, and I just wanted to read that into the
4 record.
5 The Annie R. Morgan Alliance is a
6 dedicated group working to preserve the legacy
7 of historic Annie R. Morgan Elementary School,
8 a cornerstone of education and community life
9 in Jacksonville for over a century. Named
10 after one of the city's pioneers and educators,
11 the building has been a place of learning,
12 growth, and connection for generations of
13 children and families.
14 Today, the Alliance is leading an
15 ambitious effort to restore and reimagine this
16 beloved space. Their vision is to transform
17 the former school into a vibrant community hub,
18 featuring a library, community meeting rooms,
19 and flexible space for educational programs,
20 workshops, and cultural events.
21 By breathing new life into the Annie R.
22 Morgan building, the Alliance is not only
23 preserving local history but also creating new
24 opportunities for learning and unity in the
25 community.

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1 This initiative honors the past while
2 building for the future. A true celebration of
3 heritage, education, community, and resilience,
4 and I really think that's what Annie R. Morgan
5 is all about.

6 When it first came about in 1917, I had
7 read that it was making sure that the farmers'
8 kids had clothing and that kind of thing. It's
9 always been an anchor in the community, and we
10 don't want to see that bypassed in any way.

11 Thank you.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

13 If there's anyone else here, you can come
14 up.

15 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Again, please state your
17 name and address and she'll swear you in.

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Tiffany Clark, 799 Water
19 Street.

20 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
21 right hand for me, please.

22 MS. CLARK: (Complies.)

23 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
24 testimony you are about to give will be the
25 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the

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1 significance. I advocate for its preservation
2 because losing this landmark would erase an
3 important piece of Jacksonville's history, my
4 children's history, my grandchildren's history.

5 I believe that we should research
6 opportunities for adaptive reuse, transforming
7 this century-old structure into a community
8 asset while preserving its historic value.

9 As you remember -- and maybe you don't --
10 in 2019, Duval County Public Schools developed
11 a facilities -- a facilities master plan,
12 addressing over one billion in maintenance
13 needs across the district. Annie R. Morgan was
14 on that list back in 2019 for demolition.

15 I'm going to give you three reasons why I
16 believe we should not follow through with that.

17 The cultural heritage, because it serves
18 as a connection to our past and it preserves
19 our memories, our community memories.

20 Economic benefits. Preservation projects,
21 like the one we desperately need for Annie R.
22 Morgan, will create local jobs, it will boost
23 the neighboring property values, and offer
24 opportunities for a community center, a
25 library, or office spaces that will benefit the

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1 truth?

2 MS. CLARK: Yes, ma'am.

3 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

4 MS. CLARK: Good afternoon.

5 My name is Tiffany Clark, and I actually
6 have never attended Annie R. Morgan. None of
7 my family -- my three children that came
8 through Duval County Public Schools did not
9 attend Annie R. Morgan, my husband and none of
10 his family, but I am here simply as a concerned
11 citizen, as someone who was born and raised on
12 the north side of Jacksonville, 36th and
13 Moncrief, to be specific, but I do have a deep,
14 deep concern for the preservation of this
15 building.

16 I'm not good with the -- off the cuff, so
17 I did put some notes, so I'm going to read
18 those to you.

19 Preserving Annie R. Morgan. Demolition
20 cannot be this historic building's future after
21 its faculty and staff and students and families
22 consolidate into Biltmore Elementary.

23 As a concerned resident with no personal
24 connection to the school, I do feel this
25 building has architectural and historical

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1 entire neighborhood and the city, if you think
2 about it.

3 And then environmental sustainability.
4 Reusing existing buildings reduces construction
5 waste and resource consumption. Many historic
6 structures feature inherently efficient design
7 elements, like natural ventilation and durable
8 materials that reduce environmental impact.

9 The Woodstock Park neighborhood dates back
10 to the early 20th century, developing during
11 Jacksonville's rapid expansion. Of course, as
12 you know, the Great Fire, World War I.

13 As one of the few remaining architectural
14 landmarks --

15 (Timer notification.)

16 MS. CLARK: -- in this --

17 Thank you.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

19 Anyone else here to speak?

20 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Please state your name and
22 address and she'll swear you in.

23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Randy Gallup. My
24 address is 1701 Prudential Drive, Jacksonville,
25 Florida 32207.

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1 I am the director of real estate and
2 intergovernmental liaison for Duval County
3 Public Schools.
4 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
5 right hand for me, please.
6 MR. GALLUP: (Complies.)
7 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
8 testimony you are about to give will be the
9 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
10 truth?
11 MR. GALLUP: I do.
12 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
13 MR. GALLUP: Thank you, Commissioners, for
14 hearing my comments today.
15 The school district is very sensitive to
16 the needs of this community, for Woodstock
17 Park. The school consolidation was approved
18 under the master facilities plan.
19 With all of our consolidations, we seek a
20 Castaldi approval from the State. And a
21 Castaldi approval is the ability to demo a
22 building. It doesn't mean you can, it doesn't
23 mean you will, you just have to have the
24 ability to. And the State of Florida is the
25 last -- is the final say in whether or not a

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1 repairs needed to this school, which is roughly
2 10 times the value.
3 If you were to look at repairs that are
4 critical, that are needed today, alone, you're
5 at \$3 million, \$500,000 of which would result
6 in termite and tenting of the entire 1916
7 building. So that would have to be tented to
8 eradicate the termites which are in the
9 underpinnings of the floor.
10 Lastly, as intergovernmental liaison, I
11 wish to also let you know that we have an
12 Interlocal Agreement with the cities of Duval
13 County and the Duval County Public Schools,
14 which is one of the last bits of county
15 government that remains. Under that Interlocal
16 Agreement, there is the opportunity for the
17 school district to sell buildings and land to
18 the cities in the -- in the county of Duval,
19 under Florida Statute 163.01, subsection 17.
20 And since libraries and community centers
21 are contemplated in the Interlocal Agreement,
22 the City could very well buy this building and,
23 therefore, we are requesting that the landmark
24 status not be granted, and that -- we feel that
25 maybe the timing of this filing should be made

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1 school building can be demolished. We're
2 unable to make that decision on our own.
3 So under this master facilities plan, when
4 there was a consolidation to allow flexibility
5 for the school district and the taxpayers of
6 Duval County, we sought Castaldi reviews on all
7 school buildings. Some came back with full
8 demos, some came back with partial, some came
9 back with none. This happens to be one that
10 came back with a full demolition.
11 They don't look at the historical context
12 or the years it was built. They simply are
13 looking at the facility condition assessment,
14 which I provided y'all a copy of today, that
15 has the school at a -- in 2018, an FCA of
16 67 percent, which is a failing percentage.
17 The current appraisal of the property,
18 with the building, is \$1.3 million. That
19 appraisal was conducted just a few months ago
20 on behalf of the school district and was
21 provided -- a copy was provided to the Planning
22 Department.
23 A facility condition assessment was
24 conducted in 2018 and showed that in 10 years,
25 so in 2028, there would be over \$12 million in

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1 after a sale has occurred.
2 We run the risk of this landmark status
3 reducing the value of the property,
4 subsequently harming the very taxpayers that
5 we're trying to help.
6 Thank you.
7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
8 Is there anyone else here to speak to this
9 landmark?
10 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
11 THE CHAIRMAN: No? All right. We'll
12 close the public hearing and entertain a
13 motion.
14 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Motion to approve
15 LM-25-04, located at 964 St. Clair Street.
16 COMMISSIONER HOFF: I will second that.
17 THE CHAIRMAN: Discussion?
18 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Chair,
19 could I ask a question of the school board
20 representative?
21 THE CHAIRMAN: Absolutely.
22 (Mr. Gallup approaches the podium.)
23 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Good afternoon.
24 MR. GALLUP: Good afternoon, Commissioner.
25 COMMISSIONER HOFF: So if I understand

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1 correctly, the school will be closing and the
2 plan is to put it up for sale?
3 MR. GALLUP: That is correct.
4 COMMISSIONER HOFF: With the future use
5 unknown?
6 MR. GALLUP: That is correct.
7 The school is closing at the end of this
8 school year. The school board has yet to do
9 board action that would declare the building
10 surplus, demo or not, and disposition.
11 If the City were to buy it, it would need
12 to be -- it would have to be declared surplus.
13 And if I were to be asked to prepare an agenda
14 item today, it would not be -- it would be on
15 the August agenda. So that's how far out we're
16 looking. We look two months out on board
17 action.
18 I would hope that the Commission would
19 entertain a deferral that would maybe allow the
20 Honorable City Council Member to work with the
21 superintendent on possibly a sale under the
22 Interlocal Agreement and then possibly filing
23 for the historic status afterwards.
24 I would be one of the first people to
25 assist in providing the original plans of the

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1 real estate firm that was hired in December by
2 the school board, Trinity Commercial Group,
3 that this landmarking status would -- could
4 actually reduce the appraised value of the
5 building, subsequently the right hand of the
6 taxpayer harming the left hand.
7 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: So when you do --
8 you're asking us -- you're asking us to take,
9 obviously -- I personally think this meets five
10 of the requirements based off of some of the
11 information we've received today, five out of
12 nine, where four is kind of a minimum.
13 You're asking us to defer this, and the
14 school supports it, just in case the -- there's
15 more money it can be worth, but I -- I'm a
16 little -- you mentioned -- you mentioned
17 developers.
18 And when this goes to sale within the
19 school -- it's just within the county. It
20 can't be sold to a single-family home developer
21 that's going to tear it down or -- it's just
22 within the school district or the -- I'm sorry,
23 the City of Jacksonville, where it is being --
24 MR. GALLUP: No. As I've offered
25 properties in the past, under our board policy,

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1 school. So it's not that we don't support
2 preserving this building. We just feel that it
3 possibly will harm the disposition if it were
4 to go out on the open market to potential
5 multifamily or single-family builders or
6 somebody who wishes to convert the facility.
7 If the desire is for it to be a community
8 center, then they should try and purchase it
9 under the Interlocal Agreement which we have
10 here in this county.
11 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Okay.
12 MR. GALLUP: Thank you.
13 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
14 can I speak to the school board rep?
15 I'm sorry that you sat down, sir.
16 (Mr. Gallup approaches the podium.)
17 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: I'm not sure that
18 I'm following. You're saying that the school
19 board would support a landmarking after this
20 sort of Inter- -- I can't remember now -- the
21 sale within the school district?
22 What would -- if it supports the
23 landmarking, why does it harm it to landmark it
24 now versus three months from now?
25 MR. GALLUP: It is in the opinion of our

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1 7.83, under disposition, we have to offer it
2 through public bid, so there would be a sealed
3 bid process, and that is part of the problem
4 that we run into, is -- for instance, Norwood
5 was mentioned. Norwood was sold by the school
6 district in 2009. So that school is -- we're
7 coming up on two decades, coming close, that
8 the school district has not owned it, and it
9 has continue to sit, mainly because it sits on
10 an ash site. So that probably has a lot to do
11 with it.
12 But we haven't even -- we haven't even
13 authorized the demolition of Annie R. Morgan.
14 So the school board has not made [sic] any
15 action. Actually, the kids haven't even left
16 the school yet. So I feel this is just kind of
17 putting the cart before the horse and we're
18 just getting a little ahead of ourselves and
19 that quite possibly this could be brought up at
20 a later date, once there's more certainty as to
21 what's going to be happening with the facility.
22 By putting it up now, it almost kind of
23 steers it in a certain direction and,
24 therefore, limits the taxpayers' flexibility on
25 opening it on the market because if it's -- if

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1 it's given a landmark status now, quite
2 possibly there could be potential bidders that
3 are scared away or bidders that are going to
4 offer less.

5 Moreover, since we are -- at the county,
6 we don't pay taxes and, therefore, some of the
7 tax benefits of the landmark status doesn't
8 really benefit the school district at all, and
9 so there's no real selling point there in terms
10 of price reductions for -- for the amount of
11 property taxes that we pay every year.

12 But our ultimate goal is -- is to avoid
13 blight, to support the neighborhood. And,
14 again, I -- I will point back to the ILA. We
15 have done this with two other school sites,
16 which was Brentwood and West Jax. West Jax
17 went to the parks and community department and
18 Brentwood actually went to the libraries
19 department. So this has happened at other
20 locations, and -- and I'm not saying it's out
21 of the realm of possibility here, but it should
22 be something that is explored.

23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: So if this -- if we
24 do defer this to whenever this -- after the
25 sale happens and somebody purchases the land

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1 MR. GALLUP: Since the school --
2 Commissioner, since the school was listed on
3 the master facilities plan for closure as far
4 back as 2018 -- so we're looking at seven years
5 ago, and now the school is only closing now and
6 the historic designation is being filed now.
7 What -- the question I would ask is, why would
8 not have this been filed sooner? That if this
9 is such a landmark, what would have precluded
10 the filing in 2023 or 2024 or 2020?

11 It just seems to be right now when we're
12 mobilizing to do something with the site that
13 this is here.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, I think that's not
15 hard to understand because change is coming,
16 and so people are now concerned. A year ago or
17 two years ago or three years ago, there wasn't
18 that potential kind of change coming, so I can
19 understand why people would want to mobilize to
20 protect something, but I think this is more --
21 unless there's more questions for the
22 representative, I think there should be more
23 discussion.

24 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yeah.

25 MR. GALLUP: Thank you.

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1 that has the intention of tearing this down and
2 we landmark it then, what -- you know, I mean,
3 it can just -- we don't landmark it; we
4 recommend landmarking.

5 MR. GALLUP: Right.

6 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Obviously, it goes
7 to the City Council for the final approval.

8 I -- I'm kind of spinning because I -- I
9 feel like landmarking it after the fact, it can
10 get -- just make it actually have less of a
11 chance of being saved because somebody can pick
12 it up in that process that doesn't have that
13 intention.

14 And I don't mean to speak against the City
15 Council at all, but they could use their, you
16 know, lawyers and everything after we recommend
17 landmarking to go to the City Council and be
18 like, "Listen, I bought this property. You
19 guys sold this to me. I should be able to do
20 whatever I want with it." And that speaks
21 volumes in a business economy, so I'm just
22 worried that we're --

23 I understand that -- the hesitancy with
24 maybe getting less of a value, but I worry that
25 that puts it at more risk.

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

2 More discussion, please?

3 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Through the Chair,
4 I think, you know, our role here is to make a
5 recommendation on the landmark status and
6 historic designation of this. Some of these
7 other taxpayer considerations and cost
8 considerations are more of a discussion that
9 goes to the -- when the City Council makes a
10 decision on some of these things.

11 I think our role is to determine whether
12 or not it meets these criteria, which staff has
13 filed a report here, and I don't see anything
14 to controvert the four criteria that they have
15 recommended. And I tend to agree with
16 Commissioner Epstein; that there may be more,
17 for a fifth as well.

18 So, I mean, in terms of recommending
19 historic status from here, I see this as -- as
20 something that -- I would agree with staff on
21 the report, and to bring all these other facets
22 into it are really not our role.

