

CASE SUMMARY • CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (COA)

Historic Preservation Commission Evidentiary Hearing • December 11, 2025

Project Planner | Alden Finholm | 910.772.4165 | alden.finhholm@wilmingtonnc.gov

Address:	32 North Front Street	District:	Commercial Business District-Historic District Overlay (CBD-HDO)
Request:	Store front restoration		
Property Owner:	Tilia Holdings LLC 32 N. Front Street Wilmington, NC 28401	Agent:	Tim Hamilton 2117 Wrightsville Ave Wilmington, NC 28403



32 N. Front Street | Front (west) Façade | Nov/2025 (City Staff)

Case Overview

The applicant proposes to restore an existing store front.

Details as shown on the drawings, plans, photographs, submittals, and narrative statement contained in the application, and supplemental materials and statements made at the December 11, 2025, meeting are a part of this request unless otherwise noted.

Property Information

Property Description

The following property description is adapted from the Wilmington Historic District Boundary Expansion and Additional Documentation report, dated 2003 (originally listed 1974).

The building located at 32 North Front Street was constructed sometime between 1870 and 1884. In 1914, Mr. Isaac Shrier purchased the three-story building. During that same year, Mr. Shrier remodeled the altered building and created a Beaux Arts style front façade with terra cotta trim around the two-story window opening. The denticulate cornice is supported by wreathed consoles and is capped by stone pediment with a name stone with "I Shrier" and "1870" and "1914" inscribed into the stone. Shrier was a men's clothier. Mr. Burrett H. Stephens was the architect for the 1914 modifications and Mr. Robert Tucker was the contractor.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

- **1884 Map.** Building listed as a brick clothing store
- **1889 Map.** No change
- **1893 Map.** No change
- **1898 Map.** Labeled "clothing store" and "Tailor"
- **1904 Map.** Labeled "Book storage"
- **1915 Map.** Labeled as singular building. No change
- **1951 Map.** No change
- **1955 Map.** No change

Current Conditions

- The subject building is a contributing resource to the Central Business District Historic District Overlay (CBD-HDO).
- The property is zoned Central Business District-Historic District Overlay (CBD-HDO). The CBD-HDO was established on April 24, 1979.

Proposed Findings of Fact

Property Information

1. The subject building is a contributing resource to the Central Business District Historic District Overlay (CBD-HDO). Only that which can be seen from the public right-of-way, excluding alleys, is subject to design review.
2. The subject property is located on the east side, one parcel south of the intersection of North Front and Princess streets.
3. The following facades are subject to review: west (front) façade and east (rear) facade
4. The following Certificates of Appropriateness have been issued for the property:
 - a. September 2016 (MW-17-32): Paint change
 - b. August 2007: Remove fire escape and create two balconies

Scope of Work

5. The applicant proposes to remove ornamental medallions.

- a. Ornamental medallions to be removed are at ground level.
6. The applicant proposes cleaning and repointing masonry.
 - a. Clean limestone and masonry and repoint mortar joints where necessary.
 - b. Repoint with a color matching mortar and strike replacements joints where necessary to match original.
 - c. Charcoal thin Brick Veneer with charcoal grout.
7. The applicant proposes to remove existing finishes and paint the aluminum storefront
 - a. HEX COLOR # 434448,
8. The applicant proposes installing new material on the vertical pilasters.
 - a. Hardie panel for flat background and frame that on 4 sides in 2 projecting levels of 1x dried.
 - b. For the frame a treated pine wood material.
9. The applicant proposes installing a new horizontal commercial sign.
 - a. The new horizontal sign band above the door will be a 1-piece non-wood material planed on a CNC router.
 - b. Projecting letters will be in a gold color.
 - c. The sign will be centered above entryway at 6" in Height and 9'-7" in length.
 - d. A gold "32" will be on center of the doorway's glass.
10. The applicant proposes to renovate the recessed entry.
 - a. New ceiling will be stained tongue-in-groove wood.
 - b. Install recessed lights projecting downward. (see observation)
 - c. Existing slate entry floor will be removed and replaced with mosaic ceramic tile the applicant proposes three options for flooring.

