



Mayor & Council of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, Maryland 21811

Phone 410-641-2770 Fax 410-641-2316

www.berlinmd.gov

**Town of Berlin
Historic District Commission
February 4, 2026 – 5:30 PM
Berlin Town Hall – Council Chambers**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Agenda Adoption**
- 3. Approval of Minutes:** January 7, 2026
- 4. Case # HDC-02-04-26-04:** 208 North Main Street – Request to Conduct Exterior Renovations
- 5. Case # HDC-02-04-26-05:** 501 South Main Street – Fence Installation Request
- 6. Case # HDC-02-04-26-06:** 100 North Main Street – Request to Modify Existing Roof
- 7. Case # HDC-02-04-26-07:** 2 North Main Street – Retroactive Approval for Unpermitted Work
- 8. Comments from the Public**
- 9. Comments from the Staff**
- 10. Comments from the Commissioners**
- 11. Comments from the Chairman**
- 12. Adjournment**

Any persons with questions about the above-referenced meeting or any persons needing special accommodations should contact Kate Daub at 410-641-4002. Written materials in alternate formats for persons with disabilities are made available upon request. TTY users dial 7-1-1 in the State of Maryland.

Town of Berlin
Historic District Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 7, 2026

Chairman Bunting called the Historic District Commission meeting to order on January 7, 2026, at 5:30 PM. Members present were Vice Chair Laura Stearns, John Holloway, Carol Rose, Lisa Doyle, and Mary Moore. Staff in attendance were Acting Planning Director Ryan Hardesty, Special Projects Administrator Kate Daub, and Permits Coordinator Kaitlin Ahlers.

Chairman Bunting called for a motion to adopt the agenda for the January 7, 2026, meeting. Mr. Holloway moved to approve the agenda, and Ms. Rose seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Bunting called for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2025, meeting. Ms. Doyle presented a correction to be made on page 2 of 21. Ms. Doyle stated that a few comments attributed to Chairman Bunting were from Mr. Holloway. Chairman Bunting asked if there were any other corrections to the minutes. Ms. Moore directed the commission to page 3 of 21. Ms. Moore stated that the context of the statement about her living in Montgomery County and its Historic District was incorrect and requested that it be corrected in the minutes. Following this, Ms. Stearns moved to approve the minutes with corrections, and Ms. Moore seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Bunting introduced Case #HDC-1-7-26-01 concerning proposed alterations to and demolition of the structure located at 413 South Main Street. The request was presented by Mr. Matthew Amey, the current property owner. Mr. Amey addressed the Commission and explained that he was seeking approval to install a wooden fence in the rear yard, install an impervious driveway surface composed of shells or stone, and begin the disassembly of the existing structure at 413 South Main Street. He stated that a structural engineer evaluated the property and issued a report dated January 6, 2026. Mr. Amey requested permission to present the report to the Commission, which Chairman Bunting approved.

Mr. Amey explained that the structure no longer has a viable footer and that the foundation is swelling. He stated that remediation would require lifting the house, which, in his professional assessment, would likely result in structural collapse. Mr. Amey also presented photographic evidence demonstrating extensive termite damage and weather-related deterioration to the roof and supporting structural elements. Mr. Amey concluded by stating that his goal is to honor the structure's historic character while also creating a safe and

functional home for his mother. Chairman Bunting expressed his respect for Mr. Amey and the work he has completed on previous buildings within the Historic District.

Ms. Rose explained that when the property was last presented to the Commission in 2009, she and Ms. Moore toured the home's interior to assess the extent of the structural damage. Ms. Rose further noted that the home is registered with the Maryland Historical Trust as File #80. She asked whether the Maryland Historical Trust would be required to review the current proposal.

Ms. Rose stated that she agrees the structure appears to be unsafe and added that records indicate the home was listed with the Maryland Historical Trust in 1969 as being in fair exterior condition. She also explained that the documentation noted that, aside from being a telescopic dwelling, the structure held limited architectural or historical significance. Ms. Rose commented that she was uncertain whether the Commission had the authority to approve the demolition without Maryland Historical Trust review.

Chairman Bunting again asked whether consultation with the Maryland Historical Trust was required. Ms. Rose offered to contact the Trust on Mr. Amey's behalf the following day. She stated that if approval or clearance is received, she would see no reason the Commission could not approve the request.

Chairman Bunting advised Mr. Amey that any proposed new construction would require a separate application and presentation to the Commission; however, the Commission could consider approval for the disassembly of the existing structure. Mr. Amey presented three-dimensional renderings of the home and directed the Commission's attention to the right side of the structure, where the roof collapsed inward. Chairman Bunting stated that he agreed the structure should be demolished.

Mr. Amey explained that he intends to use the three-dimensional model as a reference when rebuilding the home, ensuring it closely reflects the original footprint. He stated that his goal is to reconstruct the home using modern materials while maintaining its historic appearance. Ms. Stearns and Ms. Moore expressed their support and enthusiasm for the proposed concept.

The Commission agreed to table the demolition request until it received guidance from the Maryland Historical Trust. Ms. Rose asked whether it would be possible to provide the application packet to the Maryland Historical Trust for review, and Chairman Bunting confirmed that she could do so.

Chairman Bunting noted that the Commission could proceed with approval of the proposed driveway and fence. He asked Mr. Amey to clarify the proposed driveway materials, and Mr. Amey stated that he plans to use either clamshells or bluestone, consistent with the driveway materials at his residence at 8 Jefferson Street.

Ms. Stearns asked whether the fence would be visible from the street. Mr. Amey responded that it should not be visible, although visibility may change once the structure is removed. Ms. Stearns also asked whether the fence design would include material to close the gaps between slats. Mr. Amey stated that he intends to install black mesh between the fence boards.

