

**State Board of Review Meeting
National Register of Historic Places
South Carolina Department of Archives and History
State Historic Preservation Office**

Minutes of the November 21, 2025, Meeting

The State Board of Review meeting was held in the Wachovia room of the South Carolina Archives and History Center, 8301 Parklane Road, in Columbia, South Carolina.

Members Present

Dr. J. Edward Lee (Chair), Mr. Phillip D. Smith (Vice Chair), Dr. Carolyn Dillian, Mr. J.R. Fennell, Ms. J. Haley Milner, Ms. Amy Moore, Dr. Rhondda Robinson Thomas, and Ms. Stacey Young.

Members Absent

Dr. A. V. Huff, Jr.

Call to Order

Dr. Lee called the meeting to order at 10:30 A.M. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Introduction of Board Members

At Dr. Lee's invitation, each of the board members introduced themselves, stating their names and professional affiliations.

Remarks

Dr. Lee invited Dr. W. Eric Emerson, director of the Department of Archives and History and State Historic Preservation Officer, to offer remarks. Dr. Emerson welcomed attendees to the South Carolina Archives and History Center and thanked them for being present at the meeting. He also acknowledged Dr. William Cain, an incoming member of the South Carolina Archives and History Commission who was in attendance for the meeting. Dr. Emerson explained some of the functions of the Department of Archives and History and highlighted the importance of the State Review Board's work. Dr. Lee then invited Ms. Elizabeth M. Johnson, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, to offer remarks. Ms. Johnson welcomed attendees and acknowledged the National Register Staff, including Mr. Brad Sauls, Supervisor of Registration, Grant, and Local Government Programs, and National Register co-coordinators Ms. Virginia Harness and Dr. Edwin Breeden. She also acknowledged other SHPO staff in attendance: Ms. Mary Sherrer, Review Coordinator for Transportation Projects; Ms. Ayanna Goines, African American History Consultant; and Ms. Amanda Lee, Historic Architecture Consultant.

Approval of Minutes

The members received the minutes of the July 25, 2025, meeting by mail (or e-mail) in the packets prior to the meeting. Ms. Moore made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Ms. Milner. The motion was approved unanimously.

Explanation of Procedure

Dr. Lee outlined the procedure that would follow for considering each of the nominations, explaining presenters' time limits for each nomination, which would be followed by comments from visitors; questions from board members; uninterrupted board discussion; and a board decision. He also explained the procedure by which the approved nominations would be submitted for the review of the National Park Service (NPS).

Consideration of Nominations

Beginning at 10:37, the following nominations were considered:

1. **St. Mark's Episcopal Church (Charleston, Charleston County)** was presented by the preparer, Ms. Christina Rae Butler of Butler Preservation LC. During the public comments, remarks were offered by Mr. Walter Boags, a lifelong St. Mark's member who described his family's long connections to the congregation. He expressed his attachment to the church and urged the board to vote in favor of the nomination. St. Mark's vestryman Mr. Rob Turner said he joined the church five years ago and was grateful to be welcomed into it, especially as someone who is white. He noted that today's congregation is roughly half-and-half Black and white. He expressed pride in both the congregation and the church building and said the architecture was unlike any other Episcopal church in Charleston. Lifelong member Ms. Minerva King said that, while St. Mark's had traditionally been quite conservative, the congregation has more recently become active in a number of social justice initiatives. She also noted that, as children, she and her sister Dr. Millicent Brown had been part of the lawsuit to desegregate Charleston public schools. Ms. Marjory Kenney Williams said she had come to St. Mark's from upstate New York five years ago and was proud of the church and the different ways the congregation has evolved. During board remarks, Ms. Milner asked Mr. Smith his thoughts on the rarity of St. Mark's in Charleston, and he noted how unusual the wooden detailing was in such an otherwise straightforward Roman Revival design. He also shared his personal fondness for the church, as he used to live down the street and had performed there with musical groups many times. He praised the congregation and said he was happy to see the nomination moving forward. Dr. Lee complimented Ms. Butler's presentation to the Board. Dr. Thomas made a motion, seconded by Mr. Smith, for approval of the nomination at the state and local level of significance. The Board approved the motion unanimously.
2. **Wehaken (Charleston, Charleston County)** was presented by the preparer, Ms. Katie Quinn of New South Associates. Remarks were offered by Mr. Adam Ronan of the Charleston County Parks & Recreation Commission (CCPRC), which owns the Old Towne Creek County Park that includes the Wehaken property. Mr. Ronan said the park has been closed for three years for renovations and they hope to be

open to the public by the summer of 2026. He said that part of CCPRC's mission is preserving the county's historic cultural resources and noted that Wehaken would be the third National Register-listed property owned by CCPRC, along with McLeod Plantation and the Sea Island Farmers Cooperative (i.e. Stono River Slave Rebellion Site). Dr. Dillian asked for the source of the property's name. Ms. Quinn said the property's original owners believed it meant "welcome" in an unknown American Indian language. Dr. Dillian said she did not think it was any of the local ones. Ms. Young asked how the Wehaken property would be integrated into the park as a whole, and Mr. Ronan said CCPRC planned to install interpretive panels on the property's history around the park, though the buildings themselves would not be open to the public. Ms. Moore said it was great that the site would be a park and expressed hope that its ownership by CCPRC would protect it against any future development. Dr. Lee said he was glad that CCPRC was taking such an active interest in preservation. Ms. Milner made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fennell, for approval of the nomination at the local level of significance. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

