

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Wednesday May 6th, 2026, 6:00 pm

Providence City Office Building, 164 North Gateway Dr., Providence Ut

Call to Order: George Wootton.

Chair Roll Call of Commission Members: George Wootton, Brendan Lee, Ken Thigpen & Karen Brooks

Staff in Attendance: Community Development Director Skarlet Bankhead and City Recorder Ty Cameron

Pledge of Allegiance: George Wootton.

Comments from the public: Any member of the public who has a comment pertaining to the mission of the Historical Preservation Commission will have 3 minutes to make their comment.

- George Wootton opened the floor of public comment.
- No comments were made.

➤ **Item No. 1 Approval of Minutes:** Approval of the minutes for March 4th, 2026. [\(MINUTES\)](#)

- George Wootton called for the approval of the minutes of March 4th.
- No corrections were made or stated.

Motion to approve the minutes of March 4th, 2026. - Brendan Lee. 2nd- Ken Thigpen.

Vote:

Yea- George Wootton, Brendan Lee, Ken Thigpen & Karen Brooks

Nay-

Abstained-

Motion passes, minutes approved.

➤ **Item No. 2 Jody Robins Rezone of Parcel 02-095-0031 - Downtown Providence:** Historic Preservation Commission will review and discuss a rezone request of Parcel 02-095-0031, located in the general area of 96 N Main. The property is currently zoned R-1-12; the applicant is requesting Mixed Use (MXD). No action will be taken by HPC. Public Hearing set before Planning Commission on May 13th @ 6 pm. [\(ANAYLSIS\)](#) & [\(PRESENTATION\)](#)

- Chair Wootton introduced this item and reminded the Commission and those present that no action would be taken regarding this item. This item was presented for informational purposes only, with a formal public hearing before the Planning Commission scheduled for May 13th at 6:00 PM. The applicant, Jody Robins, was invited to present.
- Mr. Robins introduced his proposal to develop what he described as a boutique downtown for Providence City on Parcel 02-095-0031, located at approximately 96 North Main Street. He described the project, referred to informally as "Providence Town Square," as a mixed-use development designed to serve as a community gathering place — a concept he characterized as a "third place," distinct from home and workplace, where residents can engage in spontaneous social interaction.
- The proposed development would consist of two two-story buildings, each containing three commercial storefronts on the ground floor, for a total of six commercial spaces. The second floors would house six two-bedroom, two-bathroom apartments designed in an industrial

Victorian loft style. Mr. Robins indicated the target demographic for the residential units would be young professionals and newly married couples. He noted that this type of above-commercial loft apartment does not currently exist elsewhere in Providence.

- The site plan was described as pedestrian-oriented, with building facades facing the sidewalk, sidewalk seating, bike parking, and alley-style dining areas with granite cobblestone surfaces. A southern-facing outdoor dining courtyard was also included to maximize seasonal use. Vehicle parking would be located entirely behind the buildings, with two-car garages incorporated into the rear portion of one of the buildings. Mr. Robins stated the parking plan meets the mixed-use zoning requirement of one and a half stalls per apartment and one stall per 250 square feet of retail space. A ten-foot landscaped buffer with xeriscaping of varying heights was planned along all neighboring property lines, along with fencing, to protect adjacent residents and enhance the aesthetic character of the development.
- Mr. Robins noted that the current R-1-12 zoning already permits structures up to 35 feet in height within 10 feet of property lines, and that his proposal would remain below that height limit with buildings set back a minimum of 25 feet from neighboring properties — a more conservative footprint than what is presently allowed by right. The mixed-use rezone is required specifically to allow the commercial and mixed-use components.
- Mr. Robins discussed at length his intention to honor the architectural character of the area. He stated that the design was inspired by early 1900s Main Street USA building styles and referenced brickwork and window arch details found throughout existing Providence structures. He stated his intent to incorporate these historic design elements into the new buildings, including a distinctive straight-arch window style found on the existing structure at the site. He also referenced the work done by Cache Valley Bank in restoring historic brick buildings as a model for the quality of brickwork he intends to achieve.
- The most substantive discussion centered on the fate of the existing structure on the property, identified by Commission members as the historic tithing house, constructed circa 1875. Mr. Robins acknowledged the building directly, stating that the historic portion of the structure measures approximately 22 by 15 feet in its original footprint, with later additions containing the plumbing, bedrooms, and other modern amenities. He explained that due to site constraints — including the need for the landscaped buffer, outdoor dining space, and a large tree he wished to preserve — the existing building could not remain in place within his development plan.
- Mr. Robins offered to donate the historic structure to any individual, organization, or public entity willing to relocate it within a reasonable timeframe. He expressed awareness that moving a brick structure is complex but cited a precedent from Preston, Idaho, where a more architecturally complex brick building had been successfully relocated. Ken Thigpen noted that the structure sits on a stone foundation and raised questions about the feasibility of moving it. Jody indicated he would like to reuse the foundation stones architecturally within the new development.
- Jody stated that regardless of whether the building is moved, he intends to salvage and reuse the original brick, the stone foundation, the distinctive window arches, and interior five-panel doors. He described plans to incorporate the foundation stone into the walls of the alley dining area to create the feel of an aged foundation wall, and to use the salvaged doors decoratively within the development. He also committed to placing a commemorative plaque on the site, suggesting the text from a recent city newsletter article on the building's history would serve as an appropriate basis.