Staff Observations

11. Staff notes the following:
 - a. Ornamental medallions are on the north side of front (east) façade only.
 - b. A separate sign permit will be required for the proposed signage.
 - c. There is a discrepancy: The narrative states they will install 3 square recessed lights, and in the elevations, it lists 2 rounds recessed can lights.
 - d. The building is listed as a goldenrod plaque by HWF, meaning it is between 150-199 years old.

Applicable Design Standards

12. The following Wilmington Design Standards for Historic Districts and Landmarks are applicable to this request:

Section	Description	Standards
1.6	Secretary of the Interior's Standards	1-6, 9
1.	A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment	
2.	The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.	
3.	Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.	

4.	Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.	
5.	Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.	
6.	Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.	
9.	New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.	
2.7	District Setting-Lighting	5
5.	Exterior lighting should not detract from the historic districts. Residential areas should use low-level lighting. Carefully locate low-wattage, low-level or directional site lighting to prevent illumination on adjacent properties. The area illuminated should be limited so that adjacent properties are not adversely affected.	
3.2	General Building-Exterior Walls	1
1.	Retain and preserve original and/or historic exterior wall cladding (wood siding, masonry, stucco, etc.), trim, and decorative elements such as cornices, brackets, and window architraves.	
3.6	General Building-Materials-Masonry	1, 4-7
1.	Retain and preserve all original and/or historic masonry features, including walls, foundations, chimneys, arches, quoins, cornices, pediments and similar architectural elements.	
4.	Do not use high-pressure cleaning methods, such as sandblasting and waterblasting, on historic masonry surface.	
5.	Do not apply paint or other coatings to unpainted masonry elements that were never painted. Removal of paint from masonry surfaces is only permitted if the surface was not historically painted. Undertake removal only with a chemical paint remover specifically formulated for masonry. Always test the remover on an inconspicuous area or a test panel first.	
6.	If replacement of deteriorated masonry material is necessary, match the new materials to the original materials in composition, size, shape, color, pattern and texture. It is inappropriate to use new masonry materials that were unavailable when the building was constructed. Limit replacement to the deteriorated section only, rather than the entire feature.	
7.	Do not add masonry features that have no historical basis, thereby conveying a false sense of history.	

5.2	Non-Residential Building-Storefronts, Canopies, & Awnings-Storefronts	1-3, 5-8, 10
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retain and preserve storefronts and their functional and decorative features, including their entrances, display windows, transoms, bulkhead, pilasters, columns, signs, and awnings. Preserve replacement materials that have since become significant, such as Carrara glass. The exposure of covered or painted transoms should be encouraged. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Preserve the historic openings and arrangement of storefronts. Enlarging or infilling openings should be avoided unless evidence shows that the storefront historically had a different configuration consistent with the proposed alteration. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Repair rather than replacing any original deteriorated storefront features. Match the original or existing historically-appropriate storefront in size, scale, proportion, material, texture and detail. Only consider substitute materials if the original materials are unavailable. It is inappropriate to use faux masonry and synthetic materials such as vinyl on historic storefronts. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Replace only the damaged portion of a historic storefront if it is deteriorated beyond repair. Replacement portions of a historic storefront should match the historic portions in size, texture, design, color, and material. Unpainted wood surfaces and bright metallic finishes are inappropriate unless historically present or consistent with the visual character and age of the building. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Do not introduce new architectural details or features to a historic storefront without documentary evidence that it is appropriate. Such details or features should not be used to create a false sense of history. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. If replacement of the entire storefront is necessary, base the new design on accurate documentation of the original or create a new design compatible with the original in size, scale, proportion, material, texture and detail with the building and the district. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. If recent modifications conceal the original storefront materials, consider their removal. Display windows should not be reduced in size. It is inappropriate to use snap-in muntins. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Color schemes for historic storefronts should complement the balance of the building and other buildings on the block. Care should be taken to unify the upper and lower portions of the façade. 	
7.2	Signs-Commercial Signs	2, 3, 5-7
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. New signs should be compatible with the storefront and/or building in material, scale and color. It is inappropriate to install signs that cover character-defining features of the building. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. For new signs, wood and metal are the preferred materials. Plastic signs may be appropriate if they are of sturdy, high quality material that does not shine or glare. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Relate the shape of the sign to the building's architectural style or include elements of the style. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Combine readability and visibility in lettering and relate it to the style of the building. Take up no more than 40% of the sign area and contrast the lettering with the background. It is recommended to use dark letters on a light background or light letters on a dark background. 	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Light signs in a manner compatible with the historic character of the district. 	

