

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MINUTES

March 5, 2026 - 2:30 PM

PRESENT: Bill Loughery, Chair
Tia Hockensmith, Vice Chair
Danielle Dashiell, Member
Sean Hurley, Member
Holly Young, Member

STAFF PRESENT: Kristin Coman, Planning Manager; Chloe Berryman, City Attorney; Ginny Keeter-Bodkin, Deputy Clerk; Laura Canary, Community Development Director; Kristin Coman, Planning Manager; Brandon Berry, Senior Planner; Lynn Rosetti, Planning Consultant

Chair Loughery called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM. A quorum was present.

1. Approval of the Agenda –

Staff requested to add a status update item on the 10th Ave sidewalk with Camden Mills, Public Services Director, to be heard first (5.e.); Member Dashiell added an update on the status of status historic plaques (5.f.); Chair Loughery added a status update on the design guidebook (5.g.) and Vice Chair Hockensmith asked to add a brief update of on disclosure (5.h.).

Motion: Member Hurley moved and Chair Loughery seconded the approval of the agenda as amended; the motion carried 5-0.

2. Audience Comments – No one came forward for comment.

3. Approval of Minutes –

a. Special Meeting January 27 and Regular Meeting February 5, 2026

Chair Loughery noted that the January 27th meeting included this board's recommendation to the Board of Adjustment regarding Case 25142 for 702 Pass A Grille Way, which is now being appealed. The recorded meeting proceedings are available on the city's website in addition to the minutes.

Motion: Chair Loughery moved, and Member Hurley seconded to approve the January 27, 2026 minutes as presented; the motion carried 5-0.

Motion: Chair Loughery moved, and Member Young seconded to approve the February 5, 2026 minutes as presented; the motion carried 5-0.

4. Action Items –

The Deputy Clerk swore in all those who would be testifying before the board.

- a. Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition No. 26021: 103 1st Avenue**
Suncoast Wrecking and Asset Recovery, LLC for Marilyn Nolan requests to demolish a two-family structure that is contributing to the Pass A Grille Historic District and is a locally-designated historic resource (Designation #3, 1995).

Senior Planner Brandon Berry reviewed a brief presentation on this request. Earlier this year this board approved a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the other two structures on the property. This is for the primary structure at the front of the property. He reviewed the Land Development Code criteria for demolition permits. Staff suggested that the applicant provide testimony pertaining to the inability to save the building. The structure was not noted to have sustained substantial damage during a recent post-hurricane assessment. The owner has received an extensive letter detailing redevelopment options and has been made aware of the redevelopment restrictions on the existing, nonconforming density buildings. Staff recommended approval with no stay or conditions.

Applicant Marilyn Nolan testified that neighbor behind her took the historical marker plaque for safe keeping and explained that there are some items inside they would like to save and donate to the historical museum. She testified that this was the third major storm and flood she had been through and was not able to restore the home again. She added that the house was previously a barracks for a senior officer in the 1930's. Member Dashiell requested that Ms. Nolan write down any significant history of the property that she knows.

Motion: Chair Loughery moved, and Member Young seconded to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition No. 26021: 103 1st Avenue with no stay; the motion carried 5-0.

b. Certificate of Appropriateness No. 26024: 102 4th Avenue

Madison Wilson for Gilbert & Denine Dimola requests a certificate of appropriateness to add decks and stairs in conjunction with the elevation of a contributing single-family resource to the Pass A Grille National Register Historic District. The structure is currently listed on the City's local historic registry but is proposed for de-listing under this project scope (Designation #69).

Contract Planner Lynn Rosetti presented the background and details of this request; her presentation is part of the meeting record. The applicants are seeking to elevate this structure above BFE (base flood elevation) onto a proposed new concrete foundation that would provide parking for one car, storage, and access to the elevated house. The house itself would not be altered, but the elevation and the modified foundation with stairs and a deck will change the appearance. Staff recognized the problematic nature of leaving this house at grade within an area of the city that is subject to flooding. Staff noted that the applicant is not required to elevate the building to the proposed height, but they generally do not discourage property owners from elevating as high as they prefer. However, if the elevation had been closer to five or six feet, staff felt there could have been a more reasonable discussion about creating a usable ground-level space. Their concern mainly relates to how much elevation is being proposed, as this level of elevation usually requires careful consideration. This board is considering only the Certificate of Appropriateness for the design; other matters will require approval from the Board of Adjustment.