23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
24 I agree. And typically when we do defer
25 something here, we ask the applicant if they

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1 wish to defer it. So, in that case, I would --
2 after hearing what you've heard here, do you
3 wish to defer the landmarking as the applicant?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CLARK-MURRAY: Do you need
5 me to come to the microphone?

6 THE REPORTER: Yes, please.

7 (Council Member Clark-Murray approaches
8 the podium.)

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CLARK-MURRAY: Once again,
10 my name is Tyrone Clark-Murray. My address is
11 on file. I'm the district council
12 representative.

13 So short answer, no, I do not wish to
14 defer it. The whole purpose of the landmarking
15 is to protect the building.

16 And to the DCPS representative, to answer
17 his primary question, it was not preserved when
18 it was first recommended or on the master's
19 list in regards to maybe -- perhaps demolition.
20 I was not the Council representative.

21 And he also mentioned West Jax. That
22 building, with all its grandeur and beauty, is
23 being preserved at my behest. I worked with
24 the Parks Department to -- I'm going to use a
25 term, in a sense "gifting" from DCPS to the

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1 we need to do here.

2 I will -- I'll kind of give my thoughts
3 with what staff has put together. Obviously,
4 we're here, this is a -- which is -- the
5 designation, A, the value, significance,
6 cultural, this is an anchor to the
7 neighborhood. If it was changed or removed in
8 any way, I think -- it seems like it would
9 leave quite a hole there.

10 Architecturally, I can say that Mellen C.
11 Greeley and Henry Klutho are probably the most
12 predominantly well known and proficient
13 architects in Jacksonville's history. The AIA
14 Jacksonville has an award that it gives out for
15 craftsmanship that is named after Mellen C.
16 Greeley because the craftsmanship of his work
17 was so exquisite. So I believe that it --
18 having these two people as architects on it is
19 integral to the -- letter D here.

20 The quality of the architecture, again,
21 the craftsmanship that's here is wonderful, and
22 it makes it very easy for preservation. And
23 I'll look to even like the John Gorrie, which
24 was an old school that was turned into
25 multifamily, probably in the last 20 years.

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1 City so that it can become a community center
2 because those -- that particular community,
3 which is Robinson's Addition, they have been
4 left behind for at least 15 years and now they
5 have a Council representative who actually
6 cares about the communities in her district,
7 and I'm working to preserve those things which
8 are valuable to them.

9 And so once again, one of the reasons why
10 I'm working on Annie R. Morgan and being
11 proactive is because I don't want it to become
12 a Norwood, because I have a connection to that
13 school as well, and I've seen it become in a
14 state of disrepair. And it may be -- maybe the
15 owner is working on demolition -- what is it,
16 demolition by -- there's a term -- by neglect.
17 I'm not going to let that happen to Annie R.
18 Morgan because, once again, I see it every day.

19 Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
21 so I think what we're saying here is we've been
22 tasked to -- if we consider supporting this for
23 landmarking and recommending it for
24 landmarking, and the applicant does not want to
25 defer after what they've heard, so that's what

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1 Maybe it's been longer now because everything
2 is getting --

3 But I think there's a lot of points here
4 that staff has really documented very well and
5 have shown how important this is. I would even
6 ask staff if there's a way of maybe
7 interviewing some of the guests that we've
8 talked to here to maybe get this Item C, with
9 some of the past graduates being so prolific as
10 well to gets its five points.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Commissioner.

12 Any other discussion?

13 COMMISSIONER MORGAN: I will just add,
14 having spent the bulk of my career working with
15 developers and in the private sector, the only
16 thing that's going to make a historic property
17 less valuable is if you don't want to maintain
18 it. If you want to tear it down, if you want
19 to modify it in a way that does not honor the
20 building, then it's not going to be a great
21 investment for you. That's what that means.
22 It's going to be less appealing to people that
23 don't want to preserve the building.

24 And so just in my experience, I feel that
25 by postponing this any further, we would just

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1 be opening it up for a conversation down the
2 road.

3 And I absolutely agree with Commissioner
4 Epstein that it's almost setting the potential
5 owner up for failure if we're having these
6 conversations and they buy this property and
7 then it's an issue after they've spent the
8 money.

9 Those are my thoughts.

10 COMMISSIONER LOVE: Through the Chair, I
11 agree with what Commissioner Epstein -- the way
12 she approached it as well in terms of her
13 concerns.

14 I also agree with what Commissioner -- I'm
15 drawing a blank -- Gregory mentioned earlier
16 about the concerns being brought up being very
17 legitimate and understandable but more or less
18 being outside of the scope of what we're trying
19 to work on here.

20 It was actually mentioned specifically
21 that -- to landmark it now would sort of lead
22 the entire fate of the building in a certain
23 direction, and I think that's kind of what
24 we're concerned about.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Well said.

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Just make it --

2 MS. LOPERA: But if you wanted to put on
3 the record you found a fifth criteria that it
4 met, you could. It's not necessary as you only
5 have to meet four in this case. Because of
6 owner opposition, four criteria are required,
7 so -- but it's up to you all.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: I think that's a really
9 good idea. Thank you.

10 Commissioner Epstein, if you don't mind,
11 would you restate why you think that additional
12 criteria should be added to the report?

13 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yes.

14 So I believe, based off of testimony that
15 we've received here today from residents, past
16 students, graduates -- I think we heard from a
17 mayor, we heard from a principal -- that there
18 have been -- at least an astronaut, some
19 legislators, some community people with
20 community government involvement. So I see
21 that -- I think that that qualifies us for
22 designation C. And counsel was saying that's
23 (j)(3), which is, it is identified with a
24 person or persons who significantly contributed
25 to the development of the city, state, or

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1 I think all of you -- all of the comments
2 so far is on point in regards to what we're
3 trying to achieve.

4 Any other -- is there -- Legal, is there a
5 concern?

6 MS. LOPERA: There's no concern.

7 If I could just address one thing.

8 So through the Chair to the Commission,
9 you've heard testimony here today. If you find
10 that an additional criteria has been met, as
11 has been expressed by Commissioner Epstein, you
12 could state that on the record, that you find
13 that -- it's criteria C, I believe, in the
14 report, but it's criteria 3 -- (j)(3) in the
15 Ordinance Code. You can find that there's
16 credible evidence supporting a fifth criteria,
17 if you choose to want to put that on the
18 record.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: So one of the commissioners
20 could propose an amendment to the report or a
21 revision to the report or we just --

22 MS. LOPERA: I don't think that's
23 necessary. You, as the finder of facts, are
24 using the criteria to establish and support
25 your decision.

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1 nation.

2 So I think that there definitely has been
3 some evidence given to us today that we could
4 compound upon that notation and make this a
5 five different [sic] out of nine -- I'm sorry,
6 five out of seven of the possible attributes
7 this can go for for landmarking.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: I tend to agree with that
9 assessment, Commissioners.

10 Do you agree with Commissioner Epstein?

11 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Through the Chair,
12 yes.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: I think we should make that
14 revision to the report.

15 Commissioner Hoff.

16 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Chair, I
17 believe Ron Sellers was also mentioned, Florida
18 State Football Hall of Fame and the College
19 Football Hall of Fame, so ...

20 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yes. I'm sorry, I
21 forget about sports.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Especially FSU.

23 Is there any other discussion about this?

24 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

25 THE CHAIRMAN: I've really enjoyed hearing

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1 your comments on this, and I think they're very
2 much in line with the Historic Preservation
3 Commission.

4 I think that -- but I also would say that
5 the concerns, although speculative, we
6 understand as well, from the -- from DCPS.

7 And I think, Commissioner Gregory, you --
8 your comment about, really, what -- what's
9 within our wheelhouse, the things that we need
10 to focus on, we need to stay focused on, so
11 this -- this structure has a history, it's been
12 a part of our community and the fabric of
13 Jacksonville for a very long time. We have
14 lots of people here representing it today, very
15 well, I might add, and I think we should -- I
16 think we should vote unless there's more
17 discussion.

18 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

19 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor of the
20 landmarking of Annie R. Morgan.

21 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

23 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

24 THE CHAIRMAN: So (microphone failure) no
25 opposed.

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1 of the second floor windows.

2 In preparing the application, the Planning
3 Department has found the application to meet
4 four of the seven criteria. The four criteria
5 include the following:

6 A, its value as a significant reminder of
7 the cultural, historical, architectural or
8 archaeological heritage of the city, state or
9 nation. 38 Monroe Street West is listed as a
10 contributing property within the Downtown
11 Jacksonville National Historic District.

12 As well as criterion C, it is identified
13 with a person or persons who significantly
14 contributed to the development of the city,
15 state or nation. 38 Monroe Street West served
16 as the office of prominent Jacksonville
17 architect Abner C. Hopkins from the 1950s until
18 his death in 1972.

19 Criterion E, its value as a building is
20 recognized for the quality of its architecture
21 and it retains sufficient elements showing
22 architectural significance. There are about 35
23 contributing masonry vernacular buildings in
24 the Downtown Jacksonville National Historic
25 District, including 38 Monroe Street West,

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1 Landmark 25-04 has been approved.

2 So let's just go ahead -- we have two more
3 landmarks. Let's just stay in this -- in the
4 (microphone failure), and then we'll move on to
5 the other items.

6 The next one is LM-25-05 at 38 Monroe
7 Street.

8 I'll open the public hearing and hear a
9 staff report.

10 Thank you, everyone, for being here and
11 speaking to this landmark.

12 MR. ARSENAULT: Thank you.

13 Through the Chair to the Commission,
14 LM-25-05 seeks to designate the property at
15 38 Monroe Street West as a local landmark. The
16 property consists of a two-story masonry
17 vernacular commercial structure. Constructed
18 in 1947, the building is characterized by its
19 flat roof, its stucco exterior, its restraint
20 and architectural ornamentation, its division
21 into two horizontal zones, and its glass
22 storefronts.

23 The building has been altered over time
24 through the installation and removal of covered
25 awnings and signage as well as the replacement

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1 which is identified as 40 to 44 West Monroe
2 Street on the NRHP.

3 And, finally, criterion G for its
4 suitability for preservation or restoration.
5 38 Monroe Street West has not been altered in a
6 manner that has destroyed its original
7 architectural significance. The building is
8 currently vacant and uninhabitable; however,
9 the owner has proposed to renovate the
10 structure to allow for commercial space on the
11 first floor and residential space on the second
12 floor.

13 Furthermore, alterations to the original
14 structure have been minimal. The second floor
15 windows have been replaced; however, the
16 building's overall lack of architectural
17 ornamentation remains intact and unaltered.
18 38 West Monroe Street can be reasonably
19 rehabilitated and preserved while allowing for
20 continued use.

21 Since the property owner is in favor of
22 the designation, at least two of the seven
23 criteria must be met pursuant to Section
24 307.107(j) of the Ordinance Code.

25 In reviewing the application, the Planning

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1 Department has found the application to meet
2 four of the criteria. Based on the findings of
3 this report and consideration of the Ordinance
4 Code, the Jacksonville Planning Department
5 recommends that the Jacksonville Historic
6 Preservation Commission approve the designation
7 of 38 Monroe Street West, LM-25-05, as a City
8 of Jacksonville landmark.

9 Thank you.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

11 Is there any questions for staff?

12 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Is the applicant here
14 today?

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward.

17 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

18 THE CHAIRMAN: State your name and address
19 and she'll swear you in.

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I think you know my
21 name.

22 Carmen Godwin, 4834 Malpas Lane.

23 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
24 right hand for me, please.

25 MS. GODWIN: (Complies.)

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1 years. Schick Electric Shaver shop,
2 Hostetter's and Goddard's Corset Shop were just
3 a few of them.

4 The building meets at least four of the
5 criteria, as mentioned, for local landmark
6 designation. The first is a significant
7 reminder of the city's heritage. The building
8 is a -- is significant for its role in the
9 growth of downtown commerce as Jacksonville was
10 developing into a financial business district.

11 The building replaced what was considered
12 at the time an outdated duplex structure with a
13 modern, streamlined structure consistent with
14 the architecture of the period.

15 Next is identified with a person who
16 significantly contributed to the development of
17 the city and state. This is -- the second
18 floor was the offices of Abner C. Hopkins. He
19 was an architect from the 1950s. This was his
20 office until his death in 1972.

21 He did a lot of residential design and
22 commercial design in Jacksonville and the
23 Southeast. His residential designs are
24 prominent in Brookwood Terrace, South Shores,
25 St. Nicholas, North Shore, and Fairfax Manor,

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1 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
2 testimony you are about to give will be the
3 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
4 truth?

5 MS. GODWIN: I do.

6 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

7 MS. GODWIN: Hello. Thank you so much.

8 38 Monroe is located in the heart of
9 downtown. It's directly across the street from
10 the Main Street Library and just a block away
11 from James Weldon Johnson Park. It was
12 constructed in 1947 and it's a contributing
13 structure to the Downtown Historic District.

14 Commercial building design of the mid 20th
15 century expressed a period of American optimism
16 and prosperity. This building represents
17 Mid Century streamlined commercial design with
18 a focus on minimalism and modern building
19 materials. The building's first tenant was
20 Henderson's, who opened in March of 1947. It
21 was a bakery and catering company with an event
22 space called The Mirror Room. I could imagine
23 that was a lot of fun.

24 It also had the three bays, had lots of
25 different businesses there throughout the

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1 and noted commercial designs by Hopkins include
2 the Royal Crown Bottling Company in San Marco,
3 the Southern Dairies on Stockton, Campus Art
4 Theatre in Tallahassee, Lovett grocery stores,
5 the one in Springfield, specifically Fort
6 Lauderdale, and several Morrison Cafeterias.

7 Another criteria met by 38 Monroe is it's
8 recognized for its architecture and it retains
9 significant elements. 38 West Monroe embodies
10 classic mid 20th century subtle detailing and
11 utilized modern materials for the time. These
12 elements include a smooth stucco finish, a
13 horizontal metal ribbed belt course, angled
14 recessed storefronts with off-center entrances,
15 a restrained projecting string course above the
16 second story windows, and Terrazzo lobby
17 entrance flooring.

18 The final criteria -- as mentioned, the
19 structure has been modified very minimally, so
20 it is suitable for preservation, and we do have
21 a preservation plan --

22 (Timer notification.)

