



NORTH LITTLE ROCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

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MINUTES

February 12, 2026
506 Main St.
North Little Rock, AR
5:30 P.M.

Commission Members Present:

Tom Marr
Charlie Hart
Susan Markman
Debra Roberts
Mason Toms
Megan Willmes

Commission Members Absent:

None

Others Present:

Kelli Peters, Director
Cary Bradburn, Staff
Liesel Golden
Eddie Armstrong
Don Chambers
Bob Markman
M'Liss Collins
George Collins
Gary Clements
Charley Dawson
Bob Ragsdale
Becky Ragsdale
Travis McKenney

Commission Chairman Tom Marr called the meeting of the North Little Rock Historic District Commission to order on February 12, 2026 at 5:30 P.M., and quorum was established. Mr. Marr asked the guests to introduce themselves.

CORRECTION AND ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Mr. Marr asked if Commissioners had read the minutes of the January 8, 2026 Historic District Commission meeting. Debra Roberts moved to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2026 HDC meeting as written. Megan Willmes seconded the motion and it was approved 6-0 in a roll call vote.

New Business:

A. 524 Main Street – Construction of the new open-air ATG Pavilion

Chairman Marr yielded the floor to Gary Clements, who presented the project to the Commission. He pointed out that there are two components to this proposal: the pavilion and the stage. Both were designed by ATG. Part of the reason why Advertising & Promotion is involved is that they want to (build this pavilion to) create an attraction that would draw people from around the state, as

HDC Meeting February 12, 2026

Page 2

well as people traveling through the area. They are also trying to link up with the Rock & Roll Highway & the Delta Blues Highway. He added that Arkansas has a lot of history with blues, jazz, and other styles of music.

There will eventually be a total of twenty (20) busts. Kevin Kresse will create a lot of them, but not all of them. They will be bronze busts of famous musicians from Arkansas. The main attraction will be a replica statue of Johnny Cash at the west end of the pavilion, facing Main Street.

The pavilion will be open-air, located at the northwest corner of the Plaza on what is now known as "the grassy knoll." There will be monumental steps around the pavilion and concrete benches on the south, facing the Plaza. They would like to rent it out for weddings and other events. It's a pavilion so it will be open with no gas, no plumbing, and no heat/air. It will be built out of steel tubes. The upper surfaces will be lit from below, you won't see the light sources. There will be some lights shooting straight down inside the pavilion. When they have events there will be panels that can be hung up to block the wind.

They've designed it to blend with the architecture that's already on the Plaza. The structure will be white, the roof will be a light gray. The paving will match the concrete pavers that are already on the Plaza so it will look like an extension of it.

There will be an ADA ramp on the east end which will be used to haul things up and down, as well as for handicap accessibility. The area between the pavilion and the plaza will also be used by catering trucks; it will be the service area.

Bob Markman asked if this would affect the drainage. Mr. Clements said that it's already a grassy knoll. Whenever they built the Plaza they built all new sidewalks so he doesn't believe that drainage will be an issue.

Charlie Hart asked if there would be steps on the north side. It was clarified that there would be steps on three sides, and an ADA ramp on the east, leading up to the pavilion which will be three feet above the sidewalk. There are utility & access easements in the service area but they are staying out of that area.

Susan Markman asked if the busts would be permanent installations. Charley Dawson explained that they would be permanent, but there would be two busts made of each musician. The plan is to display one bust under this pavilion, and the other will be displayed in the hometown of each musician. Mr. Clements added that a lot of the small towns donated money to this project because they want their artist to be represented. He said that the first 18 busts will face inward. If they are able to add another 18 in the future, those will face outward. They will install up to 6 per year, from 2026-2029.

Debra Roberts asked who is paying for the project. Mr. Clements answered that the Advertising & Promotion Commission is paying for 2/3 of it, and ATG is paying for the rest.

HDC Meeting February 12, 2026

Page 3

Charlie Hart asked if there is a list of the musicians. Charley Dawson looked it up and read the list:

Louis Jordan – Brinkley
Sister Rosetta Tharpe – Cotton Plant
Al Green – Forrest City
Levon Helm – Marvell
Glen Campbell – Delight
Florence Price – Little Rock
Pharoah Sanders – North Little Rock
Lefty Frizzell – El Dorado
William Grant Still – Little Rock
Charlie Rich – Colt
Sonny Boy Williamson – Helena
Scott Joplin – Texarkana
Big Bill Broonzy – Pine Bluff
Jimmy Driftwood – Mountain View
Conway Twitty – Helena
Ronnie Hawkins – Fayetteville
Howlin Wolf – West Memphis
Granny Almeda Riddle – Heber Springs
Al Bell – North Little Rock
Albert King – Osceola

Chairman Marr then opened the discussion for public comment. There were no comments so he closed public comment.