Recommended Conditions

If the commission elects to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for this request, staff recommends the following conditions be applied.

- 1. All materials removed from the building as a result of this project shall be disposed of properly.
- 2. All windows and door glazing shall be clear with no tint.
- 3. No mature trees or historic landscaping shall be removed as a result of the proposed project.
- 4. All construction shall comply with the regulations and requirements imposed by the Land Development Code and other applicable federal, state, or local law, ordinance, or regulation, including the North Carolina Building Code. All required permits shall be obtained.
- 5. Changes to the project from that described in the application and submittals, shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission, or if minor in nature as specified in the Wilmington Design Standards for Historic Districts and Landmarks, by staff through the administrative bypass process.

Public Hearing Notice

Notification Type	Date
<i>Signs posted</i>	11/27/2025
<i>Notice mailed to adjacent property owners</i>	11/25/2025
<i>Newspaper advertisement date</i>	12/5/2025

Attachments

- 1. Application (Received 11/12/2025)
- 2. Case Map (Dated 11/19/2025)
- 3. District Map (Dated 11/19/2025)
- 4. Narrative (Dated 11/3/2025)
- 5. Elevations (Dated 10/02/2025)



32 N. Front Street | Front (west) Façade | Ca. 1991 (City Archive)



32 N. Front Street | Front (west) Façade | Ca. 2015 (City Archive)



32 N. Front Street | Front (west) Façade | Nov/2025 (City Staff)



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CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION

MAJOR WORK

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

- Applications are due by 1:00 PM on the submission deadline date and can be dropped off in person, submitted via email to: preservation@wilmingtonnc.gov or mailed to PO Box 1810, Wilmington, NC 28402.
- Do not drop off, email, or mail-in an application for major work prior to scheduling a pre-application meeting. Meetings may be scheduled by calling 910-254-0900.
- Application fees must be paid before the COA can be granted. Invoices for the application fee and the neighboring property owner mailing fee (\$0.85 per notice) will be provided by staff after submission and will include deadlines and payment instructions. If you wish to pay over the phone, please call 910-254-0900 to arrange credit card payments.
- All applicable items listed on the submittal checklist are required for an application to be considered complete.
- Applications will be reviewed for completeness before they are accepted. Incomplete applications will not be scheduled for HPC review.

Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Dates and Submission Deadlines

Meeting Date	Submission Deadline
August 14, 2025	7/9/2025
September 11, 2025	8/5/2025
October 9, 2025	9/2/2025
November 13, 2025	10/7/2025
December 11, 2025	11/4/2025

Application Fees

Check one:	Estimated Project Cost	Application Fee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Up to \$ 17,999	None
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$ 18,000 - \$ 24,999	\$ 20
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 25,000 - \$ 49,999	\$ 25
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 50,000 - \$ 99,000	\$ 35
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 100,000 - \$ 499,000	\$ 50
<input type="checkbox"/>	\$500,000 or more	\$ 100

Approval of after-the-fact (ATF) work (completed without a COA) requires application submittal and an ATF fee of \$100.