23 MS. GODWIN: -- and a plan for reuse of
24 the structure as well.

25 And I'm happy to answer any questions you

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1 might have.
2 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
3 Do we have any questions for the applicant
4 at this time?
5 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
6 THE CHAIRMAN: No?
7 MS. GODWIN: All right. Thank you.
8 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anyone else here
9 today that wishes to speak to this landmark?
10 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
11 THE CHAIRMAN: No? We'll close the public
12 hearing and entertain a motion.
13 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Motion to approve
14 LM-25-05, 38 Monroe Street.
15 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Second.
16 THE CHAIRMAN: Discussion?
17 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Just want to --
18 through the Chair, just want to thank staff for
19 putting this together.
20 Thank you to the applicant for wanting to
21 landmark this building.
22 I think it's pretty evident here -- with
23 an applicant's support, you are only required
24 two of these bullet points, and we have four,
25 so I say this is beyond worth landmarking at

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1 wall, its restraint in architectural detailing,
2 and its corner signage feature on the second
3 floor.
4 The building has been altered slightly
5 from its original form, including changes to
6 the storefront, the installation of a covered
7 awning on the secondary entrance, and the
8 painting of a mural on the secondary facade.
9 In preparing the application, the Planning
10 Department has found the application to meet
11 three of the seven criteria. The three
12 criterion include the following:
13 A, its value as a significant reminder of
14 the cultural, historical, architectural or
15 archaeological heritage of the city, state or
16 nation. 231 Laura Street North is listed as a
17 contributing property within the Downtown
18 Jacksonville National Historic District.
19 Criterion E, its value as a building is
20 recognized for the quality of its architecture
21 and it retains sufficient elements showing its
22 architectural significance. There are about 35
23 contributing masonry vernacular buildings in
24 the Downtown Jacksonville Historic District,
25 including 231 Laura Street North.

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1 this point.
2 THE CHAIRMAN: Anyone else?
3 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
4 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Then let's put
5 it to a vote.
6 All those in favor?
7 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.
8 THE CHAIRMAN: None opposed, so let it be
9 known that LM-25-05 has been approved.
10 We'll move on to the next one, LM-25-06.
11 This one is at 231 Laura Street North, and
12 we'll open the public hearing and hear a staff
13 report.
14 MR. ARSENAULT: Thank you.
15 Through the Chair to the Commission,
16 LM-25-06 seeks to designate the subject
17 property located at 231 Laura Street North as a
18 local landmark.
19 The property consists of a two-story
20 masonry vernacular commercial structure.
21 Constructed in 1957, the building is
22 characterized by its rectangular form, its flat
23 roof with a large billboard, its brick
24 exterior, its recessed doorway, its plate glass
25 storefront windows, terrazzo decorative knee

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1 Finally, criteria G, its suitability for
2 preservation or restoration. 231 Laura Street
3 North has not been altered in a manner that has
4 destroyed its original architectural
5 significance. Any alterations that have been
6 made to the structure are reversible.
7 Furthermore, the structure does not show
8 evidence of any significant deterioration that
9 threatens the stability or integrity of the
10 building.
11 The structure is currently vacant and the
12 owner has proposed to renovate the structure to
13 allow for commercial use on the first floor and
14 basement and residential use on the second
15 floor.
16 Since the property owner is in favor of
17 the designation, at least two of the seven
18 criteria must be met, pursuant to section
19 307.107(j) of the Ordinance Code.
20 In reviewing the application, the Planning
21 Department has found the application to meet
22 three of the seven criteria. Based on the
23 findings of this report in consideration of the
24 Ordinance Code, the Jacksonville Planning
25 Department recommends that the Jacksonville

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1 Historic Preservation Commission approve the
2 designation of 231 Laura Street North,
3 LM-25-06, as a City of Jacksonville landmark.
4 Thank you.
5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Caleb.
6 Is there any questions for staff?
7 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
8 THE CHAIRMAN: We know the applicant is
9 here. Would you please come forward.
10 (Ms. Godwin approaches the podium.)
11 THE CHAIRMAN: You can -- for the record,
12 state your name and address and she'll swear
13 you in.
14 MS. GODWIN: Carmen Godwin, 4834 Malpas
15 Lane.
16 Do I need to be sworn in again --
17 MS. LOPERA: (Nods head.)
18 MS. GODWIN: -- or am I good?
19 Okay.
20 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
21 right hand for me, please.
22 MS. GODWIN: (Complies.)
23 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
24 testimony you are about to give will be the
25 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the

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1 photos. You can tell that there's a very
2 similar architectural style.
3 Commercial building design of the mid 20th
4 century expressed a period of American optimism
5 and prosperity, and this building represents
6 Mid Century streamlined commercial design.
7 It does meet three of the criteria. I'll
8 go through those quickly.
9 First, a significant reminder of our
10 city's heritage, which is mentioned.
11 Next, the National Shirt Shops building is
12 recognized for the quality of its architecture.
13 Its Mid Century architectural style, again, was
14 duplicated in National Shirt Shops'
15 construction throughout the Southeast.
16 The building embodies the mid 20th century
17 subtle detailing and use of modern materials,
18 including the white speckled glazed brick,
19 terrazzo kickplates, entrance flooring embedded
20 with the National Shirt Shops logo, which was a
21 very popular thing to do during that time
22 period, and a projecting corner signage
23 integrated into the architectural design.
24 It is one of the few remaining small-scale
25 Mid Century buildings in downtown Jacksonville

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1 truth?
2 MS. GODWIN: I do. Thank you.
3 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
4 MS. GODWIN: Thank you so much.
5 I need my glasses.
6 All right. The National Shirt Shops
7 building is located at 233 North Laura Street.
8 It's on one of the most prominent corners in
9 downtown. It's right across from the park,
10 Snyder Memorial Church, and the library. It is
11 a contributing structure to the Downtown
12 Historic District as well.
13 National Shirt Shops was a men's retailer
14 that began as a line of shirts in 1911 and
15 expanded to full-scale storefronts with many
16 locations nationwide in the 1940s. In Florida
17 alone, there were at least nine national
18 Shirt Shops locations.
19 They constructed this building in 1957 and
20 operated here until the 1980s. This new store
21 was dedicated solely to the National Shirt
22 Shops and was architecturally modeled in a very
23 similar style to the company's other new modern
24 stores throughout the Southeast.
25 So when you -- I had in the packet some

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1 and the only one that retains a historic
2 billboard on its rooftop, which we also have a
3 plan for.
4 The final criteria met is that the
5 building is suitable for preservation. We are
6 working with an architect and an engineer
7 currently, and we do have plans for some new
8 uses, a new restaurant use on the first floor,
9 and two apartments being added to the second
10 floor.
11 I'm happy to answer any questions.
12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
13 MS. GODWIN: Thank you.
14 THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions?
15 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Chair, I
16 guess, to staff, I think, regarding the
17 billboard on top of the roof, that is part of
18 this application and has been called out. And
19 I know that billboards are regulated very
20 specifically, so -- because in some
21 circumstances they are considered blight.
22 So I wonder, could I have our -- why the
23 billboard that's on top of the roof was
24 included in this application, I guess. Yeah,
25 what's -- what is your opinion on including the

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1 billboard in the application?

2 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair to

3 Commissioner Hoff, I mean, our main reasoning

4 for including the billboard is because it's a

5 prominent fixture of the building itself and

6 it's associated with the historical elements

7 and history of the building.

8 So in terms of just the regulations,

9 what -- and whatnot, I mean, that's something

10 they have to coordinate with the Downtown

11 Investment Authority, or DIA, in terms of what

12 can go there and what's permitted. But again,

13 we just found that it's -- it's a historical

14 fixture of the building.

15 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Thank you.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there --

17 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Sorry. Could I --

18 through the Chair, can I ask the applicant to

19 speak on why the billboard is included?

20 MS. GODWIN: Sure. Absolutely.

21 If you look at the historical photos in

22 the application, the billboard was a part of

23 the historic integrity of the building. It is

24 a character-defining feature of the building.

25 When automobiles came into effect during

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1 And I would argue, if you went -- I don't

2 know if you are going for tax credits on this,

3 but I would argue if you went for tax credits,

4 they would make you maintain it and do

5 something prominent with it.

6 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Through the

7 Chair to the applicant, can I just ask, do you

8 plan on using it for ads?

9 MS. GODWIN: No. The goal is to work with

10 the City to --

11 COMMISSIONER MORGAN: Okay.

12 MS. GODWIN: -- either make it, like, an

13 art piece or make it something that's really

14 attractive that people can do selfies in front

15 of. We don't really know exactly what it's

16 going to be, but we definitely want -- and it's

17 not going to be, like, a huge -- it's not like

18 a moneymaker for us. It's not something we're

19 going to sell for ads and that sort of thing.

20 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: That's enough

21 for me. I think -- and I don't want to speak

22 for Commissioner Hoff, but sometimes when

23 there's, like, the potential of an ad or a

24 billboard, and even in a bus station, like,

25 sometimes it just really takes away from the

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1 this time period, the reason they designed that

2 huge, sort of projecting signage area was for

3 the automobile. Prior to that, they didn't

4 really need that because people were just

5 walking down the street and seeing the signage.

6 So that billboard addition was around the same

7 time that the building was constructed. It was

8 placed there. So it's actually historically

9 contributing to the building itself.

10 The use of it will be something that we'll

11 work through. We're actually talking to the

12 mayor's office right now and other people about

13 the use of it. And we understand what the

14 regulations are, so I think that will be a

15 whole other conversation unrelated to historic,

16 if that makes sense.

17 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,

18 I would just argue -- you know, kind of when I

19 was new in town many, many years ago, during

20 Art Walk downtown, you could say, "Hey, meet me

21 at that billboard," and everybody knew exactly

22 what you were talking about, so --

23 I would say it's -- it's attached to the

24 building, and I would say it's a historic

25 feature of the building.

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1 historic nature. If it's not an ad at all, I

2 don't have any concerns.

3 MS. GODWIN: I mean -- I think, legally,

4 we can use it for an ad for the business that

5 rents it out, but our goal right now is to make

6 it more of like a city feature, something

7 really wonderful for downtown.

8 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Thank you so

9 much.

10 I don't want you to reveal the secrets --

11 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't either -- pop-up

12 movie theatre.

13 So are there any -- wait.

14 Legal.

15 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to the

16 Commission, so when I draft the ordinance to

17 establish a landmark that goes before City

18 Council for their consideration, I do -- I am

19 required to include the activities that require

20 a COA for individual landmark structures.

21 I have not looked into the billboard

22 issue. Billboards are highly regulated. If it

23 is legally permissible to do so, do you want a

24 condition in there -- anything about the

25 billboard?

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1 I hesitate to -- I don't know. I have not
2 fully analyzed the billboard issue. But if you
3 have a specific direction you want to give me
4 on that, as long as it's legally permissible, I
5 can include that.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: That's something good for
7 us to think about.

8 Is there anyone else here today to speak
9 to this landmark?

10 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

11 THE CHAIRMAN: No? Okay. Let's close the
12 public hearing and I'll entertain a motion.

13 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Motion to approve
14 LM-25-06 at 231 Laura Street North.

15 COMMISSIONER HOFF: I will second that.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Discussion.

17 So the point that Counsel brings up,
18 comments about that? Because the current --
19 the report and the recommendation is including
20 the billboard as part of the landmarking of the
21 structure. So does anyone else have any
22 comments on that or want to discuss that?

23 COMMISSIONER HOFF: So through the Chair,
24 just want to -- just want to say that there
25 have been thousands of billboards removed over

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1 mind, what's at issue here is the landmarking
2 of the structure, not proposing or stipulating
3 certain uses or methods of things being used;
4 is that correct, or is this within our purview
5 to (microphone failure) the things that they're
6 discussing right now?

7 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair and to the
8 Chair, you can landmark just the structure if
9 you want and I can word it in a way that says
10 you don't want to include the billboard in it.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Right, but that -- that's
12 what I'm saying. It's -- we're landmarking the
13 structure, and right now what's being
14 recommended is including the billboard in the
15 landmarking. It's not saying only use it for
16 art or only use the billboard for display or --
17 it's just, is this structure being landmarked
18 or not? And right now the billboard is being
19 included in it, so --

20 Yes, we could say, remove the billboard
21 from the landmarking, but I don't think that's
22 what I'm hearing from everyone, so -- but the
23 use of the thing -- even if the applicant tells
24 us specifically what the use is, that could
25 change, just like other historic structures

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1 the past few decades because they are generally
2 seen as an aesthetic negative. So if the
3 billboard is going to be used, I would just
4 highly encourage it not to be used for
5 traditional advertising.

6 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: To the Chair,
7 I'll just echo that.

8 And I don't know about, like -- I'm -- I
9 just think that -- sort of a one and done.
10 There's no process here like there is an actual
11 billboard, to go through with it. It seems to
12 me that it would be some type of permanent
13 thing that's approved with the building. But
14 if it's going to be something that's being
15 changed up -- and then that goes back to the
16 terms of your lease. If you're talking about
17 customizing it for a tenant, you're sort of
18 offering something to a tenant that we don't --

19 So I understand. I think that if the
20 intention is public art or something that's
21 more permanent, that -- I think that would be
22 great, but I understand the concern that
23 Commissioner Hoff has.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: I guess this is a question
25 for staff and perhaps Legal, but I'm -- in my

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1 that we've landmarked in -- the previous one,
2 Annie R. Morgan, the (microphone failure) for
3 it, you know, so I'm just not sure that's also
4 within our purview.

5 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Through the
6 Chair to Counsel, quick question. I think you
7 said this. If there were a COA, which would be
8 required for exterior modifications, it would
9 come to us anyway?

10 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to
11 Commissioner Morgan --

12 (Simultaneous speaking.)

13 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: So I think
14 (inaudible), yeah.

15 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to
16 Commissioner Morgan, I just -- I hesitate to
17 say that we can require a COA for every time
18 they change -- want to change the sign on the
19 billboard because, again, there's a downtown
20 sign code, there's billboard provisions. I'm
21 not -- I hesitate to say that that would be
22 allowable.

23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair
24 to Counsel, though, if it's a landmarked
25 portion of the building, then it would be

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1 required, wouldn't it?

2 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to

3 Commissioner Epstein, what I'm saying is I

4 don't know if that's legally permissible.

5 MS. GODWIN: May I?

6 THE CHAIRMAN: So it's something for us to

7 consider, I suppose, but I -- I would hark back

8 to Commissioner Epstein's comments earlier,

9 that -- you know, and I agree with you, that

10 this -- the billboard on this building is a

11 part of the structure and the historic nature

12 of the building. I mean, I've been in this

13 city since 1965, so, I mean, I can't -- this is

14 just part of Jacksonville, in my opinion, so I

15 agree with your comments that (microphone

16 failure).

17 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: And through the

18 Chair, I would -- I would even echo that that

19 was probably a time where billboards were kind

20 of more important and fun and not becoming sort

21 of littered across our roads and everything.

22 And, you know, I understand where

23 Commissioner Hoff is coming from, that, you

24 know, many of them have been taken down. To

25 me, this isn't the same as a billboard, you

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1 know, kind of across a typical, you know,

2 thoroughfare, driveway, you know. I would hope

3 that we don't, you know, find some legal

4 billboard advertising on here for, you know,

5 something -- a slip and fall or something in

6 the future, but I think it's -- it's a really

7 important piece of the building, so ...

8 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to the

9 Commission, so I think you have a couple of

10 options here:

11 If you want to table it, and I can look

12 into it and take it up later in the meeting,

13 that's an option.

14 If you want to vote to include it as part

15 of the landmark, and if legally permissible,

16 I'll include your recommendation that a COA be

17 required for changing the billboard, we can --

18 I can do that.

19 And then if I later determine that --

20 MS. GODWIN: May I --

21 MS. LOPERA: -- we can't include a COA

22 requirement, then I'll just exclude that.