Mr. Hart then asked if the roof will be a metal roof. It was clarified that it would be a standing seam metal roof. Mr. Hart then asked Mr. Clements if he designed it. Mr. Clements said that ATG designed it. His role is to oversee the project.

Chairman Marr stated that they normally steer new construction away from metal roofs in the historic district but the Plaza has its own identity, and doesn't have anything historic, so he feels they can make an exception in this particular case.

Mason Toms commented that the design seems to share similarities with some of the works of E. Fay Jones and Frank Lloyd Wright, and seems to create a connection to Fay Jones' design of the pavilion at Laman Park by the library, which is his only fully-metal design, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. So that creates a nice connection to another internationally-recognized architect, located across town.

Chairman Marr then asked for a motion to approve or deny the application as submitted. Debra Roberts made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Mason Toms seconded the motion and it was approved 6-0 in a roll call vote.

B. 508 Main St. – Expansion of stage, permanent covering over stage at Argenta Plaza

Gary Clements continued his presentation, shifting his focus to the proposed expansion of the stage at Argenta Plaza. The stage has been designed and sited to be centered to the pavilion. The current stage is too small, and not deep enough, forcing musicians to line up instead of being able to move about as needed. Another factor for making the stage wider is because there is a vault beneath the plaza that contains all of the equipment that controls the fountain. There will be monument steps on the east and west elevations, but not on the north elevation. This will allow movement from one side to the other, but will discourage attendees from entering the stage from the front while musicians are performing. There will be a standing seam metal roof over the stage which will slope toward the south, to reflect the sound out toward the plaza. It will be the same color as the roof over the pavilion. There will be a gutter that will direct water toward the screen, and will catch water runoff. There will be panels on the sides in order to block the sun.

Megan Willmes asked how tall the wall on the south would be, which was shown on the plans. Mr. Clements said that it is the existing wall, and the roof will be attached to it. It will be guttered to the back.

Debra Roberts pointed out that they have always had concern about the effect of water runoff on the foundation of our building. She wants to make sure that this doesn't make it worse. Mr. Clements assured her that it won't make it worse. Charlie Hart asked Mr. Clements if he has plans on how to handle the water runoff. Mr. Clements answered that he does not, but they are still working on developing plans for how to handle the water runoff. He added that he was involved in the renovation of our building back in 2001. Surprisingly, there is no concrete foundation under this building. It started out as a sand bed, and they stacked bricks with no mortar. They pyramided them up until they got them where they wanted them, then they started using mortar. He was concerned about the weight of an archives on the second floor so they used steel framing for the building. They put steel columns in the corners of the building to help stabilize it. They currently have water problems that are coming from the parapet. It gets in from the top, and works its way down and can't get out. Kelli Peters added that they are currently working on getting the parapet repaired.

Chairman Marr then opened the discussion for public comment. Bob Markman asked if the City has agreed to fix the drainage problem on E. 6th Street where water stands after heavy rains. Mr. Clements wasn't aware that there was a problem there. He said that there are planters between the pavilion and the sidewalk. Charley Dawson said that that is outside the current scope of the work (at the pavilion) but they won't make the problem worse. There were no other comments so he closed public comment.

Susan Markman asked about the timeframe for the stage. Mr. Dawson said that they plan to finish the design around the first of April. They have an event on the Plaza on May 1 or 2, so they plan on being done within 4 months. He added that his company was the original construction manager of the Plaza; there are 55,000 pavers on the Plaza, in case they're curious.

Chairman Marr then asked for a motion to approve or deny the application as submitted. Susan

Markman made a motion to approve the application as submitted. Megan Willmes seconded the motion and it was approved 6-0 in a roll call vote.

C. 220 W. 6th St. – Construction of two-story residence on corner lot

Chairman Marr introduced Eddie Armstrong and gave him the floor so that he could present his project to the commissioners. Mr. Armstrong gave the commissioners the background on why he wants to build a house on this lot. He was happy to see some of his neighbors at the meeting. He then yielded the discussion back to the Commission.

Chairman Marr stated that as a Commission, they primarily focus on the exterior facades of the structure, and not the interior layout. He stated that, being in a historic district, they are limited to a few architectural styles such as Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and a transition between the two styles. He then mentioned that the Craftsman style was the predominant style after that, and there are many in the district in that style. He said that there are several examples of Craftsman details having been added to other style which tends to look odd, but it was very commonly done. He said that the exterior design of this house didn't lend itself to any particular style so he asked if Mr. Armstrong might consider tweaking the plans to reflect a particular style. Mr. Armstrong said that he would be willing to tweak the plans however the Commission advises; he just wants to be in the neighborhood.

