

**STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF HIDALGO  
CITY OF MCALLEN**

The Historic Preservation Council convened in a meeting on Wednesday, April 1, 2026 at 12:01 p.m. at the McAllen Development Center – 311 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street – Executive Conference

|                 |                   |                  |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| <b>Present:</b> | Carolina Civarolo | Chairperson      |
|                 | Michael Hovar     | Vice-Chairperson |
|                 | Marc Millis       | Member           |
|                 | Daniel Padilla    | Member           |
|                 | Jesus De Leon     | Member           |

|                       |                     |                             |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Staff Present:</b> | Michelle Rivera     | Assistant City Manager      |
|                       | Martin Canales      | Assistant City Attorney III |
|                       | Luis Mora           | Deputy Planning Director    |
|                       | Kaveh Forghanparast | Senior Planner              |
|                       | Carmen White        | Administrative Assistant    |

**CALL TO ORDER – Carolina Civarolo - Chairperson**

**1. ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS**

**a) Chairperson**

Mr. Marc Millis nominated Ms. Carolina Civarolo for Chairperson. Mr. Daniel Padilla seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously with five members present and voting.

**b) Vice-Chairperson**

Mr. Daniel Padilla nominated Mr. Mike Hovar for Vice-Chairperson. Mr. Marc Millis seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously with five members present and voting.

**2. Minutes**

**a) Minutes for the meeting held on September 18, 2025**

Minutes noted and corrected regarding Board member Millis had mentioned that on the third paragraph before Adjournment on the last page, he had asked if staff could look into City of Brownsville Preservation Ordinance.

Mr. Marc Millis **moved** to approve the minutes. Mr. Daniel Padilla **seconded** the motion. Motion approved with five Board members present and voting.

**b) Minutes for the meeting held on December 4, 2025**

Mr. Daniel Padilla **moved** to approve the minutes. Chairperson Carolina Civarolo **seconded** the motion. Motion approved with five Board members present and voting.

### **3. Discussion and Possible Action**

- a) Discussion of subcommittee considerations and recommendations for possible adoption of standards governing front yard fences in the Historic District.

Mr. Forghanparast stated at the last HPC meeting, that three members were assigned as a subcommittee to look into clarifying the guidelines for fences and he wanted to share the results of the meeting. If there were any guideline changes on the ordinance it does not mean we need to change it. It would be the HPC Board's decision to change it. He spoke with the Legal Department and if changes suggested, they would draft an ordinance, speak with the Ordinance Review Committee and if agreed take it the City Commission for approval.

Legal Counsel Martin Canales mentioned to the new members that the HPC has had more and more applications for fences. Moreover, the function of this HPC is to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness. The issues with the fences were they were too tall or pillars were too big but more and more owners have expressed an interest in having fences for security issues. The houses in the Historic District their yards are in the front and do not have much of a backyard. From the Certificate of Appropriateness applications the Board has received, none had been refused with conditions. What the HPC and Planning Department has done was work with the applicant to design the fence that meets with the standards that the Council had recommended.

Mr. Forghanparast stated that the design guidelines had multiple things one being the consistency of style, scale and materials. When there are proposals, additions or changes all of this should be considered. Per the guidelines, walls should not be located along the front yard, abutting the existing sidewalk, adjacent to the street at corner lots. Privacy fencing shall be isolated to the rear yard. Fencing shall not be constructed at the front yard. Mr. Forghanparast showed photos of the houses in the Historic District that had fences, the heights and structures.

Vice-Chairperson Hovar stated sometimes with preservation the purpose of preservation gets lost in what the entities require a design to be post original building. The National Historic Preservation guidelines states do not mimic or make it close to it. It would confuse the story of the building. He feels that the Historic Preservation Council should come up with an ordinance to guide and educate people about what was best for the preservation of the District. Mr. Hovar stated it would be nice if on the fences put a plaque on it that would state, "This fence was erected in the year 2025" not being a part of the original construction that would be a great thing to tell people as they're walking down the Historic District.

Mr. Forghanparast stated people put up fences around their properties for privacy and for safety concerns for children to play outdoors. He mentioned that on March 10, 2026 there was a meeting with the subcommittee to discuss all of these issues. He also had some of the numbers that the subcommittee had an idea on for the columns height and width, no higher than 5 feet 5 inches and width of 18-20 inches. For the parapet height of 2.5 feet and because the elevation of the house it could be different from the inside and outside, it should be measured from the sidewalk. Spacing of the columns was another issue was discussed depending the width of the property that it should be 8 to 16 feet apart. Materials for columns and parapet that stucco, brick or stone may want to discuss. Fence portion material, height of parapet Colors, low-level lighting and vegetation. These were some the items that was discussed with the subcommittee. He stated they looked at multiple cities on how their fences were. The City of San Antonio had guidelines that were simple and easy to understand.

Board member Millis stated the Historic District that it was literally a hodgepodge from old to new. Our guidelines around fencing will have to be broaden when it comes to an older structure versus a new build.

Legal Counsel Canales stated he noticed that the fence visually overtakes the house. Either the color or the bulkiness of the columns was out of balance.

Board member Millis stated he often struggled with the guidelines of the Historic Preservation because of the mix of existing properties and new buildings. He mentioned on the fencing guidelines where it stated fencing should be isolated to the rear yard only, considered changing it to allow fences in the front yard. Mr. Forghanparast stated the first paragraph mentions about what was existing and the second paragraph about new construction.

Vice-Chairperson Hovar stated the ordinance from City of San Antonio because every one of them was a transparent fence. There were no opaque masonry fences in any of these examples; everything was a variation off the same theme, which was thin pickets or wires.

Legal Counsel Canales asked staff when someone comes in to apply for a fence, do they submit a design for consideration. Mr. Forghanparast stated they would first come and speak with him. If they came and said they wanted to put a fence in front of their yard, his answer would be that our character guidelines does not discourages it. If they proposed it, he would have to recommend disapproval. If they could submit, a design and then staff would review it to discuss about it and then show it to the Director. It would be then taken before the HPC and if they want to put any conditions or changes, they can.

Chairperson Civarolo stated the guidelines for the HPC itself and not everyone on the HPC was an architect or a contractor someone that was knowledgeable of everything that happens it helps everyone have a better idea what is a possibility.

Board member Padilla stated there should be minimum standards. He stated that Mr. Millis had a good point having separate guidelines for a home that was historical and a new build or a newer home. We should have two different types of recommendations.

Board member Millis stated with what Board member Padilla mentioned whether or not we have two separate for the Historical structures in the Historical District or focus on scale and complimentary within these guidelines. The questions is, do we want it to look more like City of San Antonio and push the open metal fencing initially or do we succumb to what was already approved? Column height and width, spacing.

Vice-Chairperson Hovar stated you need to have height. Need to have a different one for both.

Mr. Forghanparast stated if the HPC needed more time to think about it, we could come back for another meeting to discuss it more.

Chairperson Civarolo asked staff what would be the next step. Would it be like an amendment to these standards? Mr. Forghanparast stated they should bring those ideas to the Ordinance Review Committee that consist of three City Commissioners.

Legal Canales stated it sounded like the HPC agrees that fences are going to be allowed and probably need to edit the standard guidelines

Vice-Chairperson Hovar stated diagrams were needed to show people what it looks like.

### 3. Adjournment

Following discussion, Mr. Jesus De Leon made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Marc Millis **seconded** the motion, which passed unanimously with five members present and voting. The meeting was adjourned at 12.59 p.m.

ATTEST Carmen White  
Carmen White

Carolina Civarolo  
Chairperson