Following the discussion, Ms. Rose moved to approve the proposed driveway and fence at 413 South Main Street and to table the demolition request pending direction from the Maryland Historical Trust, at which time demolition approval would be granted if permitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Holloway and carried unanimously.

Chairman Bunting presented Case #HDC-01-07-26-02, a request for approval of building alterations and new signage at 4 South Main Street. Appearing before the Commission were the applicants, Ms. Claire Lackner and Ms. Tiffany Lackner.

Ms. Lackner explained that the applicants are seeking approval to establish a small breakfast café at the property. She stated that the Fire Marshal evaluated the building and recommended installing the venting system on the side facing Jefferson Street. Ms. Moore asked whether the space would continue to function as a storefront, and Ms. Lackner responded that it would operate solely as a small café.

Ms. Stearns asked whether the vent could instead exit at the rear of the building. Ms. Lackner stated that while this may be possible, the Fire Marshal recommended placement on the Jefferson Street side. Ms. Stearns expressed concern that the proposed vent location could obstruct the existing Odd Fellows sign on the building.

Chairman Bunting asked about the rear window featuring a tree illustration and requested clarification on the proposed treatment. Ms. Lackner explained that the lattice had previously been installed at that location and requested approval to reinstall it. She stated that she had consulted with John Lewis regarding potential impacts on the building. Ms. Lackner further explained that venting through the Gold Craft space was not feasible due to the furnace there, and that routing the vent through the rear window may be possible, but

she was uncertain whether it would comply with Historic District guidelines. She also requested approval to remove existing paint from the window trim and repaint it black.

Ms. Doyle raised concerns about the proposed business name and any associated trademarks. Ms. Lackner responded that trademark approval was obtained in February 2025 and that the name does not conflict with any existing licensing.

Ms. Stearns requested that the applicants provide the proposed exterior paint colors for review, noting that repainting the building in the same color would not require Commission approval. She stated that paint markups and color selections could be submitted via email. Ms. Moore advised the applicants that the Commission evaluates designs for visual appeal and overall flow. The Commission requested that the proposed sign be relocated either above or below the existing Dreamweaver sign and suggested increasing the thickness of the sign face to improve visibility. Ms. Stearns also commented on the black sign with thin white lettering and asked whether the lettering could be made thicker. Ms. Lackner stated that they would explore these revisions and expressed appreciation for the Commission's feedback.

Chairman Bunting asked if the Commission had any additional questions regarding the proposed alterations.

Mr. Amey expressed concern about the vent location above the doorway, facing the Wooden Octopus; however, he stated that those concerns had since been addressed.

Chairman Bunting requested a motion to approve relocating the exhaust vent to the rear window and installing the proposed fencing. He noted that approval for the exterior painting and signage would be granted upon submission of the revised plans via email. Ms. Stearns made the motion, and Ms. Rose seconded. The motion carried.

Chairman Bunting then presented Case #HDC-01-07-26-03, a request for new signage at 18 Broad Street. Mr. Todd Justice appeared before the Commission and presented the proposed signage, explaining that the applicant is requesting to replace the existing Firestone Tire sign with a Continental Tire sign of the same size.

Chairman Bunting requested a motion to approve the new signage. Ms. Stearns made the motion, which was seconded by Ms. Rose. The motion carried.

There were no public or staff comments.

Ms. Moore asked staff about the red storage container located on a property at the foot of Washington Street and South Main Street. Ms. Hardesty asked whether the trailer in question had been previously discussed by the group at a past meeting, and Ms. Moore confirmed that it had. Ms. Moore stated that the containers were visually unappealing. Ms. Hardesty explained that the containers had been previously reviewed and found to be in compliance with the Town code.

Ms. Moore also raised a concern regarding Adkins equipment located on a property on Franklin Avenue behind William Street. Ms. Hardesty stated that she believed Code Enforcement had previously inspected the site, but would confirm. Ms. Moore expressed concern that an illegal rental may be occurring at the property, and Ms. Hardesty stated that she would verify the permitting and licensing status.

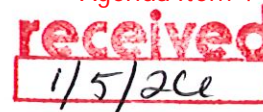
Chairman Bunting requested a motion to adjourn. Ms. Moore made the motion, and Mr. Holloway seconded, with the meeting concluding at approximately 6:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kaitlin Ahlers', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kaitlin Ahlers

Permit Coordinator



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HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

Date: 01/05/2026 Subject Property Location: 208 N Main Street Case #: HDC-2-04-26-04

Property Owner Berlin Heritage Foundation/Taylor House Museum Owner Phone # (410) 641-1019

Owner Address 208 N Main St, Berlin, MD 21811 Owner Email: info@taylorhousemuseum.org

Agent/Contractor: Heather Nottingham Agent Phone# (410) 422-0945

Work Involves: ☐ Alterations ☐ New Construction ☐ Addition ☐ Demolition ☐ Sign ☐ Other

DESCRIPTION OF WORK PROPOSED:

Two portions of the siding, specifically on the north and south sides that have been patched and repaired over the years, will be replaced. Our shutters will be repaired, and those that are beyond repair will be fabricated in the historical manner. Also, both the front porch railing on the east and the attic window on the west are unsalvageable and will be replaced. All repairs will be done to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and will be exact replicas of the current, historically accurate structure.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED WITH APPLICATION

All required documents must be submitted to the Planning Department prior to at least three (3) weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled hearing. Failure to include all the required attachments and/or failure of the applicant or his/her authorized representative to appear at the scheduled meeting may result in postponement of the application until the next regular scheduled meeting. If an application is denied, the same application cannot be resubmitted for one year from date of such action. The Berlin Historic District Commission Rules and Regulations are available for review in the Town of Berlin Planning Department.