- 94 • Ken Thigpen requested that when final architectural drawings are completed, the applicant return
95 to present them, specifically calling out where salvaged materials would be used and which
96 historic structures informed the brickwork on each section of the buildings.
- 97 • Karen Brooks expressed significant reservations about the project from a historic preservation
98 standpoint. She observed that historic Providence did not feature two-story commercial buildings
99 and that the proposed scale and character would fundamentally alter the feeling of the town's
100 center. She stated her view that the tithing house should remain in place, as it has been a fixed
101 part of the community's history and its location is integral to its significance. She also noted that
102 the proposed design does not, in her view, integrate harmoniously with the nearby Old Rock
103 Church or the surrounding historic residential character of the area, and characterized the
104 development as an intrusion on the community.
- 105 • Brendan Lee expressed a more measured perspective, noting appreciation for the pedestrian-
106 oriented design and the way the project could help connect the downtown area with the adjacent
107 park, which he felt currently seemed disjointed from the rest of the commercial area. He agreed
108 with the importance of commemorating the site's history through a plaque or similar memorial.
109 He also inquired whether Jody had prior experience working with historic architecture in small
110 towns; Jody acknowledged that his experience is more a personal passion than a professional
111 specialty, with his primary development experience being within Providence itself, including the
112 Providence Springs 55-and-older community and the Providence Shire subdivision.
- 113 • Brendan Lee raised the issue of pedestrian and vehicular safety, noting that the proposed site is
114 on a heavily traveled street and that additional traffic generated by six commercial businesses
115 could be a meaningful concern. Jody acknowledged that traffic would increase, but argued that
116 the pedestrian-scale design was intended to capture local residents who would walk or bike to the
117 destination rather than drive. He also noted that mixed-use zoning requires the installation of a
118 bike servicing center, bike parking, and electric vehicle charging stations, all of which he intends
119 to include.
- 120 • A member of the public residing directly across the street identified herself as a former member
121 of the Historic Preservation Commission and a history major. She spoke at length about the
122 character of the surrounding neighborhood, noting that homes on the block date to 1910 and
123 1929, and that the area has always been a residential neighborhood, not a commercial district.
124 She described the intersection of Main Street and 100 North as already hazardous, citing a
125 personal traffic count of 726 vehicles in a single hour that did not coincide with a scheduled
126 sporting event. She expressed concern about the additional traffic that six commercial businesses
127 would generate and stated that she would not cross the street at night due to current traffic
128 conditions. She also stated that the design of the proposed buildings, while perhaps well-
129 intentioned, does not feel consistent with the pre-1930 character of the neighborhood and the
130 historic structures nearby.
- 131 • Community Development Director Skarlet Bankhead provided context for the Commission,
132 noting that the property could be purchased and developed under the current R-1-12 zoning
133 without any Commission review, and that nothing in the current city code would prevent
134 demolition of the tithing house by any property owner. She noted that no preservation
135 protections are currently in place for the structure. Ms. Bankhead also addressed the traffic
136 concern, stating that a prior traffic count had not met the warrant for a four-way stop at Main and
137 100 North, and that the stop sign was instead placed at 100 East and 100 North where the
138 warrant was better supported. She noted that if traffic levels increased to meet the warrant at
139 Main and 100 North, the appropriate first response would be reinstatement of the four-way stop.

- Chair Wootton reflected on the Commission's dual responsibility: to honor the historic character and structures of the community while also recognizing that Providence has long lacked a defined downtown, which has historically limited the city's eligibility for certain grants and programming. He acknowledged that the project would change the character of the area for immediate neighbors, expressed appreciation for the applicant's willingness to incorporate historic materials and a commemorative plaque, and noted that traffic and zoning matters fall more squarely within the jurisdiction of the Planning and Zoning Commission. He stated that he had previously explored the possibility of using the tithing house as a museum location but had concluded with staff that the building's structural condition made that impractical.
- The applicant confirmed that the property is currently under contract for purchase, contingent on the outcome of the rezone process. He indicated that if the rezone is not approved, he could still acquire the property and develop it under current zoning, but expressed that this would not reflect his vision for the site or the community.
- No action was taken by the Historic Preservation Commission on this item, consistent with the agenda designation.