Is this an after-the-fact approval?

☐ Yes ☒ No

For more information:

City of Wilmington · Planning and Development Department · Historic Preservation
 929 N. Front Street, 1st Floor
 PO Box 1810, Wilmington, NC 28402
preservation@wilmingtonnc.gov · 910.254.0900

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION MAJOR WORK

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT

Property Street Address: 32 North Front Street

Tax Parcel Number: R04720-009-002-000

Property Owner Information

If the applicant is not the property owner, an agent form (below) is required to be signed by the property owner and submitted with an application. Application must be signed by all legal property owners.

Owner name(s): Tilia Holdings, LLC
Mailing Address: 32 N. Front St Wilmington NC 28401
Phone: 910 679 4093 Email address: REDACTED
Signature: Walker Date: 11/3/25

AGENT FORM (This section is required if the applicant is anyone other than the property owner)

I Walker Agency the undersigned owner, do hereby appoint
Tim Hamilton to act on my behalf for the purpose of petitioning
the
city of Wilmington Historic Preservation Commission for a certificate of appropriateness, as applicable
to the property described in the attached petition.

I do hereby covenant and agree with the city of Wilmington that said person
(agent) has the authority to do the following acts for or on behalf of the owner:

- Submit a property petition and require supplemental materials
- Appear at public meetings to give testimony and make commitments on behalf of the owner
- Accept conditions or recommendations made for the issuance of the certificate of appropriateness on the owner's property
- Act on the owner's behalf without limitations with regard to any and all things directly or indirectly connected with or arising out of any petition for a certificate of appropriate-

This appointment agreement shall continue in effect until final disposition of the petition submitted in conjunction with this appointment.

Owner(s) name(s): Walker Agency
Owner(s) signature: Walker Date: 11/3/25
Designated agent name: Tim Hamilton Designated agent phone: 910.619.7496
Designated agent email: REDACTED
Designated agent mailing address: 2117 Wrightsville Avenue Wilmington NC 28403

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION MAJOR WORK

SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST

If the information is not included with the application, the request cannot be scheduled for review by the Commission. Please check off the items below if completed:

☒ **Signed Application Form / Agent Form** (as needed)

☒ **Project Narrative**

- Brief detailed description of the project, including a description of how the proposed changes are consistent with the Wilmington Design Standards for Historic Districts

☒ **Tax Map**

- This can be found online at New Hanover County GIS Portal at <https://www.nhcgov.com/844/GIS-Maps-Data>

☒ **Proposed Building Materials**

- Product sheets for each type of material proposed (including windows, doors, roof, siding, etc.)
- Material Sheet Checklist if applicable
- May include brochures or manufacturer's specification sheets

☒ **Digital Photos** (all photos may be emailed)

- A keyed site plan or lot diagram showing existing structures, features and conditions
- A close-up of the proposed work area.

These scopes will require additional information including but not limited to the following:

☐ **New Construction, Major Alterations, Additions**

- Site plan drawn to scale with existing and proposed buildings, setbacks, parking areas, driveways, trees to be removed or preserved, fences and landscaping.
- Architectural drawings, drawn to scale including elevations and floor plans.
- Additional information that helps determine whether the project is consistent with [Design Standards](#).
- Three dimensional models (optional)

The applicant is responsible for supplying all information necessary to enable the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to understand the proposal and potential impacts on the historic district or overlay.