The following items, if applicable, must be provided to Town Staff in order for the proposal to be considered:

1. Site plan.
2. Scaled drawings of plans and/or elevations of the proposal, or in the alternative, a scale model.
3. Color photographs of the existing structure, the area to be altered and close-ups of architectural details.
4. For a proposed new structure, photographs of the subject site and all buildings in the immediate vicinity.
5. All photographs shall be printed on 8½ x 11 paper or provided in digital format, and shall be labeled with a description of the contents of the photographs.
6. Samples of materials or copies of manufacturers product literature.

The applicant, or an authorized representative, has been advised to appear at the meeting of the Berlin Historic District Commission scheduled for 2/4/26 (date).

Applicant Signature Heather Nottingham

Digitally signed by Heather Nottingham
Date: 2026.01.05 11:54:29 -05'00'

Date 01/05/2026

APPROVED:

Historic District Commission Chair (Date)

Planning Director (Date)







CALVIN B. TAYLOR HOUSE
BERLIN TOWN MUSEUM

The siding, railing, and shutters will be fabricated in cedar wood. Each piece will be removed from the museum's exterior, measured, and recreated exactly to the specifications of the individual piece. As there is no manufacturer or prefabricated materials, supplying an example is not possible. All items made will be constructed in historically accurate ways according to Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Any further information may be requested through Burley Building Co. at 410-430-3890. Also, if it would be more helpful, we would be happy to attend the meeting and explain our specific needs. Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you,

Heather Nottingham, *Museum Administrator*

Berlin Heritage Foundation, Inc.

208 North Main Street ~ Berlin, MD 21811 ~ 410-641-1019
info@taylorhousemuseum.org ~ www.taylorhousemuseum.org



STAFF REPORT

TO: Town of Berlin Historic District Commission

FROM: Ryan Hardesty, Acting Planning & Zoning Director

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, February 4, 2026

SUBJECT: 208 N. Main Street – Taylor House Museum

SUMMARY

The Town of Berlin Planning and Zoning Department has reviewed an application submitted by the Berlin Heritage Foundation/Taylor House Museum for exterior repairs and selective replacement at 208 North Main Street, a contributing historic structure located within the Berlin Historic District.

The applicant proposes the repair and replacement of deteriorated wood siding, the repair and fabrication of shutters, the replacement of unsalvageable porch railing, and the replacement of an unsalvageable attic window, all to be completed using historically accurate materials and methods. The application states that all work will be performed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and that all replacement elements will be exact replicas of existing features.

BACKGROUND

The subject property, 208 North Main Street, is owned by the Mayor & Council of Berlin and is commonly known as the Taylor House Museum. The property is located within the Berlin Historic District and is recognized as a historically significant structure contributing to the district's architectural and cultural character.

According to the application, two sections of the existing wood siding on the north and south elevations have experienced deterioration and patching over time and require replacement. In addition, existing shutters will be repaired where feasible, and shutters that are beyond repair will be custom-fabricated to match the historic design. The application also notes that the front porch railing on the east elevation and the attic window on the west elevation are unsalvageable and will be replaced.

All replacement siding, shutters, railing, and window components will be fabricated in cedar wood, with each element removed, measured, and recreated to match the original in dimension, profile, and appearance. The applicant has indicated that no prefabricated or modern substitute materials will be used.

FINDINGS

Staff offers the following findings based on review of the application materials and photographs:

1. The subject property is a historically significant structure within the Berlin Historic District.
2. The proposed work is limited to repair and in-kind replacement of deteriorated exterior features and does not involve changes to building scale or architectural style.

3. Replacement siding, shutters, porch railing, and attic window will be fabricated in cedar wood and replicated to match existing historic elements.
4. The proposed repairs will preserve and enhance the historic character of the structure and contribute positively to the overall integrity of the Historic District.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic District Commission approve the application for 208 North Main Street for siding, shutter, railing, and attic window repairs and replacement, subject to the following condition:

1. All replacement materials and details shall match the proposed plan and any deviation from the approved scope shall be subject to additional review by the Historic District Commission.



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HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

Date: 1/5/26 Subject Property Location: 501 S MAIN ST Case #: HDC-2-4-26-05
 Property Owner: DANIEL + STEPHANIE CASON Owner Phone # 443-483-1112
 Owner Address: 510 S MAIN ST BERLIN MD 21011 Owner Email: dan.e.cason@gmail.com
 Agent/Contractor: Mc GEE FENCE Agent Phone# 443-373-1880
 Work Involves: ☐ Alterations ☐ New Construction ☐ Addition ☐ Demolition ☐ Sign ☒ Other

DESCRIPTION OF WORK PROPOSED:

INSTALLING FENCING TO ENCLOSE THE BACKYARD AND WILL NOT BE VISIBLE FROM THE STREET. FENCE WILL BE A COMBINATION OF BLACK ALUMINUM ALONG THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE AND DRIVEWAY AND WHITE VINYL PRIVACY FENCE ALONG THE REAR OF THE PROPERTY

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED WITH APPLICATION

All required documents must be submitted to the Planning Department prior to at least three (3) weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled hearing. Failure to include all the required attachments and/or failure of the applicant or his/her authorized representative to appear at the scheduled meeting may result in postponement of the application until the next regular scheduled meeting. If an application is denied, the same application cannot be resubmitted for one year from date of such action. The Berlin Historic District Commission Rules and Regulations are available for review in the Town of Berlin Planning Department.

The following items, if applicable, must be provided to Town Staff in order for the proposal to be considered:

1. Site plan.
2. Scaled drawings of plans and/or elevations of the proposal, or in the alternative, a scale model.
3. Color photographs of the existing structure, the area to be altered and close-ups of architectural details.
4. For a proposed new structure, photographs of the subject site and all buildings in the immediate vicinity.
5. All photographs shall be printed on 8 1/2 x 11 paper or provided in digital format, and shall be labeled with a description of the contents of the photographs.
6. Samples of materials or copies of manufacturers product literature.