23 That's another option.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: So to the applicant, you've

25 heard the discussion. Could you come forward

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1 and maybe just chime in a little bit?

2 MS. GODWIN: I would rather just remove

3 the billboard from the historic designation. I

4 mean, there is a legal process that we have to

5 go through for getting the billboard permitted.

6 It doesn't necessarily need to be historically

7 designated. I was just including it in my

8 application because it's a really cool feature

9 that was constructed at the time that the

10 building was designed, but I would either

11 rather -- I would prefer not having any

12 stipulations. I would prefer just pulling it

13 from the application if that's the direction

14 you're going to go.

15 Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Through the Chair,

17 I -- well, first off, I want to say thank you

18 for bringing us this property as a landmark

19 status. I think it's a good example of

20 Mid-Century Modern, small scale versus

21 surrounded by high-rise buildings or mid-rise

22 buildings. It creates a nice elevation

23 difference.

24 And I think the billboard is something

25 that we would want to see preserved as part of

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1 the landmarking of this property. It's just a

2 matter of the legal mumbo jumbo of getting it

3 through.

4 COMMISSIONER MORGAN: Through the --

5 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: I think that -- I

6 think this property having a billboard -- is

7 there a way we can put a stipulation that it be

8 used for art or display and it's not

9 commercially resellable [sic] as an

10 advertisement? Is that something that we could

11 use as a recommendation in the COA? Is that

12 possibly permissible?

13 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to

14 Commissioner Gregory, I think you could include

15 that recommendation. I don't know if we can

16 require it.

17 And one option would be -- through the

18 Chair to the Commission, would be to include it

19 as part of the landmarking so that, should they

20 want to tear it down, it would come before you

21 as a partial demolition but not include, like,

22 a COA requirement.

23 And something that was brought to my

24 attention is -- I think the regular sign code

25 would prevent them from advertising other

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1 businesses because there's a prohibition in
2 off-site signs. So I think we'd be covered in
3 that way. So that would be an option if you
4 want to ensure that the billboard stays a part
5 of the structure.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: So, you know, I would ask
7 the commissioners just for -- like, right
8 now -- and for me -- I can't speak for
9 Commissioner Epstein, but I think Commissioner
10 Epstein and I feel like this is part of the
11 historic structure of the building.

12 Agree or disagree?

13 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Agree.

14 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Agree.

15 COMMISSIONER LOVE: I would agree.

16 I think -- through the Chair, I think
17 that -- it's my personal opinion that the
18 billboard should be a part of the landmark
19 status. I mean, there's nothing really like it
20 in downtown Jacksonville. It was built -- or
21 installed when the building was built. I think
22 applying sort of modern day concerns like that,
23 it may not be appropriate.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: I agree.

25 You know, I think this is one of those --

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1 property owner that seeks landmarking their
2 historic structures.

3 MS. GODWIN: Thank you.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: We're going to go back to
5 previously deferred items to be heard, item D,
6 and so we have -- we have one COA there. It's
7 COA-25-31951 at 1649 Osceola Street.

8 Oh, I'm sorry.

9 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair, that was
10 the one that was deferred -- or requested
11 deferral.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, I'm so sorry. So it
13 was deferred. It was a deferred item to be
14 heard, and it's deferred, as we've heard.

15 It's requested to be deferred, so
16 (microphone failure) --

17 MR. WELLS: One more cycle.

18 MS. LOPERA: So do you want to say that
19 it's deferred until June --

20 MR. WELLS: 25th.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: So we will defer
22 COA-25-31951 until June 25, 2025.

23 So I just want to state for the record
24 that at this meeting there are no Certificates
25 of Appropriateness to be heard today. In my

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1 this is this one of those areas where we've all
2 gotten old enough that modern architecture and
3 Mid-Century Modern structures are historic,
4 which is kind of wonderful, but I think it's a
5 new ground for a lot of us and so it's good
6 that we're having this conversation.

7 All right. So I think I'm hearing we
8 leave the -- we want to leave the -- although
9 the applicant has given us some options here, I
10 think we -- it's in -- in our minds, to leave
11 the billboard as part of the landmarking.

12 Is there any other discussion about the
13 landmarking of the building?

14 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Should we vote?

16 So let's vote.

17 All those in favor?

18 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?

20 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

21 THE CHAIRMAN: So let it be known that
22 LM-25-06 at 231 Laura Street North has been
23 approved.

24 MS. GODWIN: Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: And thank you for being a

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1 time here on this commission, this has never
2 happened before, so I just wanted to state that
3 for the record.

4 There is no work initiated or completed
5 without a COA to be reviewed today. Bravo.
6 Bravo.

7 So we'll go to New Business. We have some
8 demolition delays. The first one is DD-25-04,
9 it's 2928/2930 Corinthian Avenue.

10 We'll open the public hearing and hear a
11 staff report.

12 MR. ARSENAULT: Thank you.

13 Through the Chair to the Commission,
14 DD-25-04 is requesting the demolition of two
15 structures located on the subject parcel.
16 These structures are listed as contributing in
17 the Old Ortega National Register Historic
18 District. This is the property at 2928 and
19 2930 Corinthian Avenue.

20 The JHPC must review and take action on
21 such requests for demolition within 60 calendar
22 days after a completed demolition application
23 is received by the Historic Preservation
24 section of the Jacksonville Planning
25 Department.

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1 The Commission shall take one of the
2 following actions: Approve the demolition
3 permit application, deny the demolition permit
4 application, or defer the demolition permit
5 application.

6 A brief property description here: 2928
7 Corinthian Avenue was constructed around 1936.
8 2928 Corinthian Avenue is a one-story Craftsman
9 bungalow structure. The building can be
10 characterized by its low-pitch roof,
11 front-facing gables, porch with brick columns,
12 6-over-6 sash windows and brick foundation.

13 The most notable alteration to the
14 building appears to have been the enclosure of
15 the left side of the front porch which
16 completely enclosed the front elevation and
17 installed an 8-over-8 sash window on that side.

18 Constructed around 1940, 2930 Corinthian
19 Avenue is a one-story frame vernacular
20 building. The structure can be characterized
21 by its side gable main roof, its front porch
22 with a gable end roof and tapered square posts
23 on brick piers, its drop siding, its exterior
24 brick chimney on the south elevation, and its
25 6-over-6 double-hung sash windows.

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1 While these earlier evaluations are only
2 cursory assessments of significance, staff does
3 not have any additional documentation that
4 would meet the necessary additional criteria
5 needed to overcome the owner's objection to the
6 local landmark designation.

7 Staff also conducted a site visit on April
8 2nd, 2025, and researched the properties for
9 evaluative and documentary purposes.

10 The owner has stated in a letter enclosed
11 within the application that upon approval for
12 demolition they are willing to post notice for
13 90 days that the buildings may be relocated by
14 an interested party at no cost. They would be
15 willing to provide up to 30 days to complete
16 the removal of the structures if an offer is
17 accepted. If during this time no interested
18 party comes forward, the owner will proceed
19 with demolition.

20 Based on our evaluation, it is the opinion
21 of the Planning Department that 2928 and 2930
22 Corinthian Avenue meet at least three criteria
23 for landmark designation:

24 Criterion A, because both properties are
25 located within the Old Ortega National Register

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1 There do not appear to have been any
2 visible or documented significant alterations
3 to the building. There is also a
4 noncontributing shed to the rear and left of
5 the structure which is proposed to be
6 demolished as well.

7 Pursuant to Section 320.407, Ordinance
8 Code, if the Commission votes to deny the
9 demolition permit application, it shall issue
10 an advisory recommendation to City Council on
11 the structure's landmark status utilizing the
12 criteria and procedures in Section 307.104(j),
13 Ordinance Code.

14 If the property owner is not in support of
15 the landmark designation, the Commission must
16 find that the property meets at least four of
17 the seven local landmark criteria. Therefore,
18 staff evaluated the demolition permit
19 application in accordance with the local
20 landmark criteria.

21 In the 1998 Florida Master Site File
22 surveys for the two properties, the reviewer's
23 initial determination of the significance of
24 the two structures were that neither building
25 qualified for individual local designation.

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1 Historic District and are listed as
2 contributing properties.

3 Criterion E for their value as a --
4 buildings are recognized for the quality of
5 their architecture. Over 100 primary buildings
6 in the historic district can be classified as
7 wood frame vernacular, including 2930
8 Corinthian Avenue. And 68 residences in the
9 Old Ortega Historic District display bungalow
10 features, including 2928 Corinthian Avenue.

11 And, finally, criterion G for their
12 suitability for preservation or restoration.
13 2828 and 2930 Corinthian Avenue have not been
14 altered in manners that have permanently
15 destroyed their original architectural
16 significance.

17 Both structures retain a high degree of
18 architectural integrity, and upon a cursory
19 inspection during staff's site visit do not
20 show evidence of any significant exterior
21 deterioration, making them suitable candidates
22 for preservation.

23 Based on the findings of this report in
24 consideration of the landmark criteria outlined
25 in Section 307.104 (j), Ordinance Code, the

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1 Jacksonville Planning Department recommends
2 that the Jacksonville Historic Preservation
3 Commission approve the demolition permit for
4 2928 and 2930 Corinthian Avenue, DD-25-04, and
5 not pursue local landmark designation.
6 Staff should note that within the package
7 are also three letters of opposition to the
8 demolition as well as the applicant's response
9 to one of the letters for your review.
10 Thank you.
11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Caleb.
12 Do we have any questions for staff?
13 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
14 THE CHAIRMAN: Is the applicant here?
15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)
16 THE CHAIRMAN: Come forward and state your
17 name and address and she'll swear you in.
18 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: I'm sorry, really
19 quickly, the book we have says 2930 Corinthian
20 Avenue and the agenda says 2934.
21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's -- it's the
22 second one.
23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Oh, I'm sorry.
24 MS. LOPERA: Number 1 is --
25 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: It's 2928 and --

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1 We enjoyed going up to this -- the business
2 community to get our hair cut and to get our --
3 pick up our things from the drugstore and so
4 forth. It was a vibrant community for many,
5 many, many years when we were growing up.
6 My mother had a kindergarten there, a
7 preschool, in these three buildings, and -- the
8 two, plus the one she was referring to. We
9 knew that when she retired that we had a -- she
10 had a greater vision that she wanted to do
11 something to continue to maintain the integrity
12 and the vibrancy of the community business
13 center, but over the years that has kind of
14 atrophied, it's gone down, and the -- we don't
15 have much activity there. There's a lot that's
16 going on, and --
17 And my brother and I have reached the
18 point where we are at an age where we're not
19 really able to continue to maintain those at
20 the level that we wanted to, nor have we been
21 able to -- with the rising costs of insurance,
22 the rising costs of real estate taxes, been
23 able to push the rent, which we will have to
24 do, push it up to where we can make a valid
25 return on our investment.

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1 okay. I'm sorry.
2 THE CHAIRMAN: (Off microphone.)
3 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: I apologize. I was
4 looking at the applicant's (microphone
5 failure). Sorry.
6 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Brent Ross,
8 4153 Torino Place.
9 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
10 right hand for me, please.
11 MR. ROSS: (Complies.)
12 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
13 testimony you are about to give will be the
14 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
15 truth?
16 MR. ROSS: I do.
17 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
18 MR. ROSS: Well, thank you.
19 I'm here to ask that you would approve
20 the -- your staff's recommendation to allow for
21 the demolition of these two properties.
22 My brother and I grew up in the Ortega
23 area. We were there all our lives until we
24 graduated and went off. We went to elementary
25 school there. We played in the parks there.

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1 Unfortunately, this property -- the
2 buildings only sit on about 20 percent of the
3 land that we have in the middle of Ortega, and
4 so the value is not just in those buildings,
5 it's in that land. And the ability to renovate
6 or to redevelop that area is something my
7 brother and I have had a vision for for many
8 years, but we were not really capable of doing
9 that from a capital point of view.
10 We have a purchaser who is capable of
11 doing that and has a vision for reinvigorating
12 the business community in that area to provide
13 a service for the entire community in the
14 Ortega area, so I just ask that you would
15 approve the staff's recommendation to allow us
16 to tear down those buildings.
17 Thank you.
18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
19 Any questions for the applicant at this
20 time?
21 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
22 MR. ROSS: Okay. Thank you.
23 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anyone else here
24 today to speak to this?
25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward and
2 state your name and address and she'll swear
3 you in.
4 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi. Good afternoon.
6 My name is Carolyn Cawthon. My address is
7 4741 Godwin Avenue in Jacksonville and my
8 business address is 2928 Corinthian Avenue.
9 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
10 right hand for me, please.
11 MS. CAWTHON: (Complies.)
12 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
13 testimony you are about to give will be the
14 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
15 truth?
16 MS. CAWTHON: I do.
17 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
18 MS. CAWTHON: I've been employed at Trips
19 in the Village for 8-and-a-half years now. I
20 work for Russell Glasheen, who has occupied
21 that building for over 30 years, as --
22 operating as a travel agency.
23 We service the community immediately
24 surrounding that village. Our clients are
25 throughout this community, and we host a number

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1 The village is still busy. There is still
2 traffic throughout our village every single
3 day. Our clients come in and they say every
4 day, especially since this application has come
5 through, "What are we going to do? You guys,
6 you're going to be gone. We miss coming here.
7 We love this office." And, of course, they
8 love us, and we love that, and -- and that's
9 who we service. We want to be able to continue
10 to do that.
11 We are a small business, but we are
12 thriving, and we have been thriving. And to
13 put us out of business by destroying this -- or
14 demolishing this property will really impact
15 our business because we rely on that visibility
16 and that establishment there in that village.
17 The building itself needs a little work,
18 but it is standing and it has held us through
19 numerous hurricanes. In fact, when Hurricane
20 Irma hit our community and our owner was
21 displaced from our [sic] home, she came and
22 stayed in the office because it was high and
23 dry. It can weather the storms.
24 The building is fine; there's nothing
25 wrong with it, and we just ask that you don't

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1 of vendors and partners that come into our
2 office and visit, and they come from all over
3 the world and come to visit us. And the first
4 thing they say when they come into our office
5 every single time is, "What a beautiful place.
6 This office is amazing. This community is
7 gorgeous. We just love this. I wish I could
8 work in a place like this."
9 It is very impressive. This building is
10 small and it doesn't look impressive, but it
11 is. It carries character that is integral to
12 the community and to that village.
13 It is true that that village has lost a
14 lot of energy. It has lost a lot of occupancy,
15 but that is not a result of these buildings.
16 That is a result of restaurants failing because
17 of COVID. That is a response to a bank
18 failing -- not failing, but being acquired by
19 another bank and then closing that branch. The
20 property owner across the street has died.
21 That property has been in probate for a number
22 of years.
23 So while the community, or the village,
24 has lost some energy, it's all been things that
25 are unrelated to the value of the property.