Because the structure is still currently considered a contributing resource until the district is re-surveyed, which may take another year or two after the storm, staff advised that the applicant still obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness in the meantime. This ensures review continues during this interim period, since the building could potentially remain on the registry or be identified as contributing again during the future survey.

Applicant Gil Dimola appeared testified that they were unaware that the dwelling was on the historic register. He presented a photo of what he originally proposed that the finished home would look like. Mr. Berry confirmed that there had been some changes to the plans since design review.

Motion: Member Hurley moved to approve Certificate of Appropriateness No. 26024 at 102 4th Avenue to remove from historic designation. He withdrew the motion.

Motion: Chair Loughery moved, and Member Dashiell seconded to approve Certificate of Appropriateness No. 26024 at 102 4th Avenue without a specific recommendation to the Board of Adjustment; the motion carried 5-0.

c. Certificate of Appropriateness No. 26026: 104 4th Avenue

Madison Wilson for Ronald and Margaret Schiff requests a certificate of appropriateness to add an elevator, decks and stairs in conjunction with the elevation of a contributing two-family resource to the Pass A Grille National Register Historic District. The structure is currently listed on the City's local historic registry but is proposed for de-listing under this project scope (Designation #82).

Ms. Rosetti reviewed a presentation on the request, including background and analysis, and photographs. Staff recommended approval to protect the structure from future flooding. Mr. Berry testified that he spoke to the applicant regarding loss of historic designation.

A key concern raised by Chair Loughery was the proposal to relocate the garage from the rear alley to the front of the property, which would require a curb cut and removal of an on-street parking space. The Chair noted that front-facing garages are uncommon in this historic section of Pass-A-Grille, where alley access has traditionally been used for vehicles, and expressed concern that the change could alter the historic streetscape. Staff clarified that the COA review only applies to the architectural changes (elevator, decks, and stairs) and not the garage or curb cut, which are handled administratively through the permitting process and reviewed by staff and potentially the Board of Adjustment. The board could comment on design concerns but does not have authority to deny the project based on the garage location.

Applicant Andrew Schiff testified that rear alley access is extremely narrow (about 10 feet) and difficult to maneuver, making it impractical for parking. The proposed design would allow two tandem parking spaces under the elevated home, replacing the single rear garage. Additional considerations included accessibility for elderly homeowners and ease of trash handling.

Board members generally agreed that the applicants had carefully considered the design, and discussion concluded with acknowledgment that the board's decision is limited to the elevator, deck, and stair elements, while concerns about the front garage and curb cut were noted but outside the Board's authority.

Motion: Vice Chair Hockensmith moved, and Chair Loughery seconded to approve Certificate of Appropriateness No. 26026 for 104 4th Avenue with the recommendation to the Board of Adjustment to consider parking from the rear of properties, moving forward on other cases. The motion carried 5-0.

5. Discussion Items –

a. Design Review No. 26025: 102 4th Avenue

Mr. Berry explained that this design review allows for deck and stair additions to a currently locally-designated (proposed for de-designation) historic resource and contributing resource to the Pass-A-Grille National Register Historic District, following elevation of the existing residence. No additional living space is proposed under this project. The design allows for a partial setback encroachment. The Board of Adjustment is responsible for the remainder of the encroachment toward the front yard and the rear yard.

Staff's design comments were to continue the stucco patterning to the ground floor, the deck barrier should be vertical aluminum or a style contemporaneous with the age of the structure, and the height and massing will likely remove the home from being considered a contributing structure (which the owners are aware of). Staff felt that the primary front setback was consistent with others on the block. This is a single-family use, so there are no form or mass limitations other than those required under the design regulations.

Owner Gilbert Dimola testified that the stucco will be straight down to ground level and the deck barrier will be vertical.

b. Design Review No. 26027: 104 4th Avenue

Staff presented a design review for proposed improvements to this home, which include adding an elevator, decks, and stairs as part of elevating the structure. No additional living space is being added.

The elevator is proposed at the front (north side) of the home, with stairs on the west side and a deck and stair on the east side. The front elevator and the eastern deck slightly encroach into required setbacks, requiring variances from the Board of Adjustment. The elevator extends about 8 inches beyond the existing front wall, and the eastern deck extends about two-thirds of a foot into the side setback.

Staff noted that the elevator addition appears secondary in scale and compatible with the main structure. A design change from a flat roof to a hip-style roof helps it better match the historic character of the home. However, staff pointed out that the new front garage access significantly changes the front façade, and the extent of the elevation may prevent the house from qualifying as a contributing historic resource in the future, which the owner understands.