The applicant, or an authorized representative, has been advised to appear at the meeting of the Berlin Historic District Commission scheduled for 2/4/26 (date).

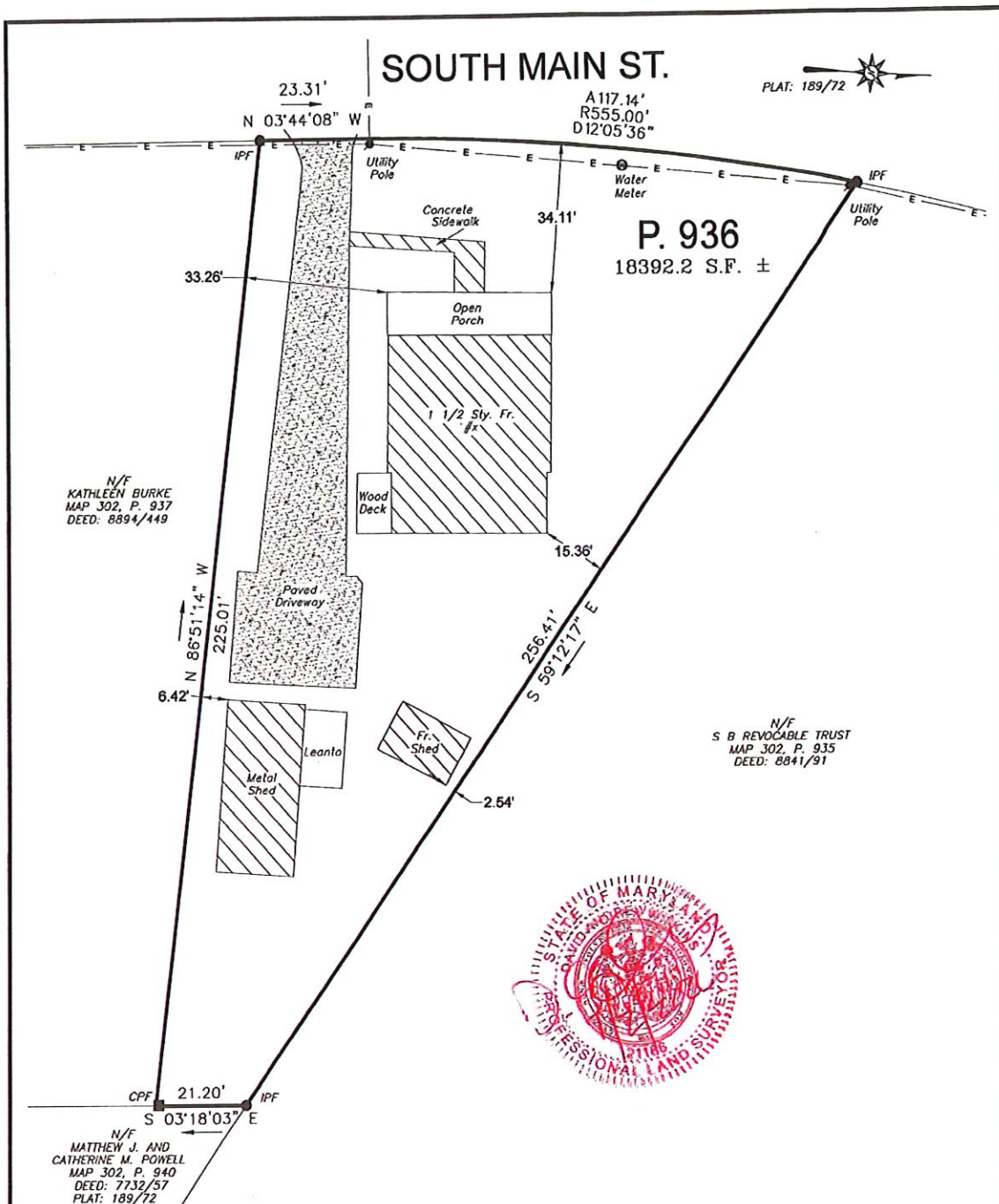
Applicant Signature

Date 1/5/25

APPROVED:

Historic District Commission Chair (Date)

Planning Director (Date)



This plat is based on a current field survey.

No Title Report Furnished.

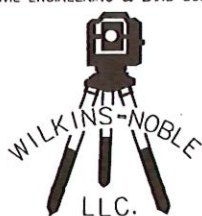
Except as specifically stated or shown on this plat, this survey does not purport to reflect any of the following which may be applicable to the subject real estate: easements; building setback lines; restrictive covenants; subdivision restrictions; zoning or other land use regulations, and any other facts that an accurate and current title search may disclose.

David Andrew Wilkins, Lic. #21188, Exp. 1/4/28, either personally prepared this Boundary Survey or was in responsible charge over its preparation and the surveying work reflected in it, all in compliance with requirements set forth in regulation 12 of corner title 9, subtitle 13, chapter 58, § 13-09.