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1 demolish it. We believe that the character is
2 integral to the character of that community and
3 that village.
4 (Timer notification.)
5 MS. CAWTHON: And that's all.
6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
7 MS. CAWTHON: Thank you.
8 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anyone else here
9 to speak to this landmark?
10 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
11 THE REPORTER: Your name and address,
12 please, ma'am.
13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Catherine
14 Jones.
15 What else did you need?
16 THE REPORTER: Your address, please.
17 MS. JONES: 2103 Respite Lane, Hilliard,
18 Florida.
19 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
20 right hand for me, please.
21 MS. JONES: (Complies.)
22 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
23 testimony you are about to give will be the
24 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
25 truth?

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1 MS. JONES: Yes, I do.
2 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
3 MS. JONES: I'd just like to say,
4 21- -- 2928 Corinthian Avenue was where my
5 grandmother and grandfather lived after they
6 lost their house in the depression on Hollywood
7 Avenue. It's the only house I ever knew that
8 they lived in. And I love that house more than
9 any place in the world. Anyplace in this whole
10 world, that's what I love, is that house.
11 It's not the same as it was when they
12 lived there because they took the screen porch
13 and they made it into a room. They took down
14 the fence that was in front of it. They took
15 the shrubbery that they had planted and they
16 made different shrubbery. They built a bank
17 right up to the property line. There use to be
18 a little grocery store there, for any of you
19 that -- none of y'all are old enough to
20 remember that.
21 The house next door, I don't know --
22 remember the address, maybe it's 2930. The
23 people that owned the grocery store, I don't
24 know, I was just a baby when it happened. But
25 I was born before that house was built. And

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1 of Ortega, and we need to remember that. We
2 need to remember --
3 (Timer notification.)
4 MS. JONES: -- that every day in this
5 state people are cutting our big, beautiful oak
6 trees. Every single day they're destroying
7 more and more of Florida. And we don't want
8 that to happen there, do we? I don't.
9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, ma'am.
10 MS. JONES: Am I through?
11 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, ma'am.
12 MS. JONES: I just would like for y'all to
13 see this picture. I wanted -- I hoped I could
14 find the picture I had of my granddaddy's house
15 as it was. This is across the street. This is
16 what the street used to look like, where the
17 drugstore was. It used to have windows all the
18 way across it. This was my grandmother and
19 granddaddy, and that was me as a baby.
20 I ask y'all, don't let big money talk you
21 into destroying that.
22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, ma'am. Thank
23 you.
24 Is there anyone else here to speak to
25 this --

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1 they lived in that house, the people that owned
2 that grocery store, Chuck Burlingame and his
3 wife Evelyn. They're both dead now I'm quite
4 sure. And one thing I remember that he said
5 was that my grandmother was the best house
6 cleaner he had ever seen in his life.
7 Ortega has changed. That community --
8 that little community has changed. I only wish
9 that every one of y'all could have known it the
10 way I knew it when I was a little girl because
11 it was -- to me, it was just perfect.
12 Now, I won't say it will never be
13 destroyed, but for somebody -- I don't know
14 what this man's name was. I didn't catch his
15 name. Maybe he did grow up in Ortega, but he
16 didn't love that house like I loved it.
17 There are trees all over that property.
18 They're going to cut all those trees down and
19 put apartments there? They're going to destroy
20 the whole character of that whole block.
21 Ortega wasn't meant to have a lot of
22 apartments built there. It was meant to be
23 Ortega. And while there are a lot of big,
24 beautiful houses all along the river, there are
25 also a lot of everyday houses all in the center

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)
2 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward.
3 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
4 THE CHAIRMAN: State your name and address
5 and she'll swear you in.
6 THE REPORTER: Your name and address,
7 please.
8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Luke
9 Leonaitis, and I live at 4531 Ortega Boulevard.
10 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
11 right hand for me, please.
12 MR. LEONAITIS: (Complies.)
13 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
14 testimony you are about to give will be the
15 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
16 truth?
17 MR. LEONAITIS: I sure do.
18 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
19 MR. LEONAITIS: Thank you all for your
20 service to the community; I appreciate that.
21 I'm not a stranger here. I actually live
22 almost across the street from the Village, and
23 I own the bank next to these three houses and I
24 own the office building where the old Chevron
25 station was.

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1 And the issue here is -- historic
2 designation. Any questions people have, you
3 know, as far as how it's used will be dealt
4 with by the zoning commission [sic]. That's
5 their job. Your job, of course, is to deal
6 with the historical aspect of the place.
7 It's a beautiful place. It's the --
8 probably the final house -- I'm 70 years old --
9 probably the final house I'll be living at.
10 I'm not young like you guys anymore, but at
11 some point you have to get your life together
12 and you have to figure out what your
13 termination is going to be, and so it's
14 important to me that this area here is brought
15 back to what it was a long time ago.
16 Historic buildings aren't all conceived in
17 the 1970s or the 1920s. They're built every
18 day. Fifty years from now, we'll come back and
19 we'll understand, did we do the right thing
20 here, did we create something that is still
21 enjoyed today?
22 And what's happened is this place has
23 fallen completely down. The bank, which is a
24 beautiful bank, was built. It's been through
25 two owners. The first one went under. The

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1 second bought it, tried to make a go of it.
2 They're a big bank. Couldn't.
3 There's no traffic in there. There's no
4 community get-together in that neighborhood
5 anymore. The proposal would be to build a
6 beautiful English village because we have
7 nothing in our neighborhood. And if you think
8 of the Ortega area there, it's an island.
9 There's nothing you can go to unless you go to
10 the very end or you cross the bridge and you go
11 up to Avondale.
12 So I hope you'll consider that what we're
13 dealing with here is the historical aspect of
14 that, which simply doesn't exist.
15 Thank you.
16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
17 Is there anyone else here to speak to
18 this?
19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Indicating.)
20 THE CHAIRMAN: Please come forward.
21 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
22 THE CHAIRMAN: State your name and address
23 and she'll swear you in.
24 THE REPORTER: Your name and address,
25 please.

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1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Heather Jones, 501
2 Putnam County Boulevard.
3 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
4 right hand for me, please.
5 MS. H. JONES: (Complies.)
6 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
7 testimony you are about to give will be the
8 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
9 truth?
10 MS. H. JONES: Yes, I do.
11 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
12 MS. H. JONES: Okay. So here's the deal:
13 I agree with both of them. You keep the
14 buildings and you turn it into a lovely
15 village. I'm all for it. That's a fantastic
16 idea.
17 The idea of destroying the buildings and
18 the trees -- the trees are massive. They're
19 not just like little trees and -- we went --
20 they've been marked to be taken down as well,
21 not just the buildings. That will ruin it
22 because the trees are Ortega. Ortega is, like,
23 fantastic.
24 They weren't -- they were my grandparents,
25 great-grandparents, I never met them. I have

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1 no, like, emotional bond in that area. Of
2 course, I have an emotional bond for Mother.
3 But I can also see what this man was
4 saying about making it better. I agree with
5 that. But I also recognize that it didn't fail
6 because of the fact that it's not nice there.
7 It failed because the city grew out.
8 Everybody's going other places because Ortega
9 is just like this little area that nobody
10 really passes through anyway.
11 And it's a neighborhood; it's not supposed
12 to be ooh-la-la Starbucks, you know? We
13 already got ooh-la-la all up and down the
14 freeways. So now we're going to ruin Ortega
15 too? Maybe we don't have to ruin it. Maybe we
16 can still keep it quaint, keep the buildings,
17 and utilize them to make it much nicer and
18 bring more in there because there was also a
19 restaurant in there that was lovely; I miss it,
20 it's gone. I don't know what happened to it.
21 The flower shop is failing as well. The
22 bank that was built there does not fit the
23 area. It actually kind of ruined the area,
24 quite frankly. So in a way it's like, could we
25 make all of the buildings sort of work better

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1 as a village?

2 Like, this is why I want to move to
3 Europe, because they're destroying America.
4 Like, everywhere you look, it's a freaking
5 strip mall or it's a -- you know -- or it's,
6 like, they take every tree and they slaughter
7 it and then they put all these ugly boxes in
8 there and people move into them. Sorry if
9 anybody lives in those, but I don't get it.
10 There's no beauty to it. There's no elegance
11 to it.

12 And if this man wants to make it elegant
13 and beautiful, fantastic, but don't destroy it
14 in the process of making it elegant and
15 beautiful.

16 That's all I got, so thank you.

17 I hope you can save it or at least have it
18 where there's a -- more discussion about it
19 instead of just, oh, well, we're going to slam
20 this down and we're going to put up apartments,
21 and now we're going to have a parking lot for
22 the apartments that are going to be there.

23 I don't know. Anyway, that's all I got.

24 Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

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1 to the COA process, so that's where [sic]
2 you'll see in Riverside and Springfield,
3 St. Johns Quarter, whereas with the National
4 Historic Districts, you'll -- they're only
5 entitled to go through the demo delay process,
6 so this is Section 320.407. So this is what
7 you're viewing before you.

8 And so the -- there's no identifiable
9 criteria that you're to evaluate the
10 application on for a demo delay; however, if
11 you decide to, let's say, deny the demolition
12 permit, it automatically triggers the review
13 for landmarking. And so we found it prudent,
14 from a staff's standpoint, to go ahead and
15 evaluate it using the landmarking criteria, and
16 so that's why we use those seven identifiable
17 criteria.

18 So, in essence, we -- we're saying that
19 there's only -- this particular structure only
20 meets three of the seven, so it would fall
21 short of that -- the criteria threshold in
22 order to overcome owner opposition. And so,
23 again, we're recommending approval of the
24 landmark -- or not landmark, demolition, I'm
25 sorry.

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1 Is there anyone else here to speak to
2 this?

3 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Anyone else here to speak
5 to this?

6 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

7 THE CHAIRMAN: No? All right. We'll
8 close the public hearing and entertain a
9 motion.

10 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Chair, I
11 will make a motion to approve DD-25-04 per
12 staff recommendation.

13 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Second.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Discussion?

15 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Through the Chair,
16 a question for staff first. Can we get a quick
17 reminder on the Old Ortega Historic District,
18 the difference between that and, say, like, a
19 National Register Historic District and why
20 this one is being brought forward to us?

21 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair to
22 Commissioner Gregory, so the differences
23 between the national and the local district
24 really is -- can you hear me a little better?
25 Yeah, so the local district entitles you

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1 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Thank you for the
2 review. That's good.

3 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Chair, my
4 thoughts on this are that I do very much
5 sympathize with the small business owner and
6 the family that have roots there in the
7 neighborhood and connection to that specific
8 property.

9 The staff did their research and have
10 made, I think, a credible report to -- if it
11 meets the required amount of criteria to be
12 designated a landmark.

13 To a couple of concerns that were
14 mentioned, if some other use that is
15 drastically different than the current use is
16 planned, then there will be a public hearing on
17 that, right?

18 I'm just going to guess that that would
19 probably be through a PUD. And if so, there
20 will be a hearing where the public can come and
21 give their input on the use and certain design
22 characteristics as well.

23 Also, you mentioned the trees. Yes, I
24 think you are spot on that a large, mature tree
25 canopy adds so much to a neighborhood's

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1 character. There is a separate Tree Commission
2 at the City and there is a tree ordinance that
3 oversees what trees can be removed, what trees
4 are considered protected, and how to work
5 through that. So there are processes for the
6 things that the family was concerned about.

7 So those are my thoughts on it -- on those
8 issues.

9 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
10 I appreciate having our speakers come in and
11 give their testimony to us because, as you can
12 see from one of our previous historic
13 designations, we were able to add one of the
14 criteria on as a consideration because of that
15 testimony given.

16 Unfortunately, I don't see anything that
17 was said here that's not already one of our
18 highlighted criteria that we meet, which is the
19 three out of the seven where we require the
20 four out of the seven.

21 None of us take considering demolishing a
22 historic building lightly, so, you know, we --
23 we, obviously, thank staff for putting this
24 together and we thank the speakers for coming,
25 but I'd say, unfortunately, because this is a

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1 done this.

2 MS. LOPERA: You need to reopen the public
3 hearing.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Because then I have to
5 reopen the public hearing.

6 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair, you'd have
7 to -- to the Chair, you'd have to reopen the
8 public hearing if you want to accept more
9 testimony or evidence from any of the public.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry.

11 Are there any other comments or questions?

12 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Then I think we have to
14 vote. We have to vote.

15 And remember, what we're voting on is
16 approval for the owner to go forward with the
17 demolition of the structure, so --

18 All those in favor?

19 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Those opposed?

21 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

22 THE CHAIRMAN: We'll move on to the next
23 one --

24 MS. LOPERA: Can you announce the result
25 of that, please, Mr. Chair?

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1 national district, we -- this is the only
2 ability we have to look at this, and it's not
3 meeting the criteria that we are given to
4 review this by, so I'm -- I'm not sure that we
5 could deny this demolition.

6 MS. JONES: If it was your grandmother's
7 house, could you?

8 MS. H. JONES: Can I say one more thing?

9 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, ma'am, the
10 public hearing is closed.

11 MS. H. JONES: Oh, I can't say anything?

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Unless someone has a
13 question for you.

14 Is there any more discussion amongst the
15 commissioners or comments amongst the
16 commissioners?

17 MS. H. JONES: Are you sure I can't say
18 one more thing? I --

19 THE CHAIRMAN: No, ma'am. I'm sorry, but
20 the public hearing has been closed.

21 MS. H. JONES: Well, other people said
22 more than one thing.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Do you have evidence of
24 another criteria to add?

25 MS. H. JONES: You know what? I've never

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry. These things
2 trouble me.

3 Let it be known that Demolition Delay
4 25-04 has been approved for demolition, 2928
5 and 2930 Corinthian Avenue.

6 Sorry.

7 Okay. It's been over two hours. The next
8 demolition delay to be heard is the same owner
9 and adjacent to the last one heard. Do we want
10 to -- Commissioners, do we want to go ahead and
11 hear this or do we want to take a 10-minute
12 break?

13 MS. LOPERA: We need to take a break.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: So we'll take a 10-minute
15 break and we'll reconvene at 3:21.

16 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

17 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Thanks,
18 everyone. We'll go ahead and get started.

19 There's one more item, I believe, under
20 the -- one more -- another demo delay, Item
21 Number 2, under New Business, demolition delay
22 DD-25-05. The address is 2934 Corinthian
23 Avenue.