Mason Toms said that he disagrees with Mr. Marr – he thinks the design lends itself toward a Folk Victorian style without copying it.

Chairman Marr asked about the styles of windows – some appear to be double-hung, but others look like fixed glass windows. Mr. Armstrong said that he was using the Lynch Apartments building across the street as his inspiration for longer windows. He offered to check with his designer. Mr. Marr explained about double-hung windows. He asked for clarification so Susan Markman said that they were looking for consistency. Mr. Marr stated that the windows don't actually have to open, but they need to appear that they do. However, Debra Roberts pointed out that if the windows are in an upstairs bedroom, they have to be able to be opened.

Ms. Markman thanked Mr. Armstrong for providing the materials list with the examples for them. Ms. Roberts asked if the door shown is the specific door he wants or if it's just a representation. Mr. Armstrong said that it's a representation of what he wants to use. She added that they normally approve the exact door. He stated that he wants a full-glass front door. Chairman Marr added that it's funny how doors can help distinguish the style of a house. Ms. Markman told Mr. Armstrong that the neighborhood has some really nice examples of front doors.

Megan Willmes stated that she would like to see a few more details such as roof brackets, which would help tie the building into the neighborhood. Mason Toms added that attention to the front porch would be a good way of bringing in more historic context.

Mr. Armstrong asked if he needs to provide revised plans in order to get approval. Charlie Hart added that generally, the changes are shown on the plans. He pointed out that the description

shows the changes but the plans don't. He told Mr. Armstrong that he wanted to go through the description line-by-line:

It lists vinyl casement windows. We don't normally allow vinyl windows but it's new construction. We normally recommend wood windows. Mr. Armstrong asked for an explanation of the difference between vinyl and wood windows. Chairman Marr explained that the vast majority of vinyl windows cannot be repaired. If the glass breaks you have to replace the entire window. Mr. Toms added that that also applies to any insulated glass windows. The only exception is true-divided-lite windows. Mr. Armstrong asked Mr. Hart if he is asking that all the windows be wood vs. vinyl. Mr. Hart stated that he would love that. Mr. Hart then explained that they allow aluminum-clad wood windows. If he finds something like that he should send it to Ms. Peters for approval. Ms. Markman added that there are several examples of the aluminum-clad windows in the district, and they are a good quality product. Megan Willmes added that there isn't much cost difference in those and the vinyl windows.

Mr. Hart then asked about the soffits, fascia, & metal trim which will be black. He asked where the metal trim would go. Mr. Toms looked at the plans and determined that the metal trim would be in the eaves. The group then tried to figure out where the Hardie board would go. Ms. Willmes & Mr. Toms determined that it would be in the gable ends.

Mr. Hart asked Mr. Armstrong if he had any plans to erect a fence. He answered that he doesn't have any immediate plans for a fence. Ms. Roberts told him that since no fence is shown on the plans, he needs to come back to them whenever he plans to build one. Mr. Armstrong asked if the living fence at 6th & Orange has been approved by the guidelines. Mr. Hart told him not to consider it. Mr. Marr said that it was an experimental fence but it hasn't held up. Mr. Armstrong asked about metal railing fences. Wrought iron fences are allowed but Mr. Marr stressed that the style of fencing should go with the style of the house. He said that wrought iron fences are more appropriate for the Queen Anne style, and picket fences were more of a Craftsman or Colonial Revival style of fence. Mr. Armstrong said that he is looking at fencing for the front and the Orange Street elevation. The rear would have a 6-foot privacy fence. The limit on front yard fences is 3.5 feet; the limit on rear yard fences is 8 feet. It was clarified that this was just a discussion for guidance, and was not being reviewed with this application.

Charlie Hart then brought up the rear stairs which are proposed to be metal. Mr. Armstrong said that if metal is a problem, he would consider using wood. Susan Markman said that metal would have an urban look, and they are in an urban area. Mason Toms said that he doesn't think the staircase will be that visible from either street. Ms. Markman said that they have always said that if something is not highly visible from the street, they have always allowed it. Mr. Hart then said that he would prefer wood. Mr. Armstrong said that his consideration is the wear & tear on wood due to weather which is why he had proposed metal, but if the Commission prefers wood, he'll go with wood. Mr. Hart said that, even though they don't normally do this, he wanted them to come to an agreement on the spot, so they took a poll. Most said that they were okay with metal.