BOUNDARY SURVEY FOR LANDS OF SEAN C. RAYNE

SURVEY NO. 501 S. MAIN

CIVIL ENGINEERING & LAND SURVEYING



11729 CHURCH ST.
PRINCESS ANNE, MD 21853
PHONE: 410-621-0321
FAX: 410-621-0320

PROJECT INFORMATION

COUNTY	WORCESTER	STATE	MD	FLOOD ZONE	'X'
MUNICIPALITY	BERLIN	SUBD.	N/A		
DISTRICT	THIRD	SECT. NO.	N/A		
TAX MAP NO.	302	PARCEL NO.	936	BLOCK NO.	N/A
DEED REF.	7093/391	LOT NO.	N/A		
PLAT REF.	189/72	DATE	12/31/2025		
FIELD BOOK	PAGE	SCALE	1" = 30'		
CAD FILE	501 S. MAIN	DRAWN BY	DAW		

LEGEND

- CPF Concrete Post Found
- IPF Iron Pipe Found
- IRF Iron Rod Found
- ⊙ IRCS Iron Rod with Cap Set
- ⊙ IRCF Iron Rod with Cap Found
- Fence
- Overhead Power Lines
- /// Sewage Reserve Area
- BSL Building Setback Line

McGeeFence@verizon.net

MHIC #138222 • DE #2016600331

www.McGeeFence.com

ALL COUPONS AND DISCOUNTS MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF SALE PRIOR TO SIGNATURE OF CONTRACT.

Sales Representative

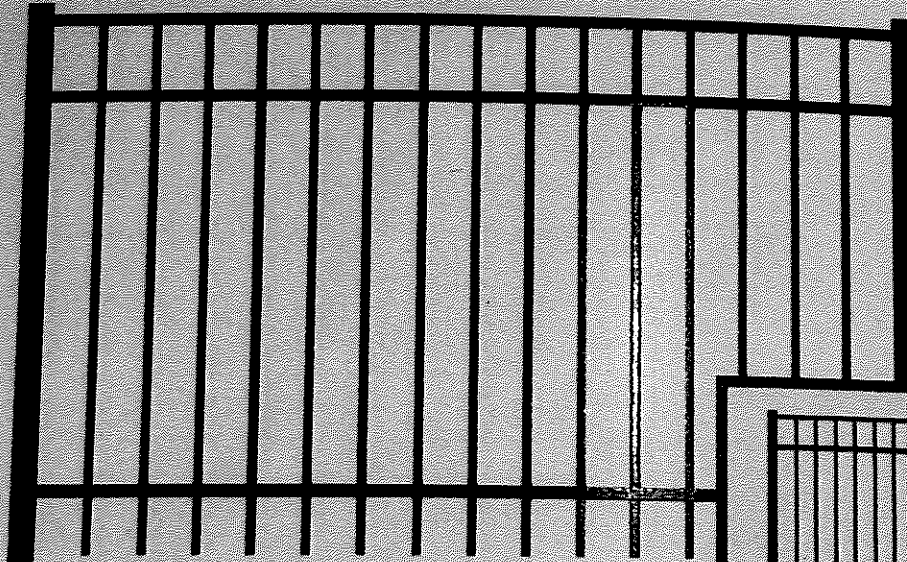
Customer Signature:

Buyers Right to Cancel: You, the buyer, may cancel this transaction at any time prior to midnight of the third business day after the date of this transaction. Customer has read and understands both sides of this contract in its entirety and accepts all terms and conditions as set forth herein.

We accept:



LEXINGTON



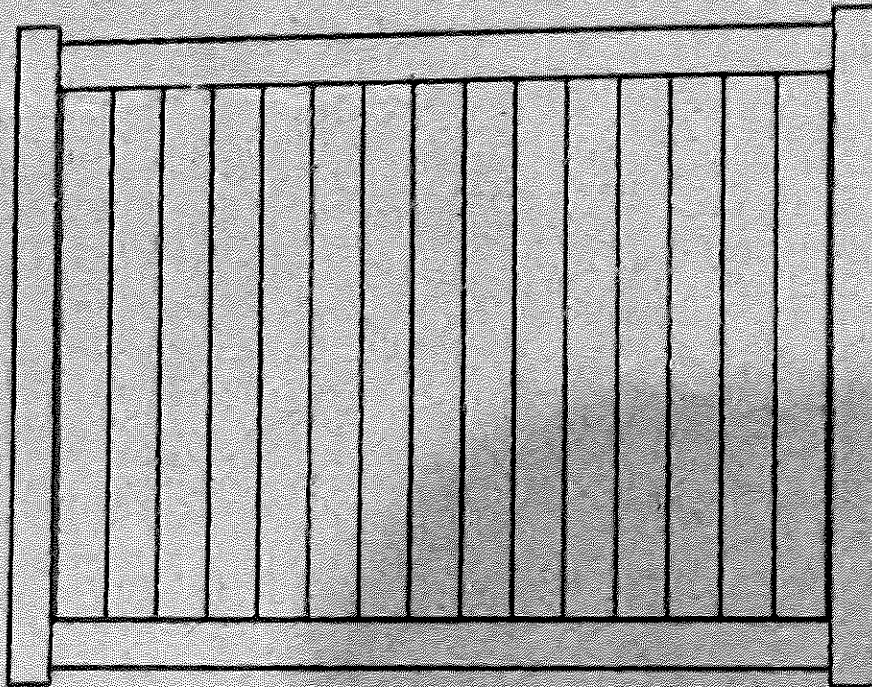
Thru Bottom



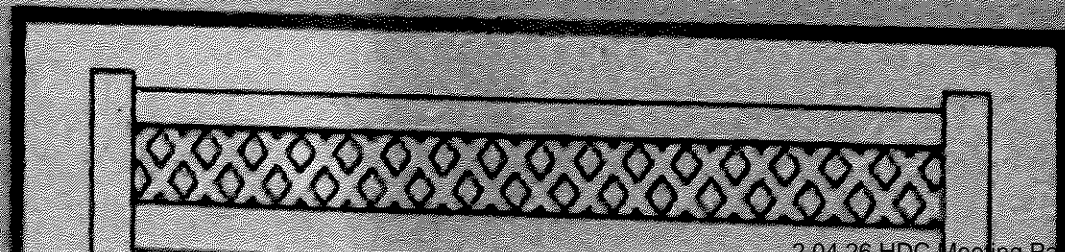
Flush Bottom
54"H Pool Code★

1.75" x 5.5" Deco

2" x 7" Nexu



BELFAST
SOLID PRIVACY





STAFF REPORT

TO: Town of Berlin Historic District Commission

FROM: Ryan Hardesty, Acting Planning & Zoning Director

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, February 4, 2026

SUBJECT: 501 South Main Street

SUMMARY

The Town of Berlin Planning and Zoning Department has reviewed an application submitted by Daniel and Stephanie Cason, property owners of 501 South Main Street, for the installation of fencing on the subject property, which is located within the Berlin Historic District.