24 We'll open the public hearing and hear a
25 staff report.

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1 MR. WELLS: All right. Thank you,
2 Mr. Chair.
3 So again, this is DD-25-05, which is for
4 the demolition of a contributing structure at
5 2934 Corinthian Avenue.
6 (Discussion held off the record.)
7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you for being here,
8 ma'am.
9 MS. H. JONES: Thank you.
10 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Back to
11 business.
12 Demolition delay DD-25-05 at 2934
13 Corinthian Avenue.
14 We'll hear a staff report.
15 MR. WELLS: All right. Thank you.
16 So, again, this is DD-25-05 for demolition
17 of a contributing structure at 2934 Corinthian
18 Avenue. So this is a demolition of a one-story
19 building. It's listed as a contributing
20 structure within the Old Ortega National
21 Register Historic District.
22 So because it's in a National Register
23 Historic District, the Commission shall review
24 and take action on requests of demolitions, and
25 the Commission has three options they can take:

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1 also did a site visit on April 2nd and
2 researched the property for evaluative and
3 documentary purposes. And from our preliminary
4 review, we found that it met three of the seven
5 landmarking criteria.
6 The first one relates to it being within
7 the historic district of Old Ortega. This
8 property is significant for its association
9 with the early residential/suburban development
10 in Jacksonville. And it also reflects the
11 architectural development of Jacksonville from
12 the period just after the Great Fire of 1901.
13 The second criteria relates to it being
14 recognized for the quality of its architecture
15 and it retaining sufficient elements that
16 convey its architectural significance.
17 Architecturally, the original design of
18 this property is referred to as a wood frame
19 vernacular because of its construction. The
20 building on the subject property also retains
21 many of its architecturally significant
22 features which were also noted in its 1999
23 Florida Master Site File form. This includes
24 the structure's L-shaped plan and cross-gable
25 roof, its drop siding exterior, and its

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1 So, again, you can either approve the
2 demolition permit, you can deny the demolition
3 permit and go through the landmarking review
4 process, or you can defer action on the item.
5 In terms of staff analysis, we found that
6 this property is a one-story frame vernacular
7 residential building. It was built in 1929.
8 It's characterized by its lap siding exterior,
9 exterior chimney on the southwest end, and
10 concrete block pier foundation.
11 Alterations to the structure include the
12 construction of at least two additions,
13 including the enclosure of the first floor
14 front porch and the addition on the rear first
15 floor southeast corner.
16 So again, if the Commission votes to deny
17 the demolition permit, it shall issue an
18 advisory recommendation to the City Council on
19 the structure's landmark status. And then if
20 you do decide to do the landmarking
21 designation, the -- you must find that the
22 property meets at least four of the seven
23 criteria in its current (microphone failure).
24 Therefore, we evaluated the application in
25 accordance with the landmarking criteria. We

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1 concrete block/brick pier foundation.
2 The property has been altered over time,
3 including, again, two additions. The enclosure
4 of the first floor front porch and the addition
5 on the rear first floor southeast corner.
6 The last criteria it meets is suitability
7 for preservation or restoration. It has not
8 been altered in a manner that has destroyed its
9 original architectural significance. While the
10 building is currently vacant with -- it does
11 have ample opportunity to be rehabilitated by
12 the structure -- by removing some of -- its
13 nonhistoric street-visible porch enclosure on
14 the first floor facade. And through proper
15 stabilization, weatherization, and
16 rehabilitation, staff finds that the property
17 can be reasonably restored.
18 And, again, based on the landmarking
19 criteria and it falling short of the four
20 threshold [sic] to overcome landmarking
21 opposition, staff finds that this is unsuitable
22 for landmarking and we forward to you a
23 recommendation to approve the demolition permit
24 and not pursue landmarking.
25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Arimus.

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1 Do we have any questions for staff?
2 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Could the applicant please
4 come forward?
5 (Mr. Ross approaches the podium.)
6 THE CHAIRMAN: And, again, state your name
7 and address and be sworn in.
8 MR. ROSS: Brent Ross, 4153 Torino Place.
9 THE REPORTER: If you would raise your
10 right hand for me, please.
11 MR. ROSS: (Complies.)
12 THE REPORTER: Do you affirm that the
13 testimony you are about to give will be the
14 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
15 truth?
16 MR. ROSS: I do.
17 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
18 MR. ROSS: Well, thank you again.
19 I don't know that I need to add anything
20 else. This is a similar type structure, and so
21 it's really the same issues.
22 So I hope you can follow your staff's
23 recommendation and approve for the demolition.
24 Thank you.
25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, sir.

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1 it's not usable as a residence. It would have
2 to be completely reconstructed inside, a new --
3 AC and heating has to be put in, new plumbing,
4 new electrical. Ultimately, a new roof.
5 The cost to do all of this, the economics
6 of it just don't make any sense in order to get
7 a return on investment in a rental capacity for
8 this small square footage. The capacity is in
9 the land that's there.
10 So I rest my case.
11 Thank you.
12 THE CHAIRMAN: Would anyone else like to
13 speak in regards to this application?
14 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
15 THE CHAIRMAN: If not, I'll close the
16 public hearing and entertain a motion.
17 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Motion to approve
18 DD-25-05 located at 2934 Corinthian Avenue.
19 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Second.
20 THE CHAIRMAN: Discussion?
21 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
22 I think that we're -- we're asked to look at
23 this as a delay to see if there's a landmarking
24 option for it, and that has not been proven by
25 staff, nor has it been proven by any public

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1 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to the
2 applicant -- sir?
3 MR. ROSS: I'm sorry.
4 MS. LOPERA: This is a separate public
5 hearing, so if there is anything you want to
6 say on this record -- it is completely separate
7 from the prior one, if there's anything you
8 want to add. You don't have to. I'm just
9 saying --
10 (Simultaneous speaking.)
11 MR. ROSS: (Inaudible.)
12 MS. LOPERA: You kind of said, oh, this is
13 just like the last one, but it's a separate
14 hearing --
15 MR. ROSS: Okay.
16 MS. LOPERA: -- so we kind of have to go
17 through the motions again.
18 MR. ROSS: Well, I -- I won't bore you
19 with the same story of being there 60 years in
20 the family, but this one has no trees, and
21 the -- this property is probably -- again,
22 20 percent of it's -- the building's on
23 20 percent of the land, and -- and this
24 particular building is -- has been renovated
25 and changed where it's not usable as an office,

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1 comment.
2 So, again, I'll say, we don't take lightly
3 allowing historic buildings to be torn down,
4 but I don't see any other route with the -- the
5 way that this is in the Ortega National
6 District and the requirements for the
7 demolition delay placed upon that.
8 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Through the
9 Chair to staff, looking through some of the
10 letters from the neighbors that are not really
11 happy about this, it says that the Ortega
12 Village was -- is currently functioning and
13 planned -- as planned by Architect Henry
14 Klutho. Is that true? Was the Ortega Village
15 designed by Klutho?
16 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair to
17 Commissioner Morgan, we saw that statement and
18 were not able to corroborate that.
19 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Okay. I wanted
20 to make sure that was not true. I did not hear
21 that either.
22 Thank you.
23 I think we'd be having a different
24 conversation.
25 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, I can't recall seeing

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1 any houses or buildings in there that have the
2 stylistic tendencies of Klutho.
3 COMMISSIONER MORGAN: And to be clear, I
4 don't think she's inferring that he was the
5 architect, but that he was the planner for the
6 entire development.
7 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, but when you -- like,
8 when you look at Fletcher Park and you see the
9 houses and stuff like that, what's typical of
10 (microphone failure) -- I mean, it would be
11 interesting if that were true, but -- I didn't
12 see that either. That's a good (microphone
13 failure) -- it's good of you to --
14 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: If it were
15 true, I think there would be more conversation.
16 THE CHAIRMAN: Absolutely.
17 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Thank you.
18 THE CHAIRMAN: Absolutely. Any other --
19 COMMISSIONER MORGAN: Otherwise, I --
20 THE CHAIRMAN: -- comments or discussion?
21 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
22 THE CHAIRMAN: I do have a -- I do have a
23 question for the owner about -- the comment
24 about -- willing to sell the houses if they can
25 be moved. Has that been advertised or what

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1 there's the intention to advertise and -- if
2 you can facilitate someone --
3 MR. ROSS: That's my understanding, the
4 buyer is going to be doing that.
5 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.
6 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
7 it's my understanding that Klutho helped
8 develop the entire Ortega subdivision and the
9 park layouts, not specifically this.
10 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Not the
11 Village.
12 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yes.
13 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Understood.
14 That makes sense.
15 Thank you.
16 THE CHAIRMAN: It's good to bring that up.
17 (Microphone failure.)
18 Anything else? Anything else, guys?
19 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
20 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Then I say we put
21 this to a vote. And, again, it's the same
22 situation as the previous one.
23 All those in favor of approving the
24 demolition?
25 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.

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1 kind of action have you taken to facilitate
2 that?
3 Because I think that is an admirable thing
4 and it would be great if those homes -- it
5 sounds like their bones are pretty strong.
6 MR. ROSS: Yeah, my understanding is
7 there's a period of time where it will be
8 available for those -- anybody who wants to
9 move those buildings.
10 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah, it's basically --
11 when I read it, it's a 90-day period.
12 MR. ROSS: Yes.
13 THE CHAIRMAN: Sixty days of being
14 available and then you have 30 days to --
15 MR. ROSS: Yes, this particular building
16 is a two-story building. It would be quite
17 difficult to move it unless you were to
18 disassemble it.
19 THE CHAIRMAN: Have you had -- has there
20 been any adver- -- I mean, how does anyone know
21 about that?
22 MR. ROSS: Well, that -- we're waiting to
23 get this taken care of before we move into that
24 mode.
25 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. And then you --

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed?
2 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
3 THE CHAIRMAN: So let it be known
4 officially that demolition delay DD-25-05, 2934
5 Corinthian Avenue, has been approved.
6 Thank you.
7 Continuing on to Item 3, we have a grant
8 letter of support. Durkeeville, the Barnett
9 subdivision.
10 MR. WELLS: Thank you.
11 So through the Chair to the Commission, we
12 are -- the City of Jacksonville is partnering
13 with a local consulting firm to basically apply
14 for a small matching grant to resurvey the
15 Durkeeville/Barnett subdivision. And so as
16 part of the grant application, we're asking for
17 a letter of support on behalf of the
18 Commission.
19 And so just some details here: The
20 Barnett subdivision, which was platted between
21 1905 and 1908, is an historic African-American
22 neighborhood. This particular area is, again,
23 a part of the larger Durkeeville area, but
24 again, this small matching grant will be used
25 to identify heritage sites, build a community

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1 narrative, and ultimately get the property
2 listed on the National Register of Historic
3 Places as a historic district.
4 So again, this letter is drafted already.
5 And as the Commission, you-all just have to
6 vote in favor of (inaudible) it over.
7 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Motion to approve
8 the grant letter of support for the Barnett
9 subdivision.
10 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Second.
11 THE CHAIRMAN: Any discussion?
12 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Chair to
13 staff, so just to -- is this -- I assume this
14 is a different part of Durkeeville that is
15 already designated; is that correct, I assume?
16 MR. WELLS: Through the Chair to
17 Commissioner Hoff, that is correct because the
18 surveying is pretty costly, so -- what we're
19 finding, so we're doing it in a piecemeal
20 approach.
21 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Okay. Great.
22 THE CHAIRMAN: Any other discussion?
23 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
24 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?
25 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.

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1 Department of State Historic Resources Division
2 to help preserve the school building,
3 102-year-old school building for work on the
4 roof, repointing the brick and stonework, and
5 replacing windows.
6 The school has been there for -- hundreds
7 of graduates out of there. We're now getting
8 third and fourth generation -- people are
9 coming in who -- their great grandmother went
10 to school there, so it's a great addition to
11 the Riverside and Avondale Historic District,
12 and we have six buildings, but this all
13 applies -- this grant is for one of the
14 buildings, the school building, which needs
15 most of the work.
16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
17 Any questions for the applicant?
18 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
19 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anyone else here
20 to speak to this today?
21 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)
22 THE CHAIRMAN: I'll entertain a motion.
23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Motion to approve
24 the St. Paul Catholic Church and School,
25 Riverside, grant letter of support.

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?
2 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
3 THE CHAIRMAN: So the grant letter of
4 support is approved.
5 The next one is St. Paul Catholic Church
6 and School in Riverside, another grant letter
7 of support.
8 MR. WELLS: Yes, that's correct.
9 So through the Chair to the Commission,
10 this one is, again, on -- coming from the
11 St. Paul Catholic Church and School. They're
12 applying for a special category grant
13 application from the State. So this is a
14 historic school, church, and it's been on
15 the -- built -- is over a hundred years old.
16 And so I will stand by and I'll defer to
17 Mr. Robert Owens -- I believe he's here to
18 speak on behalf of the letter of support -- for
19 more details.
20 (Audience member approaches the podium.)
21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm Robert Owens, and
22 I'm a member of St. Paul's Parish and a member
23 of the Finance Committee.
24 We're seeking a grant letter of support
25 for a grant we placed with the Florida

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1 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Second.
2 THE CHAIRMAN: Any discussion?
3 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
4 THE CHAIRMAN: The generational thing
5 really got to me (microphone failure).
6 All right. All those in favor?
7 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.
8 THE CHAIRMAN: Any opposed?
9 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
10 THE CHAIRMAN: So the grant letter of
11 support for St. Paul Catholic Church and
12 School, Riverside, is approved.
13 And we'll move on to Number 5. This is a
14 letter to the U.S. Postal Service concerning
15 mailboxes in Springfield.
16 MR. WELLS: Thank you.
17 So through the Chair to the Commission,
18 this is a follow-up in regards to the mailbox
19 discussion that was held at the last -- our
20 last month's Commission meeting.
21 So at the conclusion of last month's
22 meeting, you all tasked staff with drafting a
23 letter, just coordinating with SPAR to, again,
24 whip up a letter here that would go to the
25 U.S. Postal Service regarding some of the

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1 concerns that have been emerging from the
2 Springfield neighborhood.
3 So, again, we have a draft letter here. I
4 would appreciate you-all's comments and any
5 edits if needed.
6 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Through the
7 Chair to staff, I did not send you notes, and I
8 apologize for that, but did we want to mention
9 something about the parallel parking on those
10 sides of the street?
11 Because if they're going house to house,
12 they'd have to stop in the middle of the street
13 at every house.
14 THE CHAIRMAN: That's a great point.
15 COMMISSIONER MORGAN: I couldn't find the
16 part that I was looking for which was the
17 clearance for fire trucks. I don't know that
18 it's relevant to residential, where I was
19 looking, but that in itself, I think, is --
20 THE CHAIRMAN: That's really good
21 (microphone failure).
22 Any discussion for this or -- or any other
23 added comments like that that might give some
24 support for this letter?
25 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,

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1 just wanted to have -- you-all just wanted to
2 have a draft prepared this month.
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.
4 MR. WELLS: So it's really your call.
5 THE CHAIRMAN: That's good.
6 Anything else? No?
7 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
8 THE CHAIRMAN: Michael, do you -- you
9 don't have to, but do you want to say anything
10 about this or do you think we've covered it?
11 MR. HASKINS: (Indicating.)
12 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.
13 All right. Let's go ahead and put this to
14 a vote.
15 All those in favor?
16 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.
17 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: This is a draft, so
18 we're not voting.
19 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to the
20 Commission, there was some changes discussed.
21 So if someone wants to move to approve issuing
22 this letter with the changes discussed, then
23 Mr. Wells can make said changes and issue it as
24 soon as he gets that done. If you want to see
25 it again, you could make that motion to see

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1 I would also say that, because of the sort of
2 constricted way -- you know, the constricted
3 dimensions we have for clearances with the
4 street and mailboxes and sidewalks and
5 everything, there could be an ADA issue that
6 comes up from requiring mailboxes as well,
7 affecting the sidewalk sizes, which could be a
8 litigious [sic] issue -- that's not the right
9 way to say that. Sorry.
10 MS. LOPERA: Litigious.
11 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Litigious, sorry.
12 -- a litigious issue for the City. If
13 somebody's going down the sidewalk and, you
14 know, they have to put mailboxes in a certain
15 spot, making the sidewalk too small for them to
16 use.
17 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. We're on a roll
18 here.
19 Anyone else got something?
20 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
21 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. When will this
22 letter be issued, Arimus?
23 MR. WELLS: To the Chair, that's up to
24 your discretion, really. I think it just came
25 from -- I think from last month's meeting, we

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1 another draft.
2 THE CHAIRMAN: It would be -- I think we
3 could -- we should make the motions now and go
4 forward with it. I think the revisions that
5 we're asking for are not that difficult, but
6 it's up to you. It's up to you all.
7 COMMISSIONER MORGAN: I agree.
8 THE CHAIRMAN: Does someone want to give
9 us a motion, then?
10 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Motion to approve
11 the letter to USPS concerning the mailboxes in
12 Springfield with the changes that were
13 mentioned during our meeting today.
14 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Second.
15 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?
16 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.
17 THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed?
18 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)
19 THE CHAIRMAN: And so the -- that letter
20 is approved with the suggested revisions.
21 Can we -- if you want, let's talk about
22 alleyways, and then I want to talk about the
23 committee a bit, and then we can do elections.
24 Can we do that?
25 MS. LOPERA: You can.