**Without sufficient information, the Commission
may continue or deny the request.**

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION

MAJOR WORK

NEW CONSTRUCTION INFORMATION

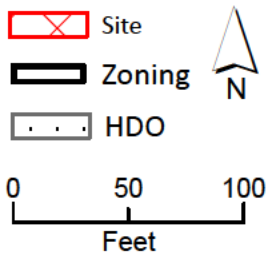
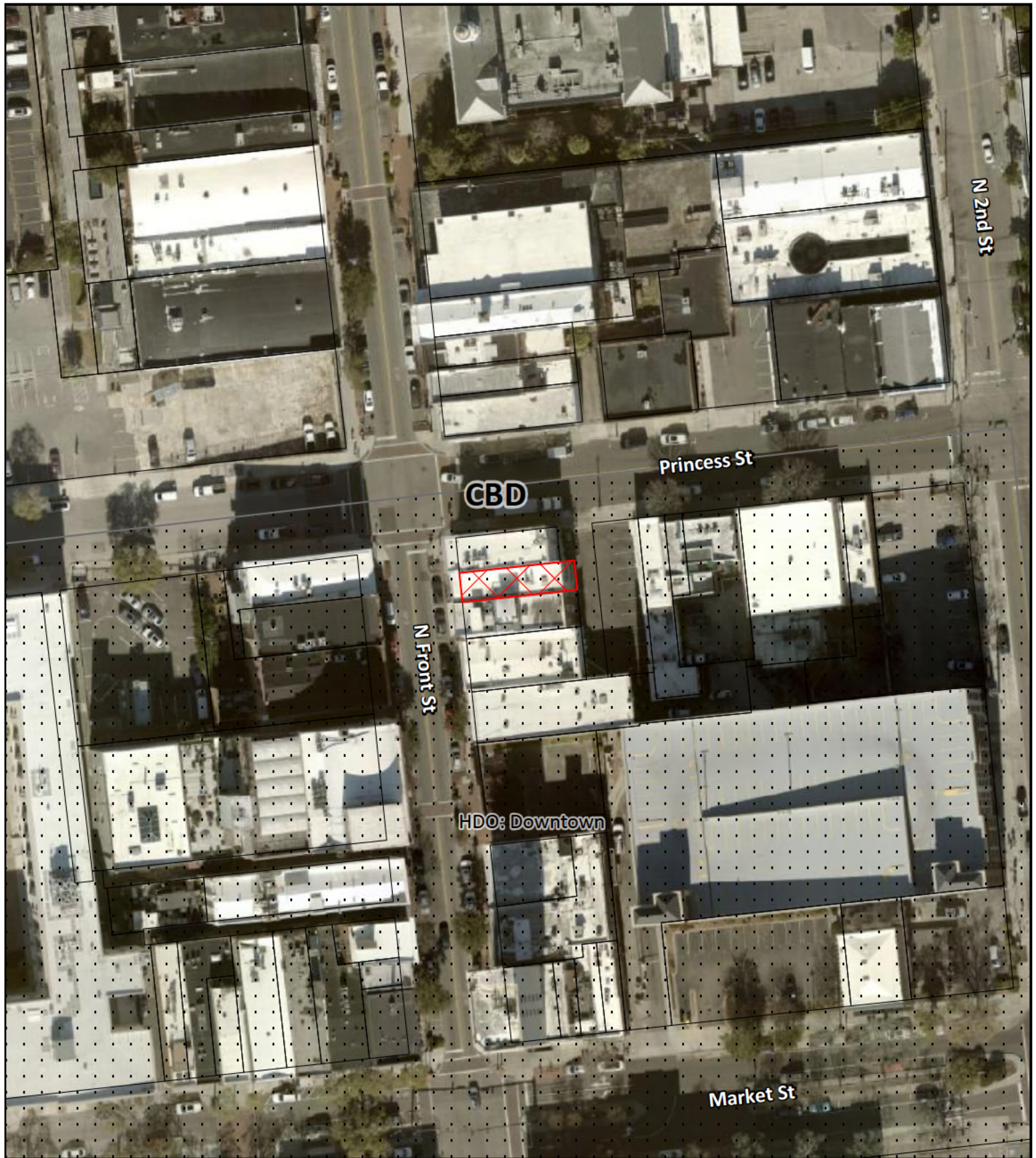
Complete one sheet for each new building or structure in order to address all of the project components. Please use continuation sheets if necessary.