Chairman Marr asked if there would be steps to the front porch, and asked if they would be concrete. Mr. Armstrong stated that they would be concrete. He then asked if there would be a

HDC Meeting February 12, 2026

Page 7

concrete walkway to the sidewalk. Mr. Armstrong said there would be a walkway. He clarified that the front porch would face W. 6th Street unlike the original house on the block which had a wraparound porch that faced both W. 6th Street & Orange Street. They passed around photos of the original Rinke House which stood on two lots at that corner. Don Chambers stated that it burned around 1975; the fire department couldn't put it out so they just let it burn which took two days.

Chairman Marr then opened up the discussion for public comment. George Collins told Mr. Armstrong that he appreciated him facing the house on W. 6th Street. He also said that they have the powder-coated aluminum wood windows and they are very happy with them. He stated that they have also agreed to so a construction fence between their houses.

Don Chambers then gave Mr. Armstrong some advice on planting hedges, and other plantings. He also pointed out that metal stairs are both noisy and slick. He suggested that he might want to put something on the treads to make them quieter. Because there were no further comments from the public, Chairman Marr closed public comment.

Mr. Marr then asked Mr. Armstrong if he had any idea which architectural style he is leaning toward. Mr. Armstrong said that he was leaning toward Craftsman which is what he had been aiming for. Mr. Marr made one more recommendation. He said that changing the single, square front porch column to a more Craftsman or decorative will make a huge difference in how the house is seen. He added that tapered columns are seen a lot in the district. Debra Roberts added that the tapered column should sit on a pier. Mr. Armstrong said that he would do that.

Chairman Marr added that they've suggested several changes to the plans, and suggested that he have his designer make the changes to the plans, and give them to Kelli to look over. Debra Roberts suggested that instead of having his designer redo the drawings, he might just give us a detailed description of what he plans to change, which would save him the expense of having his draftsman redo the drawings. She said that the detailed description could lock him into what they expect. Mr. Hart suggested that they don't build from a description, they build from plans.

Chairman Marr did a recap of their discussion: windows should be double-hung, aluminum-clad wood; front porch column should be tapered with pier; rear stairs; adding more period details; location of & amount of Hardie board siding; explanation of metal trim; knee braces would be nice; photo of front door he will use. Debra Roberts stated that they need to know what they're approving and they need something to hold him to, and to make sure they are thinking the same thing. Mr. Armstrong said that if he sees that it won't cost too much to change the plans, he will go ahead and do that, too.

Chairman Marr then asked for a motion to approve or deny the application as submitted. Susan Markman made a motion to approve the application and discussion of itemized changes, contingent on Kelli's approval of the itemized changes. Charlie Hart seconded the motion and it was approved 6-0 in a roll call vote.

Staff Report/Comments/Discussion:

Kelli Peters reported that, sadly, as of 02/06/26, Sandra has been placed under in-home hospice care. Mayor Hartwick has declared Friday, February 13, to officially be “Sandra Taylor Smith Day” (Friday the 13th). Mayor Hartwick typed the nicest letter for Sandra and she delivered it to her on Monday. Debra Roberts mentioned that she & Sandra went all through school together.

Ms. Peters reported that she had received a complaint about a fence for which she had issued a COA the previous July, however, the fence wasn’t installed until February 5. The installers put the unfinished side of the fence facing out at the rear. On the day it was installed, she went by and visited with the owner to see if that side could be reversed, but was told that the job was finished. That was not governed by the guidelines, and all other aspects of the fence followed the guidelines, so she accepted that from the owner. She asked the commissioners if they want her to go through the Commission for every fence application, or if she has the authority to approve fences at the staff level, as long as they fall within the guidelines. Debra Roberts said that if fences fell within the guidelines, Sandra approved fences at the staff level, but she would normally send them an email to alert them. Chairman Marr asked the commissioners if they want to review all fences. Charlie Hart said that he does. Mason Toms suggested that if something – even other than fences – falls within the guidelines, Kelli could send an email to see if she can staff approve a COA.

Charlie Hart asked Ms. Peters if she had issued a COA for the new house at 801 Maple yet. She said that she had not, that she is waiting for proof that the replat has been done. Once she receives that proof, she will issue the COA, but not until.

She reported that she has sent out four (4) violation letters earlier this week. One was another letter to Connie Jones but she couldn’t remember who the others were. She reported that she saw that the work at Crush Wine Bar is done! Also, the scissor lift is now in front of Argenta Drug so it appears that they are continuing on, so she’s very encouraged. Charlie Hart told her to remember how that happened, and to keep it up. She assured him she would and said that, so far, her track record is good on getting violations corrected.

After Tom Marr determined that there was no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:18 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kelli Peters", written in a cursive style.

Kelli Peters, Director
North Little Rock Historic District Commission