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1 Mr. Chair, did you want to revisit public
2 comment --

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

4 MS. LOPERA: -- at some point? At any
5 time, it's your discretion.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: The only -- there's only a
7 couple of things left to do, but we -- in all
8 of the hullabaloo, we skipped over public
9 comments, so I do want to open the floor for
10 public comments if anyone has public comments
11 today.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Then we'll close the public
14 hearing and -- so yeah, I'd like to -- let's
15 talk about the alleyways, and then I want to
16 talk about -- I want Commissioner Epstein to
17 talk about the committee they want to move
18 forward with, and then we can do the -- the
19 elections.

20 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to the
21 Commission, would you like to talk about what
22 the issue is?

23 THE CHAIRMAN: So there's been ongoing
24 discussions. There have been some issues.
25 This is specifically for Springfield, of

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1 way.

2 And so I've had a couple of conversations
3 with Legal (microphone failure). It's been
4 (microphone failure) --
5 (Reporter inquiry.)

6 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry.

7 Carla has been investigating things,
8 and -- and so I'm going to let Legal talk a
9 little bit about it, and then I'd like to have
10 a discussion about it.

11 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to the
12 Commission, so as the Chair articulated, it's
13 been brought to our attention that certain
14 people are encroaching on alleys, and it was
15 brought to our attention in the form of a
16 request that the City enforce these property
17 rights.

18 I will say this, it is the City's position
19 that we are neither the owners or have any
20 obligation to maintain any alleyway in the city
21 of Jacksonville.

22 I will say this, each alleyway is
23 different, and you would need to pull the plat,
24 the original plat establishing that block and
25 that alleyway, to find out exactly who owns

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1 course, because its -- its fabric is a bit
2 different than the other historic communities
3 with the H alleys that it has in the blocks.

4 So there have been some issues that have
5 been in discussion. SPAR has been leading some
6 of that discussion. Some things have been
7 brought forward to HPC and other entities of
8 the City have been brought into the discussion
9 because the alleyways have been encroached upon
10 by homeowners in different ways. Sometimes
11 they're being blocked, some people are building
12 things in the alleys, and there's this question
13 of ownership because it's sort of undefined.

14 And there have been issues about -- or
15 there have been questions about and suggestions
16 about the City taking the property, but the
17 City, of course, can't -- isn't interested in
18 that kind of maintenance added to their list of
19 things to do. So there have been multiple
20 discussions.

21 There's -- you know, there's interest in
22 the Commission from my -- from my position, as
23 public space. I believe that the alleys are
24 part of the public space of the city, and
25 the -- and they do need to be addressed in some

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1 that strip of land. So someone, in theory,
2 could do that, pull every plat and find out.

3 I'm not aware of any plats in which the
4 City has accepted ownership of any alleyway,
5 nor have we accepted any obligation to maintain
6 any alleyway.

7 There is a pending appeal of a case
8 wherein a property owner has sued the City of
9 Jacksonville to force us to maintain an
10 alleyway that sits behind The Shoppes of
11 Avondale. The City declined to do so for
12 several of the reasons I've already stated,
13 but -- we won at the trial court level. It has
14 been appealed and briefs have been filed, but
15 it's at the appellate level now.

16 So that's where the City sits and the
17 City's position on maintaining alleyways.

18 As far as whether they are a public space
19 or there are private easements, again, it's
20 going to be -- you've got to pull each plat for
21 every alley to really know. There's not, like,
22 an overarching legal disposition or state of
23 each -- of, you know, alleyways generally.
24 It's a case-by-case basis.

25 That being said, the Chair has expressed,

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1 and I know a lot of other people have expressed
2 that these alleyways are integral to our
3 historic neighborhoods and, you know, what can
4 we do to maintain them. So in that regard and
5 thinking through this, one option that I have
6 come up with is creating a process -- some sort
7 of process wherein, if you can get the buy-in
8 of a certain percentage of abutting owners to
9 agree that they want their alley maintained, we
10 could create some -- you would need a funding
11 source, so either -- you could require the
12 owners to pay for the maintenance of the
13 alleyway in a special assessment sort of thing.

14 One example I will offer is if a certain
15 number of owners want to underground the
16 utilities on their block, they can petition to
17 do so, and the City will underground them and,
18 like, front the expense to do so, and then I
19 think it's for ten years, assess those property
20 owners the cost on their taxes.

21 So you could -- we could talk about
22 creating something like that, some kind of
23 process if we got enough buy-in from owners
24 that we could maintain the alleyways.

25 It's just a thought, and open to more

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1 and heard children playing in the alleys.
2 Again, that space that's being used, and I
3 think there's potential -- there's greater
4 potential for it to be recognized as a civic
5 space in the Springfield community. And that's
6 what I mean by civic space, that it's for the
7 public, right?

8 But there's got to be some way to start
9 having a discussion, and maybe even structuring
10 an argument about that, that may involve more
11 community involvement in terms of maintenance.

12 And maybe -- I mean, it's taxation, is what
13 you're (microphone failure) real
14 estate (microphone failure) assessment --

15 THE REPORTER: I cannot hear you.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Can't hear me.

17 You know, there might be an expense to it.
18 And I think the percentage we talked about was
19 75 percent to the --

20 MS. LOPERA: I believe that's the
21 percentage of buy-in required for underground
22 utilities.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. You could get
24 75 percent of a block to say we need this taken
25 care of, and then the assessment would start to

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1 conversation, more -- and more discovery in
2 that regard.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thanks, Carla.

4 So for -- the thinking from me, anyway,
5 is -- in having the conversation with Carla is,
6 first of all, I find it difficult to believe --
7 and I understand, this isn't about arguing it.
8 I understand that's the position of the City,
9 but it's hard for me to accept that if
10 homeowners adjacent to each other have property
11 lines that don't touch and there's land in
12 between them that the City doesn't by default
13 own that property and is responsible for it.

14 Now, I'm -- that's as much as a legal
15 analyst as I can sound like, and I know that,
16 but I -- it's sort of like a no man's land? Is
17 that really possible? So there's that.

18 And then the other part of it is, yes, I
19 believe that the urban fabric, and in this case
20 particularly in Springfield, is defined not
21 just by the streets, but by the alleyways, and
22 I think it is public space.

23 I've seen over the last -- I think I moved
24 into Springfield in 2011, something, 2010
25 maybe, but over that period of time, I've seen

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1 happen.

2 So I'm not going to -- I want to hear you
3 talk about it. I'm going to be quiet.

4 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: Through the
5 Chair, I just have a couple of things. Really
6 good conversation, but it sounds like two
7 issues to me: Is it public or private, and
8 then who maintains it?

9 And so when I lived in Springfield, I
10 treated the alley like the right-of-way. It
11 belongs to the City, but who is going to cut
12 it? I am. It's my fence that's going to fall
13 over if I don't. And so that's just always
14 been my thought.

15 And so I guess my question is, through the
16 Chair to Counsel, if the City -- and I really
17 just want to know. If the City doesn't own the
18 alleys, then how are they building the Emerald
19 Trail through there? Because I know there's a
20 lot of neighbors that are really upset and
21 don't want people in their alley. And they're,
22 like, deal with it, it's City property.

23 So I am kind of wondering, is it -- is it
24 going back to those maps? Like, maybe in the
25 alley they selected it is public property?

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1 Or -- I just don't know if that's a cohesive
2 answer, really.
3 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair to
4 Commissioner Morgan, I have not been involved
5 in the Emerald Trail, any of that planning
6 process or that acquisition of that property,
7 so I don't know how they acquired the right to
8 use all or some of an alleyway.
9 I will say this, again, I'm not aware of a
10 single alleyway that the City has accepted
11 ownership of.
12 And I will say that the case that I
13 discussed regarding the alleyway behind The
14 Shoppes of Avondale, they pulled that plat, and
15 that plat, the original man who platted that,
16 retained ownership of the alleyway, which
17 means -- he's long since died, but that means
18 his heirs own that alleyway. If you could find
19 them, you could probably tax them for that
20 alleyway.
21 But every -- every alleyway is going to be
22 different. And in that case, it is not owned
23 by the abutting owners, it's the original owner
24 of that tract of land that was platted in 1904,
25 I think.

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1 right-of-way, in a public park, or a private
2 property, it always requires a COA. So without
3 maintaining the alleyway, one very helpful step
4 that could be taken to prevent something from
5 blocking an alleyway, like a fence, would be to
6 cite new things that are built in the
7 alleyways, which from what I understand has not
8 been done, you know, just kind of following the
9 COA rules that would apply to -- if you build
10 the fence anyway.
11 So that -- so those are my thoughts on
12 that.
13 MS. LOPERA: Could I respond to that,
14 Mr. Chair?
15 THE CHAIRMAN: Sure.
16 MS. LOPERA: Okay.
17 A few things. So -- you touched on a lot
18 of things, Commissioner Hoff.
19 So through the Chair to the Commission,
20 one of the things you touched on was private
21 property rights, essentially. So you're right,
22 a lot of people use those alleyways to access
23 their garages, the back of their property. And
24 in that regard, if someone else were to build a
25 fence and block you from accessing your

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Hoff.
2 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Through the Chair, so
3 I actually put in a lot of thought on this.
4 So some years ago, probably four years
5 ago, obviously before I had this role, there
6 was an Urban Core alleyway task force with RAP,
7 SPAR, and San Marco Preservation, who met for
8 over a year and kind of finally got the City to
9 figure out exactly what the status was, which
10 from my understanding is -- is what Ms. Lopera
11 is representing.
12 And at that time, then just kind of
13 citizen Jimmy Peluso was the RAP
14 representative, and he has stated on the record
15 that he plans to try and figure out what we can
16 do with the alleyways, specifically in the
17 Urban Core where it's not, you know, just a
18 nice thing to have, but it's where people
19 access their garage apartments and they have
20 nowhere else to park. And so -- so I think
21 that is hopefully forthcoming, whatever that
22 is.
23 Aside from that, whether a property in a
24 locally designated historic district has
25 something built on it in the public

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1 property, it is your job to defend your right,
2 your private property rights. The City is not
3 going to come in and do that for you. Just
4 like we wouldn't come in if someone built a
5 fence 3 feet onto your property, we're not
6 going to come in and defend your right to use
7 your property how you should. Same way, we
8 wouldn't help you defend your right to access
9 the back of your property.
10 The City oftentimes does have a utility
11 easement along the alleyways, and we will
12 definitely tear down your -- if you build a
13 fence across the alleyway and we need to access
14 our sewer to maintain it, we will tear down
15 your fence and maintain our sewer because we
16 have an easement and the right to do so.
17 So we'll defend our private -- our
18 property rights or our easement rights in that
19 regard, but not going to expend City resources
20 to help others defend their property rights, if
21 that makes sense.
22 Another thing you touched on was citing
23 new construction in an alleyway, like a fence
24 or something we have governing authority over,
25 right? Anything -- any activity requiring a

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1 COA that's done in an alleyway, we can
2 certainly cite. We would need someone to call
3 that in and report it, and then we would treat
4 it as activity, you know, new construction
5 without a COA or something, whatever it is,
6 fence, performed without a COA.

7 COMMISSIONER HOFF: So just a follow-up on
8 that.

9 So I was at an HPC meeting some years ago
10 when that idea was suggested, and the response
11 from the person that was in your position was,
12 well, if you cite something in an alleyway,
13 that's de facto maintaining it; therefore,
14 we're not going to cite anything in an
15 alleyway.

16 So I hope that what you just described,
17 you know, is kind of the current view.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: (Microphone failure), like,
19 I run down the endgame of things. It's just
20 what I do. And it's like, okay, can everyone
21 just start squatting in the alleyways? Like,
22 can we just start building shanties in the
23 alleyways and building what -- right? Like,
24 it's -- and then each homeowner is going to
25 have to defend their portion of the alleyway

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1 anyone wants to help me --

2 I guess I would have to officially make a
3 committee for someone to help me work on it,
4 yes?

5 MS. LOPERA: To the Chair, I mean, as long
6 as you have noticed meetings. If you want to
7 talk to another commissioner about something
8 like this, which is an item that could
9 potentially come before you for consideration,
10 it would be subject to Sunshine Law and you
11 would just have to notice the meeting, and then
12 you could meet together --

13 THE CHAIRMAN: (Inaudible.)

14 MS. LOPERA: -- whether in the committee
15 format or more informally as just
16 Commissioners, you know, Montoya and Epstein
17 plan to meet on -- and make it a public
18 meeting.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Right.

20 So I'm not -- and I can appoint a
21 committee outside of this meeting, right?
22 Like, I could call you tomorrow and say -- or
23 send you an email and Arimus and say, hey, I'd
24 like to make a committee for this?

25 MS. LOPERA: To the Chair, yes.

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1 against someone who has built a shanty in their
2 alleyway?

3 MS. LOPERA: Through the Chair, yes, just
4 like if someone built something on your
5 property and you didn't want it there.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: That -- you know, this is
7 a -- you know, right?

8 MS. LOPERA: I know.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: My mind is running with
10 this. It's like, well, gosh, I've got some
11 opportunity here, right? Just joking, but --

12 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
13 as long as you get a COA on it.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: So here's the thing. So
15 here's the thing, guys. I -- I think -- and
16 we're going to talk about another committee in
17 a minute, but I think this deserves some
18 attention, and the answers are difficult. And
19 I'm certainly willing to -- I'm willing to work
20 on this myself a bit. And I want to keep
21 talking with Carla about it, but I kind of want
22 to run this down a little bit. And I don't
23 know if it deserves a full-fledged committee
24 necessarily, but this is my intention. Like, I
25 want to keep following this for a while, and if

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

2 All right. I just want to tap interest.
3 Does anyone else have interest in following
4 this with me or am I solo here?