Building Element	Proposed Materials, Dimensions, Color
Roof (Roof Pitch / Material / Color)	
Main	N/A
Front Porch / Side Porch / Rear Porch	N/A
Height (avg. grade to peak of roof)	N/A
Cladding	
Body of building	Existing elevation above cornice will be lightly cleaned and re-point brick with matching mortar details as necessary.
Additional (Reveal, Finish, Mortar Color)	Any replacement mortars to be Type N and color-match original
Foundation	
Materials (including color and height)	lowest element of storefront will be thin brick
Porch (Materials & Dimensions)	
Columns (capital and base)	Remove existing cement board, install background of 5/16" cement board and two layers of projecting dried, treated wood border.
Stairs and Railing (include dimensions)	N/A
Decking (floorboards)	N/A
Balustrade / railing (top cap and bottom)	N/A
Balustrade - individual balusters	N/A
Ceiling (material, design, dimensions)	Entry ceiling to be wood T&G.
Screens (only on rear)	N/A

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION

MAJOR WORK

Deck (Materials and Dimensions)	
Posts	N/A
Balustrade / railing (top cap and bottom)	N/A
Balustrade - individual balusters	N/A
Foundation (height and materials)	N/A
Entry steps and railings	N/A
Doors (Materials and Dimensions)	
Front entry	Paint existing aluminum door.
Sides (specify location)	N/A
Rear	N/A
Windows (Materials, Style, Dimensions)	
Front	Paint existing aluminum.
Sides	N/A
Rear	N/A
Gutters and Downspouts	
Driveway	
Dimensions	N/A
Curb, Apron and Runner Materials	N/A
Any Additional Materials	