The applicant proposes to install fencing to enclose the backyard and screen the lot from the street. The proposal includes a combination of black aluminum fencing along the side of the house and driveway and a white vinyl privacy fence along the rear portion of the property.

BACKGROUND

The subject property lies within the boundaries of the Berlin Historic District. The property is improved with a residential structure and associated yard areas, which are partially visible from the public right-of-way.

According to the application, the purpose of the proposed fencing is to provide privacy and enclosure of the rear yard while maintaining an appropriate visual relationship with the streetscape. The submitted materials include a boundary survey, fence layout, and manufacturer-style drawings illustrating fence height and design.

The proposal includes:

- Black aluminum fencing along the side yard and driveway area, allowing visual permeability and maintaining openness along the street-facing side; and
- White vinyl privacy fencing along the rear portion of the property, where visibility from public streets is limited.

FINDINGS

Based on a review of the application and supporting materials, staff makes the following findings:

1. The subject property is located within the Berlin Historic District and is subject to Historic District Commission review.
2. The proposed fencing is limited in scope and does not involve alteration to the principal structure or historic architectural features.
3. Black aluminum fencing is proposed along the side yard and driveway
4. The white vinyl privacy fence is proposed only in the rear portion of the property, where it has minimal visibility from the public right-of-way.

5. The location, height, and design of the fencing are consistent with maintaining the established character of the streetscape.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic District Commission approve the application for 501 South Main Street for the installation of fencing, subject to the following conditions:

1. The fencing shall be installed in accordance with the materials, locations, and designs shown in the submitted application and supporting documents.
2. Any proposed changes to fence type, height, or placement visible from the public right-of-way shall be subject to additional review by the Historic District Commission, as applicable.



Mayor & Council of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, Maryland 21811

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received

1/12/26

Paid: \$100.00

1/13/26



HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

Date: 01/05/2026 Subject Property Location: 100 N Main St Case #: HDC-02-02-26-06

Property Owner: Edward Reid Owner Phone #: (443) 513-0392

Owner Address: 100 N Main St, Berlin MD Owner Email: ereid57@hotmail.com

Agent/Contractor: Delmarva Roofing and Coating Inc Agent Phone#: (302) 349-5174

Work Involved: ☒ Alterations ☒ New Construction ☒ Addition ☒ Demolition ☒ Sign ☒ Other

DESCRIPTION OF WORK PROPOSED:

TPO Membrane overlay on existing roofing system for moisture protection. No demolition or cosmetic changes.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED WITH APPLICATION

All required documents must be submitted to the Planning Department prior to at least three (3) weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled hearing. Failure to include all the required attachments and/or failure of the applicant or his/her authorized representative to appear at the scheduled meeting may result in postponement of the application until the next regular scheduled meeting. If an application is denied, the same application cannot be resubmitted for one year from date of such action. The Berlin Historic District Commission Rules and Regulations are available for review in the Town of Berlin Planning Department.

The following items, if applicable, must be provided to Town Staff in order for the proposal to be considered:

1. Site plan.
2. Scaled drawings of plans and/or elevations of the proposal, or in the alternative, a scale model.
3. Color photographs of the existing structure, the area to be altered and close-ups of architectural details.
4. For a proposed new structure, photographs of the subject site and all buildings in the immediate vicinity.
5. All photographs shall be printed on 8½ x 11 paper or provided in digital format, and shall be labeled with a description of the contents of the photographs.
6. Samples of materials or copies of manufacturers product literature.

The applicant, or an authorized representative, has been advised to appear at the meeting of the Berlin Historic District Commission scheduled for 2/4/2026 (date).