5 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: One thing, through
6 the Chair, first, to kind of build on what
7 Carla was saying. I see these sometimes with
8 canals and waterways, special taxing districts.
9 That would require people -- an easy way to
10 make it is (microphone failure) everybody in
11 the historic district of, say, Springfield
12 would pay into a fund for the taxing of this.

13 Now, getting people to agree to that is
14 maybe a tougher task, but that is a solution
15 that would be legal and would fund it and would
16 spread the cost out among the entire
17 neighborhood that is benefitting from this,
18 maybe not just the abutting homeowners.

19 So there's just an idea right there.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Absolutely.

21 Okay. So I don't want to -- I know we
22 need to keep moving. I don't want to take too
23 long with this, but maybe -- so I want to --
24 I'm going to table this for now.

25 What are you thinking, Carla?

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1 MS. LOPERA: To the Chair, I mean, you
2 have several options. You know, you could
3 entertain more discussion right now. Tabling
4 it would mean you're going to come back to it
5 during this meeting, or you can just, you know,
6 say you're considering forming a committee on
7 it, in which case we can talk and issue a memo
8 just establishing a committee. That's a
9 possibility.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: That's the situation,
11 Carla. I want to -- I want you to know I'm
12 going to establish a committee. I may -- I'm
13 going to talk to Carla about it, and I want to
14 have that established before the next meeting.
15 (Microphone failure.)

16 Let's keep moving.

17 MS. LOPERA: One more thing, Mr. Chair.

18 Do you want to assign people to that
19 committee, find out if anyone is interested in
20 serving on that committee? Volunteers or
21 voluntold?

22 THE CHAIRMAN: It would be my -- are
23 you -- who is interested? Is anyone
24 interested? I'm interested in volunteers now.

25 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: I would be very

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1 Commissioner Epstein, I want you to talk a
2 little bit about that.

3 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
4 thank you.

5 I know we've talked about this a few times
6 and I've kind of expressed some thoughts.
7 Specifically in our demolition by neglect, one
8 of our points we came up with was possibly
9 looking at landmarking buildings preemptively
10 so that they do not fall in -- they get
11 landmarked and saved -- hopefully saved and not
12 fall into disrepair.

13 It is one of our powers as described under
14 Section 76.103, is it Item Number 2, "to
15 identify potential landmarks and potential
16 landmark sites and to make recommendations to
17 the City Council as to whether those potential
18 landmarks and landmark sites should be
19 officially designated as landmarks and landmark
20 sites."

21 A lot of landmarks and landmarks sites in
22 there. I think -- I've asked for this to
23 happen, and I wanted to make sure it was
24 brought up this month because May is Historic
25 Preservation Month, and I felt it was very

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1 interested.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: So Commissioner Morgan.

3 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: However, we had
4 talked about doing a committee for landmarking
5 as well, and so I don't know if --

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

7 COMMISSION MEMBER MORGAN: One at a time,
8 is all I'm saying, for my personal commitment.

9 And if we want to try and get it on the
10 agenda to talk about it separately, that's
11 fine, but -- yeah.

12 COMMISSIONER LOVE: Yes.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: You interested?

14 COMMISSIONER LOVE: I am interested.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Why don't -- because of the
16 upcoming landmark committee, I did want to talk
17 about -- we'll appoint Commissioner Love and
18 Commissioner Hoff and myself (microphone
19 failure).

20 The alleyway committee will consist of
21 Commissioner Love, Commissioner Hoff, and Chair
22 Montoya.

23 Okay. And so now let's move on to another
24 committee that's been talked about and thrown
25 around, the landmark committee.

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1 appropriate for us to create this committee.

2 I think we can speak even to something
3 that was said here today, why didn't they
4 landmark that school earlier? Why didn't they
5 landmark that school earlier? Well, a lot of
6 people don't think about landmarking something
7 until they have to.

8 So I'd like to -- I'd like this committee
9 to be a little bit more proactive at looking at
10 buildings around the town that are not
11 landmarked, that are not within historic
12 districts, that are not protected, that are
13 listed as noncontributing, to look at those and
14 bring about the possibility of landmarking
15 them.

16 I think that something has come up a lot,
17 the contributing versus noncontributing within
18 our historic districts, is it's costly to
19 resurvey what's currently listed as
20 noncontributing, and some of our districts have
21 historic characteristics that are assigned to
22 them, so even landmarking something that's
23 listed as noncontributing, it's outside of that
24 historic characteristic of the neighborhood,
25 but it's still landmarkable.

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1 So there's a lot of issues with kind of
2 going about it a different direction. So I
3 think creating this committee with that in mind
4 is what I would propose for our commission to
5 do.

6 I understand that it may be hard to
7 convince owners to landmark a building if they
8 don't want to, but if this commission could
9 even landmark one structure proactively that
10 would be not in a threat to being demolished in
11 the future, it would be a win in my book.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Commissioner
13 Epstein.

14 So with the committee, do you have an idea
15 of how many members you want to be on that
16 committee?

17 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
18 I would like to have as many -- I say as many
19 members. I would like to have, I would say, at
20 least two to three members of our commission
21 here representing that, and I think we could
22 look to members of the community as well. The
23 Jacksonville Historical Society, Alan Bliss
24 from that would be a good person. I could name
25 names. I haven't asked people. I think you

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1 Jacksonville modernist.

2 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yeah.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: So it sounds like there
4 might be some reaching out to some people.

5 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yes.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: I would say -- I would
7 propose forming a committee. I would like to
8 move to make Commissioner Epstein the leader of
9 that committee. It sounds like Commissioner
10 Morgan is interested in being on that
11 committee. And then, if this is okay, that
12 maybe some other people are tapped from the
13 community to pitch in.

14 MS. LOPERA: To the Chair, so if -- this
15 falls under the realm of a committee because it
16 is one of your powers and duties. To that end,
17 it needs to only be made up of commissioners.
18 You can always tap into community members to
19 provide subject matter expertise, but as far as
20 actual voting members of the committee, it
21 would need to be only commissioners.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

23 MS. LOPERA: To that end, you know, with
24 the alleyway committee, I think that really --
25 I'll have to look at all the powers and duties

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1 know Wayne Wood. Looking at some of the more
2 predominant architects in town, asking them if
3 they would like to be a part of it as well,
4 people who know the history of the buildings,
5 the history of architects who have fallen into
6 more predominance more recently and not your
7 Klutho.

8 Obviously, if you mention Klutho's name,
9 you mention, like we did today, Mellen C.
10 Greeley, some of the other more -- truly, like,
11 18-, early 1900s historic architects, you know,
12 for sure, but, you know, talking about people
13 that were working in the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s
14 that have fallen into that historic realm that
15 have not -- buildings that are noncontributing
16 in our city right now, those are the ones I'm
17 looking at. Obviously, if we find something
18 older, we can do that too, but I think that
19 it's more important to start looking at some of
20 our more modern historic structures.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Bill Morgan. Robert
22 Ernest.

23 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Yeah. Yeah.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Professor Robert McCarter
25 just released a book on Robert Ernest who was a

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1 in Chapter 76, but it might be more of a task
2 force topic. I'll have to think through that
3 one. To that end, you could --

4 THE CHAIRMAN: I'd be jealous of
5 Commissioner Hoff being able to say he was
6 leading a task force.

7 Okay. So we'll appoint the committee.
8 Commissioner Epstein, Commissioner Morgan. Is
9 anyone else interested in (microphone failure)?

10 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: I'd be interested
11 in the landmark committee.

12 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: I would like to
13 also ask Chair Montoya if he would be
14 interested in -- especially with your
15 background and architectural education and just
16 the sort of more in-depth historical,
17 theoretical knowledge. Do you need me to say
18 anything more?

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Yes.

20 MS. LOPERA: So to the Chair -- well, this
21 is your last month as Chair, unless you're --
22 unless you are -- you know, we are going to
23 have elections at the end of this meeting. As
24 Chair, you can be a voting member of each
25 committee you create.

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1 Now, if you're not Chair anymore, you can
2 still attend these committees. They are
3 noticed meetings, so it's -- under Sunshine
4 Law, it's fine for you to attend. So -- I
5 don't know. You could be -- you can appoint
6 yourself to be on there if you want to or you
7 can just attend.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Yeah. I'll just --
9 because then the incoming Chair (microphone
10 failure). It's sort of semantic, right?

11 MS. LOPERA: It is.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. So we'll a start
13 landmarking committee led by Commissioner
14 Epstein, and its additional members will be
15 Commissioner Gregory, Commissioner Morgan, and
16 Commissioner Montoya. So there's that.
17 Then -- yeah.

18 Is there any pending litigation [sic],
19 Arimus?

20 MS. LOPERA: Legislation.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, pending
22 legislation.

23 MS. LOPERA: There's always pending
24 litigation.

25 MR. WELLS: Nothing to report for that.

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1 tasked with trying to run the meeting and keep
2 things going. And I've probably done an okay
3 job of that, but (microphone failure) -- but I
4 would rather be in the mix a little bit more.

5 I'm certainly willing to be nominated and
6 serve as vice chair, since I know how this
7 works, and if the incoming chair has to be out,
8 I could substitute, but that's totally up to
9 you all.

10 I've enjoyed being chair, but I think it's
11 time for me to -- there are some other things,
12 like these committees and some other things,
13 that I want to do as part of HPC that I think I
14 can focus on better.

15 The other thing is I leave for -- I will
16 be in Italy again in the fall of '26, and so I
17 would rather the chair -- I would rather the
18 chair have time to get accustomed and
19 acclimated to being the chair, and not just
20 have to do it on the fly. So I think that's
21 another good reason for me to step down as
22 chair.

23 So I'll open the floor to nominations,
24 although I would say, if --

25 Can I nominate a chair or can I --

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. So elections. It's
2 that time of year to elect officers. We
3 have -- it's chair, vice chair, and secretary,
4 correct?

5 The current secretary is Bill. Vice chair
6 is Commissioner Gregory. And of course, I've
7 been pretending to be chair.

8 I -- just help me with the process of
9 this. Do we open the floor to nominations, I
10 open it up, or -- I want to make sure --

11 MS. LOPERA: Sure. Through the Chair,
12 yes, you can open the floor for nominations.
13 And you can do it either individually, like --
14 do nominations for chair and then vote on that,
15 and vice chair separately, and secretary
16 separately. You could also, if you all want to
17 choose, like, a slate of candidates and vote on
18 a slate, it's up to you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: That's -- you know, that
20 was my (microphone failure), let's set the
21 table and vote on it.

22 But I want to remove myself from chair. I
23 don't want to -- I've enjoyed being chair, but
24 I miss doing what you all get to do, which is
25 talk more, because the chair, of course, is

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1 MS. LOPERA: You can.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. I would like to
3 nominate -- I nominate Commissioner Gregory for
4 chair. He's served as vice chair and
5 substituted for me a number of times, familiar
6 with the process. Probably much cooler under
7 pressure and less emotional than me, so I think
8 he's an excellent candidate. So I nominate
9 Commissioner Gregory for chair.

10 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: Through the Chair,
11 I'd like to second that nomination. I echo
12 kind of what you said. I think that the
13 meetings that Commissioner Gregory ran, he did
14 a really good job, so it sounds good.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: So now to nominations for
16 vice chair and secretary. Let's just set the
17 table.

18 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Thank you for the
19 kind words. I appreciate the nomination and
20 the consideration. Thank you so much.

21 And I appreciate you being the chair this
22 time, Commissioner Montoya.

23 With that, if you would see fit to serve
24 as Vice Chair Montoya, I'd make a motion for
25 that.

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: I would.
2 COMMISSIONER EPSTEIN: I second that.
3 THE CHAIRMAN: And then a nomination for
4 secretary. The current secretary is
5 Commissioner Hoff.
6 Are you good with being secretary?
7 COMMISSIONER HOFF: I am perfectly fine
8 being secretary because there are literally no
9 duties assigned to it other than being third in
10 line if both the chair and vice chair are out.
11 But I'm fine, or if another person would
12 like that role, that is perfectly fine too.
13 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Love,
14 (microphone failure) or any other position?
15 COMMISSIONER LOVE: I'm brand new.
16 COMMISSIONER HOFF: Is there a sergeant at
17 arms that I could do?
18 THE CHAIRMAN: No.
19 MS. LOPERA: Do we need a sergeant at
20 arms?
21 THE CHAIRMAN: So I think that we've got a
22 slate available here, yeah?
23 MS. LOPERA: All right. So in the role of
24 chair, I have Gregory -- Commissioner Gregory;
25 the role of vice chair, I have Commissioner

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Except for Commissioner --
2 Chair Gregory will start on June 24th.
3 COMMISSIONER GREGORY: Well, yes, I will
4 be then, but as a full disclosure, I will be in
5 Alaska that day with my family for vacation, so
6 I'm already absconding my duties.
7 MS. LOPERA: So you're not off the hook,
8 Commissioner Montoya.
9 THE CHAIRMAN: All right.
10 Congratulations, everyone. And everyone
11 has just been doing a great job. I really -- I
12 can tell you, this commission has been great.
13 Staff has been great. It's just -- I really
14 enjoy working for you all, so thank you.
15 Meeting adjourned.
16 (The foregoing proceedings were adjourned
17 at 4:18 p.m.)
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1 Montoya; and the role of secretary,
2 Commissioner Hoff. That is the slate.
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Does that need any
4 discussion? Do we want to put it to the floor?
5 Staff, are you okay with this? This is a
6 strange crew you have here. Diane? Everyone?
7 MS. LOPERA: Unfortunately, the staff and
8 our lovely court reporter don't have a vote in
9 this. This is a Commission vote only.
10 THE CHAIRMAN: Your vote counts to me, but
11 I'm about to not be chair anymore.
12 All right. So all those in favor of the
13 proposed incoming officers?
14 COMMISSION MEMBERS: Aye.
15 THE CHAIRMAN: It sounds unanimous.
16 Congratulations.
17 I think that's it. Yeah?
18 MS. LOPERA: Congratulations to our new
19 chair, Commissioner Gregory; our vice chair,
20 Commissioner Montoya; and our secretary,
21 Commissioner Hoff.
22 THE CHAIRMAN: So when will these new
23 officers' duties go into effect?
24 MS. LOPERA: Your official duties start at
25 our June meeting, June 25th, I believe, 2025.

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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER
2
3 STATE OF FLORIDA)
4 COUNTY OF DUVAL)
5
6
7 I, Diane M. Tropia, Florida Professional
8 Reporter, certify that I was authorized to and did
9 stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and
10 that the transcript is a true and complete record of my
11 stenographic notes.
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DATED this 10th day of June 2025.

Diane M. Tropia
Florida Professional Reporter

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