3. **Fairfield County Memorial Hospital (Winnsboro, Fairfield County)** was presented by the preparer, Ms. Jane Campbell of Rogers Lewis Group, LLC. Ms. Milner asked what the plans were for the hospital. Ms. Campbell said she was unsure, as there had been several different parties interested in acquiring the hospital, but she presumed it would end up being some kind of medical care facility. In response to questions from Mr. Smith, Ms. Campbell confirmed that the hospital closed in 2018 and that this left Fairfield County without a hospital of any kind. Dr. Thomas asked if the hospital history documented in the nomination was being shared locally in any form. Ms. Campbell said they were still figuring out potential ways for the history to be shared at the site but that its history was still very prominent in local memory. Ms. Moore asked if the mobile health units that preceded the hospital were integrated or segregated, and Ms. Campbell said it was not definitively stated either way in the sources she consulted. Dr. Dillian made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fennell, for approval at the local level of significance. The Board approved the motion unanimously.
4. **Church of the Heavenly Rest (Estill vicinity, Hampton County)** was presented by the preparer, Dr. Eric Plaag of Carolina Historical Consulting, LLC. Ms. Moore asked if the church was still in use. Dr. Plaag said it was, and that while the congregation has ebbed and flowed over time, they have been consistently active over the last several years. Ms. Moore said the survival of the original stained glass windows was remarkable. Dr. Plaag agreed and added that they had even survived a burglary in which a number of items were stolen from inside the church. Ms. Young asked if there was a board overseeing the preservation of the church. Dr. Plaag said there was now, though in the past there had been less interest in maintaining the church property. He said he was first approached about nominating the church seventeen years ago but that most members did not wish to move forward with listing until about a year ago, when he was hired to prepare a nomination. He said the congregation was now very dedicated to preserving the church building. Mr. Smith asked if the congregation is still part of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America, and Dr. Plaag said it is. Ms. Milner said she enjoyed the

nomination and was glad to learn more about the Carpenter Gothic style. Mr. Smith expressed interest in how late of an example it was of the style, and in the style's apparent rarity in Hampton County. He noted that Carpenter Gothic churches are otherwise quite prevalent throughout the Lowcountry. He asked if anything was known about possible architectural influences on the design. Dr. Plaag said no and explained that most records related to the church's construction have been lost. He added that, as discussed in the nomination, he still wonders if James Hagood Sams drew the plans for the church, despite only being nineteen-years-old at the time. Dr. Plaag also said there was one other Carpenter Gothic church in Estill but that it had undergone fairly extensive alterations. Mr. Smith said it might make sense that someone young like Sams designed the church, as its more eclectic design elements might reflect the work of a younger architect experimenting with styles. Ms. Moore commended the parish for their work preserving the church. Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Ms. Moore, for approval of the nomination at the local level of significance. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

5. **Bracknell's Store Complex (Plum Branch, McCormick County)** was presented by the preparer, Ms. Louise Bracknell. Ms. Bracknell expressed her appreciation to Ms. Harness and Dr. Breeden for helping foster her through the nomination process as someone who had not previously worked with the National Register program. During the public comment segment, Mr. Tucker Griffin, owner of two of three buildings in the complex, commented on the journey it had been trying to get the property listed. He said he first became an owner after reaching out to Ms. Bracknell's brother about the store. He said he hopes to reopen it as a country store. He said the project was viable only because of the historic tax credits for which listing would make it eligible. He noted its historical role as a community gathering place and said that both the Town of Plum Branch and McCormick County had been very supportive of the project. Ms. Moore asked when he hoped to complete work and open the store, and he said either spring or summer 2026. Ms. Young asked if any of the Bracknell's business records survived. Ms. Bracknell said some remained from the store though more had survived from the family's cotton gin. She said there were few pictures or documents from the store's early years and said that local memory had been an important record of the business's local significance. She specifically cited memory of its importance for local African American residents and said that Bracknell's was similar to many other country stores where Blacks and whites shopped and gathered with more freedom than at many other types of businesses during the Jim Crow era. She added that her family did still have a fair amount of Bracknell's-branded memorabilia used to promote the business. Dr. Thomas asked if there were plans to use similar kinds of branding in the future, and she also asked what plans there were to make sure the business's history was shared with people who visited the reopened store. Ms. Bracknell said she has had discussions with Mr. Griffin about possibly donating some of the family photographs and memorabilia to be included with an interpretive display at the store. Ms. Moore and Mr. Smith both complimented the quality of the nomination and Ms. Bracknell's presentation. Ms. Moore made a motion to approve the nomination at the local level of significance, seconded by Dr. Thomas. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