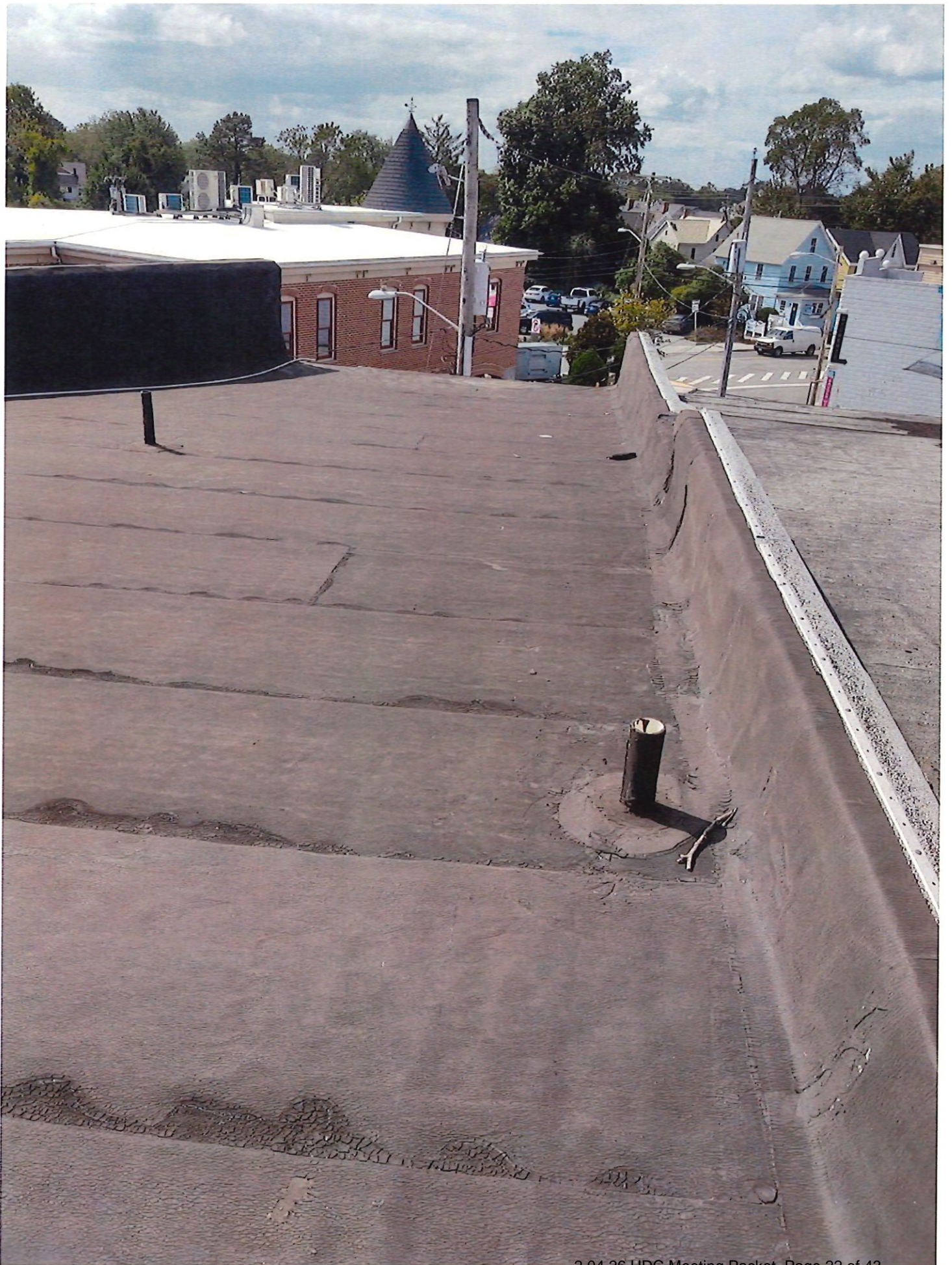
Applicant Signature [Signature] Date 1/5/2026

APPROVED:

Historic District Commission Chair (Date)

Planning Director (Date)















STAFF REPORT

TO: Town of Berlin Historic District Commission

FROM: Ryan Hardesty, Acting Planning & Zoning Director

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, February 4, 2026

SUBJECT: 100 N. Main Street – Victorian Charm

SUMMARY

The Town of Berlin Planning and Zoning Department has reviewed an application submitted by property owner Edward Reid for work at 100 North Main Street, located within the Berlin Historic District. The applicant proposes installing a TPO membrane overlay over the existing roofing system to provide moisture protection.

The application indicates that the proposed work involves no demolition, no change to roof form, and no cosmetic or architectural alterations. The work is limited to a protective overlay on the existing roof surface.

BACKGROUND

The subject property is identified as 100 North Main Street, Berlin, Maryland, also known as the location of Victorian Charm, and is within the boundaries of the Berlin Historic District.

The applicant proposes installing a TPO (thermoplastic polyolefin) membrane overlay over the existing roofing. According to the application, the purpose of the overlay is moisture protection, and the work will not involve demolition or modification of visible architectural features.

FINDINGS

Based on staff review of the application and supporting materials, the following findings are offered:

1. The subject property is located within the Berlin Historic District and is subject to review by the Historic District Commission.
2. The proposed work consists of a TPO membrane overlay on the existing roof, intended solely for moisture protection.
3. The proposal does not alter the roofline, pitch, height, or architectural character of the structure.
4. The work is reversible in nature and does not result in permanent alteration to historic architectural elements.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic District Commission approve the application for 100 North Main Street for the installation of a TPO membrane overlay on the existing roofing system, subject to the following condition:

1. The approved work shall be limited to the scope described in the application and shall not include any changes to roof form, materials visible from the public right-of-way, or architectural features without further review and approval by the Historic District Commission.



Mayor & Council of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, Maryland 21811

Phone 410-641-2770 Fax 410-641-2316

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Agenda Item 7
Paid: 1/13/26
\$100



received
1/13/26

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

Date: 01/13/2026 Subject Property Location: 2 N. Main St Case #: HDC-02-04-26-07

Property Owner: Atlantic Hotel Partnership Owner Phone #: (443) 880-8858

Owner Address: 2 N. Main St. Berlin, MD Owner Email: laura@fagers.com

Agent/Contractor: Agent Phone#

Work Involves: ☐ Alterations ☐ New Construction ☐ Addition ☐ Demolition ☐ Sign ☐ Other

DESCRIPTION OF WORK PROPOSED:

This application is for landscaping the front of the hotel.
Brick pavers to be installed on both sides of the sidewalk at front entrance. They will match hotel brick.
The trees will be surrounded by liriope and it will also be placed along fenceline.
Replace boxwoods in front of porch with new boxwoods.
Paint fence black.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO BE FILED WITH APPLICATION

All required documents must be submitted to the Planning Department prior to at least three (3) weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled hearing. Failure to include all the required attachments and/or failure of the applicant or his/her authorized representative to appear at the scheduled meeting may result in postponement of the application until the next regular scheduled meeting. If an application is denied, the same application cannot be resubmitted for one year from date of such action. The Berlin Historic District Commission Rules and Regulations are available for review in the Town of Berlin Planning Department.