➤ **Item No. 3 Hungry for History Grant:** The Historic Preservation Commission will review, discuss and may take action on pursuing the William G Pomeroy Hungry for History Grant. [\(GRANT SITE\)](#)

- Brendan Lee introduced the William G. Pomeroy Foundation's "Hungry for History" grant program, which provides funding for roadside or landmark-style historical markers focused on historic foodways. He noted that the neighboring community of Mendon had recently applied for and received a grant through the same organization for a marker related to their annual Maypole celebration, with a well-received public unveiling ceremony.
- Brendan Lee proposed that Providence pursue a grant for a marker commemorating the community's historic sauerkraut tradition, with the unveiling timed to coincide with the annual Sauerkraut Days celebration. He noted that the next application deadline is in October, providing sufficient time to apply, receive approval, and potentially install the marker in advance of the following year's event. He explained that the application requires a letter of intent identifying the proposed wording on the marker and the intended location, along with a land use permission document from the relevant property owner or the city.
- Discussion turned to the question of location. Ken Thigpen suggested that the marker should be placed in an area with sufficient pedestrian foot traffic to be seen and read, rather than at a city entrance where passing motorists would be moving too quickly. Chair Wootton agreed, suggesting that the central area near the Old Rock Church or the former school location — where much of the historic sauerkraut activity occurred — would be more appropriate. Mr. Lee supported a central and celebratory location.
- Council Member Speth, who was present, provided historical context, recounting personal memories of the sauerkraut tradition spanning decades, including the preparation of 11 to 13 fifty-gallon barrels of sauerkraut, which were taken to Preston, Idaho to be canned into upward of 2,000 cans that were sold at community dinners. He described the dinners as having served 1,200 or more people at a time, initially held at the school and later at the church. He noted that the sauerkraut was prepared in various locations over the years, including Art Hammond's milk house and the city shop, and that the practice eventually declined due to public health regulations.

- Karen Brooks raised the broader potential of the grant program to fund historical markers for other significant but currently unmarked sites in Providence, and noted that a historic foundation on her property relates to a cooperative farmers' weigh station. Ken Thigpen asked whether markers could be added in areas where existing historical markers are already present. Brendan Lee confirmed that the grant program allows for multiple applications and that multiple markers could be pursued.
- The public attendee offered additional historical context regarding church involvement in the sauerkraut dinners and suggested that the pavilion — historically located near the site of the current city hall — might be a meaningful location given its association with early community food events.
- Brendan indicated he would take responsibility for drafting the letter of intent and gathering primary sources. The Commission agreed that a follow-up presentation on the grant application, including suggested wording and proposed locations, would be brought to the next meeting for further discussion and a decision. Ken volunteered to handle physical installation of the marker if the grant is awarded.

Motion to table the Hungry for History Grant item and continue it until the next meeting. – Brendan Lee. 2nd- Karen Brooks.

Vote:

Yea- George Wootton, Brendan Lee, Ken Thigpen & Karen Brooks

Nay-

Abstained-

Motion passes, item continued.

➤ **Item No. 4 Sauerkraut Days 2026 Continued Preparation Discussions.**

- Chair Wootton opened discussion on the Commission's preparations for the upcoming Sauerkraut Days 2026 celebration. Several areas of involvement were identified for further planning at the next meeting.
- Council Member Speth expressed interest in developing a historical exhibit or informational display for the Commission's booth, incorporating photographs, historical context, and information about the long history of sauerkraut in Providence. He referenced the community history book — Providence and Her People — as a potential source for historical images and narrative material and suggested that display panels could show the evolution of the sauerkraut-making tradition from wooden barrels in milk houses to modern production. Karen Brooks proposed that the exhibit could also address the historic role of various church congregations in organizing the dinners.
- Chair Wootton noted that John Mayor, who currently produces the sauerkraut for the festival, had offered to give a presentation on the sauerkraut-making process at this year's event, which the Commission found appealing as a way to connect current and historical traditions.
- Karen Brooks raised the need to resolve transportation logistics for the historic building tours, a matter that had been briefly discussed at the prior meeting. Ken reminded the group that display materials at the outdoor booth need to be secured against wind, as items had been lost to gusting conditions in prior years. Chair Wootton noted that a photograph from a prior year's display needed to be reframed before the event.

- The Commission also identified roles to be assigned for the event, including staffing the booth across Friday evening and Saturday, participating in the parade, and coordinating the historic tour. Chair Wootton indicated he would follow up with Wes regarding coordination and would bring budget information — including proposals for Commission shirts and potential responsibility for tour transportation costs — to the next meeting after consulting further with Director Bankhead and staff.
- The Commission agreed to address these Sauerkraut Days planning items in greater detail at the June 3rd meeting, with members asked to reflect in the interim on what roles and time commitments they are prepared to take on.

The Commission voted to hold its next regular meeting on **June 3, 2026**.

Motion to schedule the next meeting for June 3rd, 2026. – Brendan Lee. 2nd -Ken Thigpen.

Vote:

Yea- George Wootton, Brendan Lee, Ken Thigpen & Karen Brooks

Nay-

Abstained-

Motion passes

Motion to adjourn the meeting. – Ken Thigpen. 2nd- Brendan Lee.

Vote:

Yea- George Wootton, Brendan Lee, Ken Thigpen & Karen Brooks

Nay-

Abstained-

Motion passes. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes approved by vote of HPC on 3rd day of June 2026.

I swear these minutes are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



Ty Cameron, City Recorder