Staff indicated the design is appropriate but noted that variances are required for the setback encroachments, and the Board may provide recommendations before the case proceeds to the Board of Adjustment.

c. Design Review No. 26029: 301 Gulf Way

Mr. Berry presented the third and final design review for 301 Gulf Way, a non-contributing residence according to the 2015 Historic Resources Survey, meaning a Certificate of Appropriateness was not required. The proposal involves elevating the existing one-story Craftsman bungalow approximately 11 feet and adding decks and stairs, while converting the ground level to parking, storage, and access space. The project largely preserves the existing appearance and architectural character of the home, maintaining its modern Craftsman features. Vehicular access will remain from the alley, which is preferred. The elevation height was considered reasonable and not overwhelming to the structure.

Design comments were minimal, with staff suggesting a thicker top railing for the front deck to better reflect the Craftsman style. Staff also noted the use of stucco on the ground floor rather than continuing horizontal siding. The item is being reviewed prior to moving to the Board of Adjustment, as the project requires variances for setbacks less than three feet on the north and east sides due to the home being elevated in place. Staff found the proposal well designed and compatible with the existing structure.

Architect Mark Jonnati appeared on behalf of the applicants and testified as to their decision to keep the existing building: his clients are design-sensitive and wanted to preserve the visual impression. The 3rd Avenue elevation is very visible, and the applicants felt that the siding on the length of building was too much and the stucco provides a chance to change colors subtly; they thought it was the best solution.

d. Height interpretation: New buildings in the Pass A Grille Overlay District

In response to a request from the board, staff presented an example of a newly constructed home on Gulf Way to explain how building height is currently interpreted under the code. The home measures height from 8 feet above grade, allowing 26 ft.7 in. to the top of the habitable roof area, 28 ft. for a flat roof parapet, and up to 32 ft overall for any structure, including non-habitable elements. The top level of the example home is labeled non-habitable storage and roof access, which staff stated allows it to reach nearly the 32-foot maximum.

Board members questioned this interpretation, arguing that the upper structure appears to function as an additional floor and that the code's examples for height exceptions (such as chimneys or mechanical features) do not clearly justify a full enclosed space above the roof. Concerns were raised that this interpretation could allow future buildings to effectively add another level while technically remaining within the height limit.

Staff explained that the interpretation relies partly on Florida Building Code definitions of habitable vs. non-habitable space and acknowledged that the definition of height has evolved through multiple code revisions, creating potential ambiguity.

The discussion concluded with a recommendation from Laura Canary, Community Development Director, to hold a workshop with the City Commission and stakeholders to clarify or potentially amend the code, ensuring consistent interpretation of height limits going forward.

e. Update 10th Ave Sidewalk (added)

Public Services Director Camden Mills reported that the city did not have enough original hexagonal pavers for the sidewalk, so additional pavers were outsourced from manufacturers in gray and red. A couple of pallets of each have been ordered to maintain the same size and shape. The job should be completed in the next few weeks. Washingtonian Palms will be installed at a later date.

f. Historic Plaque Update (added)

Ms. Coman reported that the city has decided to go more "full service" and have property owners come to the city to order plaques vs. to the vendor. There will likely be one bulk order initially. Staff is finalizing the applications and working on the list of properties. The city's PIO will be publishing on the website and social media to get the information out. Interested parties will contact the Planning Department; the initial order will likely take 6-8 weeks and then orders may be quarterly thereafter.

Plaques are still \$249. Historical markers were also briefly discussed.

g. Design guidebook update (added)

Mr. Berry reported that he spoke with Consultant Tara Salmieri, who indicated she is in process and expects an 8–10-week lead time, possibly in May. He added that there is currently a pending State Bill being considered that significantly modifies SB 180 and would scale back the applicability for most of it to July. There appears to be a House companion to that bill. Staff will be tracking that, and keep the board updated.

h. Disclosure (added)

Vice Chair Hockensmith reported that due diligence with the State and the Association of Realtors, the seller's disclosure form now specifically asks whether the home is historic or in a historic district. She added that this should be part of the legal description with the Property Appraiser's Office to promote continued awareness.

6. Adjournment – The next meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2026.

Chair Loughery adjourned the meeting at 4:36 PM.

These minutes were approved at the April 2, 2026 Historic Preservation Board meeting.