6. **Eau Claire Municipal Complex (Columbia, Richland County)** was presented by the preparer, Ms. Meredith Funderburk of Rogers Lewis Group, LLC. During the public comment segment, Mr. Lyman Munson spoke and said that he and his wife Ms. Jocelyn Munson owned the property and attended the meeting to show their support for the project. He said they had lived near the property for a long time and decided to buy it in 2018 after hearing there were plans to redevelop it into a used car dealership. He said they hoped to restore its historical appearance and rehab the Post Office building (which was later a theater) into a performance/event space and possibly convert the Town Hall into a restaurant space. Ms. Milner said she was glad to see a project like this come forward and said there were undoubtedly many places like it around the state that could be similarly preserved and repurposed. Mr. Fennell said that the local Eau Claire pride expressed through the annexation debates discussed in the nomination was still clearly alive, and he shared a story of being corrected during a public talk when he said a place in the former bounds of Eau Claire was instead in “Columbia.” Mr. Fennell made a motion to approve the nomination at the local level of significance, seconded by Ms. Milner. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

7. **Romer Building (Columbia, Richland County)** was presented by the preparer, Ms. Jane Campbell of Rogers Lewis Group, LLC. Mr. Smith asked if the original cornice and entablature were still present, and Ms. Campbell said she believed it was and that it had only been covered. He asked whether the property’s owners would restore that and other altered parts of the building’s design. Ms. Campbell said that she was encouraging the owners to reverse the later exterior changes as much as possible. Mr. Smith said that some of the 1980s alterations were undesirable from an architectural standpoint and encouraged their removal. He added that the central bay window was more acceptable, though Dr. Thomas encouraged its removal as well. A discussion ensued as to whether or not the Review Board could formally recommend owners take certain steps to restore a property. Mr. Sauls said it would likely be best if Ms. Campbell continued to lobby her client directly. Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Dr. Thomas, for approval of the nomination at the local level of significance. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

8. **St. James Rosenwald School (Hickory Grove, York County)** was presented by the preparer, Ms. Lauren Fowler-Ellis of Fowler-Ellis Preservation. During the public comments, Mr. Lester Good of Hickory Grove Community Preservation said that he grew up in Hickory Grove and remembers when the school building was used as a church, while his older siblings actually attended school there. He said his group began when his older brother first learned the history of the Rosenwald program and realized St. James was part of that history. They formed their group to acquire the school and are hoping to preserve the property and convert it into a community center. Ms. Milner asked if the original windows were still present. Ms. Fowler-Ellis said no and explained the fenestration had changed when the school was reoriented after the extension of Hickory Street. Mr. Smith asked if the original window openings were still present behind the clapboard, and Ms. Milner said that was what she meant with her previous question. Ms. Fowler-Ellis said she was unsure but that there were still other kinds of evidence of the building’s original floorplan. Mr. Good said that the original window openings were still visible behind

the interior sheetrock. Dr. Thomas said she was surprised how extensively this property and the Romer Building considered previously had been changed and said it was unusual to have two nominations for such altered properties. Ms. Harness explained that NPS has in more recent years become more lenient when judging integrity, especially for properties being nominated in areas other than Criterion C: Architecture. She added that the date of some of the changes made to St. James was not entirely clear, and it's possible that some of them occurred during the period of significance, in which case the changes themselves would be considered historic. She said that for all properties what is most important is that the character-defining features remain intact. Mr. Smith said that the general scarcity of surviving Rosenwald schools added to the significance even of those that had been altered, and he noted how common it was for such schools to undergo renovations. Dr. Thomas asked what kind of records survived for the school and if there were any that recorded names of students. Ms. Fowler-Ellis said she did not know of records with student names but there were some collections at SCDAH that included teacher names. Ms. Milner said that the South Carolina portion of the original Rosenwald Fund files includes correspondence, lists of schools, and in some cases auditor reports that noted student names. Ms. Moore asked if Rosenwald schools were usually built with volunteer or paid labor. Ms. Fowler-Ellis said she thought it was generally volunteer. Ms. Milner said that was true and that it usually counted towards the community's required contribution to each Fund project. Mr. Smith said it was hard to imagine ninety-five students being taught in the building. Dr. Thomas said it shows the eagerness of African American students for education during the period and the lengths they would go to receive schooling despite the state's lack of interest in teaching Black students. Ms. Milner noted that conditions were even worse in the types of facilities that Rosenwald schools usually replaced. Dr. Thomas said she was interested to learn that South Carolina had the fourth-highest number of Rosenwald schools of any state, and she said saw that as Black South Carolinians stepping up to fill the void left by the state government. Ms. Milner made a motion, seconded by Mr. Smith, for approval at the local level of significance. The Board passed the motion unanimously.

Other Business

Dr. Lee announced the following upcoming Review Board meeting dates:

The spring 2026 meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 20, 2026.

The summer 2026 meeting is scheduled for Friday, July 24, 2026.

The fall 2026 meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 20, 2026.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Dr. Lee asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Moore made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Smith. The Board voted unanimously to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 12:29 PM.