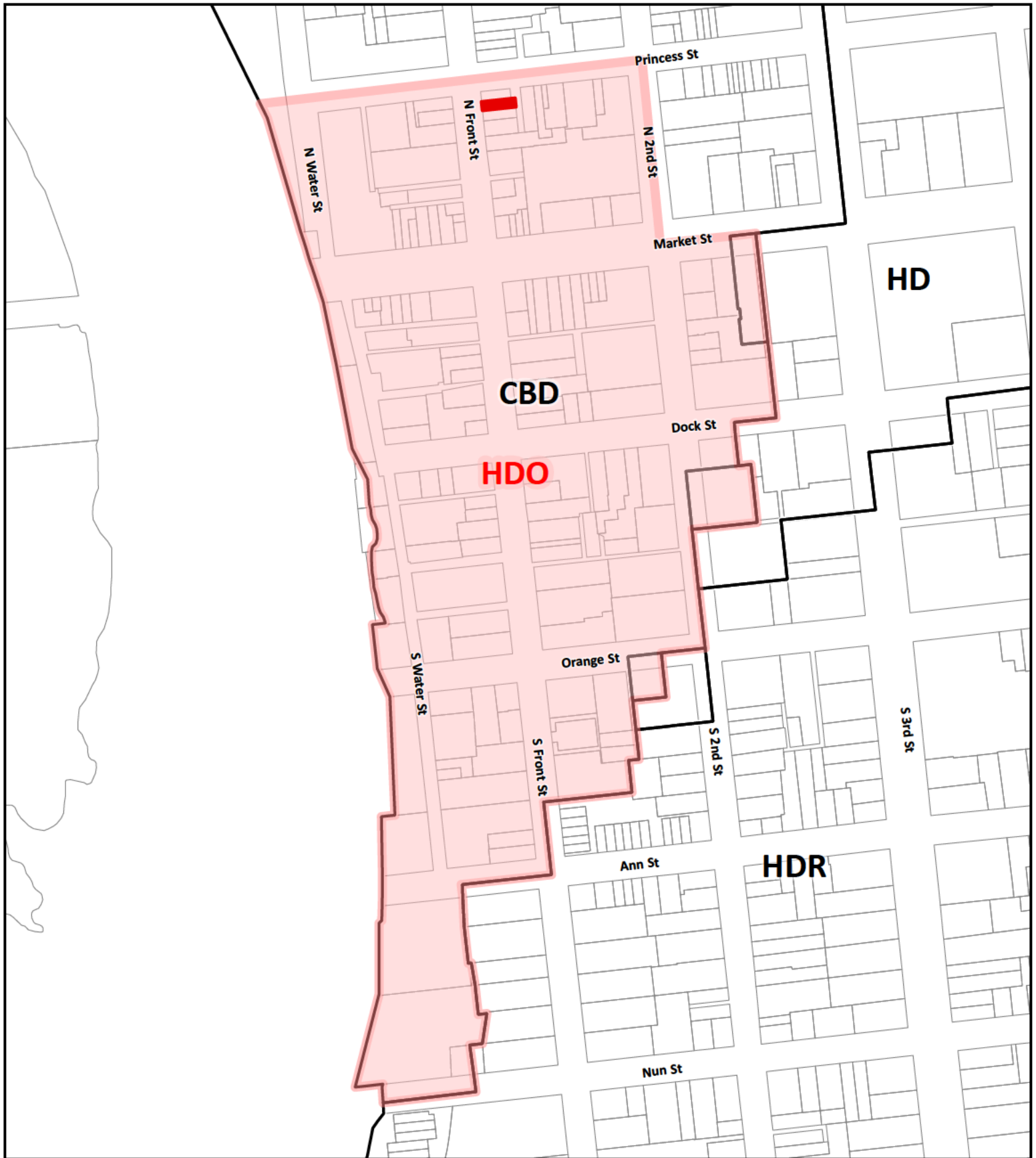
Historic Preservation Commission


MJW-37-2612 Attachment 2 — Case Map


32 N Front St


11/19/2025






 Site

 Historic District or Overlay


 Zoning

0 100 200
Feet

 N

Historic Preservation Commission	
MJW-37-2612 Attachment 3 — District Map	
32 N Front St	

11/19/2025



PROJECT NARRATIVE

32 NORTH FRONT STREET STOREFRONT REMODEL

November 3, 2025

We would like to refresh our west elevation storefront of the building at 32 N. Front St.—the c. 1914 Isaac Shrier Building. The building was renovated in the recent past and has a brushed aluminum storefront and a variety of materials on the elevation below the lower cornice. This area currently contains flat panels of Hardie and some wood trim elements.

On the upper elevation we only propose to wash the limestone and masonry, and re-point mortar joints where necessary. We would repoint with a color-matching mortar and strike any replacement joints to match the original.

Below the lower cornice we propose to maintain and paint the aluminum storefront, and remove other existing finishes. On the vertical pilasters at far north and south we would install new Hardie panel for the flat background and frame that on 4 sides in 2 projecting levels of 1x dried, treated pine wood material. Our new horizontal sign band above the door will be a 1-piece non-wood material planed on a CNC router. The projecting letters will be painted a gold color.

At the lowest level of our storefront we propose to remove the existing finish and install charcoal-colored thin brick. To ensure our thin brick is properly waterproofed we will install metal Z-flashing below the lowest horizontal member of storefront aluminum.

The new ceiling of our recessed entry will be stained tongue-in-groove wood. The downward projecting lighting will be 3 squared recessed lights. Finally, the existing slate entry floor will be removed and replaced with mosaic ceramic tile.

By reconciliation of our plan and the City's Design Standards for Historic Districts and Landmarks we posit that per 5.2 we align with all standards per our scope of work. We are preserving the upper part of our west elevation (1), preserving current openings and arrangements (2), repairing our upper elevation (3), employing compatible new design and material (4), employing a color scheme compatible, complementary with the building and the rest of the block (10). Standards 5-9 do not seem to apply to our proposed scope of work.

Thank you for your consideration in allowing us to make these improvements to the 32 N. Front St. façade.