The following items, if applicable, must be provided to Town Staff in order for the proposal to be considered:

1. Site plan.
2. Scaled drawings of plans and/or elevations of the proposal, or in the alternative, a scale model.
3. Color photographs of the existing structure, the area to be altered and close-ups of architectural details.
4. For a proposed new structure, photographs of the subject site and all buildings in the immediate vicinity.
5. All photographs shall be printed on 8½ x 11 paper or provided in digital format, and shall be labeled with a description of the contents of the photographs.
6. Samples of materials or copies of manufacturers product literature.

The applicant, or an authorized representative, has been advised to appear at the meeting of the Berlin Historic District Commission scheduled for 2/4/26 (date).

Applicant Signature Laura Date 01/13/2026

APPROVED:

Historic District Commission Chair (Date)

Planning Director (Date)









Fw: HDC Application - 2 North Main Street

From Kaitlin Ahlers <kahlers@berlinmd.gov>

Date Tue 1/20/2026 2:25 PM

To Kate Daub <kdaub@berlinmd.gov>



Kaitlin Ahlers - Permit Coordinator
Town of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, MD 21811

Office: 410-629-1483 |
kahlers@berlinmd.gov | berlinmd.gov

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From: Kaitlin Ahlers <kahlers@berlinmd.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2026 12:08 PM

To: laura

Cc: Ryan Hardesty <rhardesty@berlinmd.gov>

Subject: HDC Application - 2 North Main Street

Good Afternoon Laura,

This email is in regard to your HDC Application for 2 North Main Street. In addition to the photos you have provided, we will need examples of the lirioppe and the boxwoods that will be placed on the property. We will also need to see the sleeve that will be installed for removal and placement of the signage.

Photos of these items can be emailed, and I will then include them in your application.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best,



Ryan Hardesty - Acting Planning Director

Town of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, MD 21811

Office: 410-641-4143 |

rhargesty@berlinmd.gov | berlinmd.gov

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From: Norman Bunting Jr ·

Sent: Monday, January 12, 2026 6:53 AM

To: Ryan Hardesty <rhargesty@berlinmd.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Atlantic Hotel improvements

Good morning I received this message from Laura to be granted permission to start a landscaping project in front of the Atlantic Hotel. I will forward you the response of the commissioners. Due to the circumstances and time restraints that Mr. LeCompte has to do this. We are as commissioners unanimously for it. If we have not missed the deadline for the February meeting, I would like to get them on our docket. If not, we will get them in for March. So we will have it on the record that it was done. Thanks
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Norman Bunting Jr ·

Date: January 9, 2026 at 4:08:37 PM EST

To: Carol Rose

Mary Moore

John Hollaway

LISA

DOYLE

Subject: Fwd: Atlantic Hotel improvements

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Laura Stearns

Date: January 9, 2026 at 4:04:23 PM EST

To: Norman Bunting Jr

Subject: Atlantic Hotel improvements

Dear Historic Commission,

The Atlantic Hotel has the opportunity, in partnership with Bryan LeCompte of Yard Designs and John Fager, to make an in-kind landscape enhancement to the hotel that would also benefit the Town of Berlin as a whole.

FW: Atlantic Hotel improvements

From Ryan Hardesty <rhardesty@berlinmd.gov>

Date Mon 1/26/2026 1:11 PM

To Kaitlin Ahlers <kahlers@berlinmd.gov>; Kate Daub <kdaub@berlinmd.gov>



Ryan Hardesty - Acting Planning Director
Town of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, MD 21811

Office: 410-641-4143 |
rhardesty@berlinmd.gov | berlinmd.gov

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From: Norman Bunting Jr

Sent: Monday, January 12, 2026 6:53 AM

To: Ryan Hardesty <rhardesty@berlinmd.gov>

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Begin forwarded message:

From: Norman Bunting Jr

Date: January 9, 2026 at 4:08:37 PM EST

To: Carol Rose, Mary Moore
, John Hollaway

LISA

DOYLE

Subject: Fwd: Atlantic Hotel improvements

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Laura Stearns

Date: January 9, 2026 at 4:04:23 PM EST

To: Norman Bunting Jr
Subject: Atlantic Hotel improvements

Dear Historic Commission,

The Atlantic Hotel has the opportunity, in partnership with Bryan LeCompte of Yard Designs and John Fager, to make an in-kind landscape enhancement to the hotel that would also benefit the Town of Berlin as a whole.

The proposed improvement includes installing a small area of pavers in the front of the Atlantic Hotel where there is currently bare dirt. The two existing trees would each be surrounded by a six-foot-diameter circle of lirioppe and mulch, with the pavers curving around them. A removable ground sleeve would be installed for the hotel sign, allowing it to be taken out annually to accommodate the Christmas tree. Lirioppe would also be planted along the fence line to add greenery to an area that is currently lacking landscape interest. In addition, the boxwoods in front of the porch would be replaced.

I am a rules follower and would not be asking for this exception if it were not such an exciting thing for this town. I have wanted this to be done for years because it is an eyesore. I have tried to plant grass over the years but it just gets trampled at every town event. The dirt is very unattractive and the roots are a terrible tripping hazard. After having witnessed a woman split her toenail, I park my bike over the worse area of roots every time I work in hopes that it will keep people from tripping on them.

I sent the photo of the pavers to be sent to the commissioners. It is a classic brick paver that will blend with the hotel brick nicely.

There have been rare occasions where the Historic Commission has allowed people to apply to the commission after a project has been complete. I am asking if you would be able to review this small project and allow me to apply after the project has been completed so that it can be properly documented? Of course, I am recusing myself from this decision.

The reason for the fast approval is because Bryan LeCompte is only able to offer us this opportunity because it is January and he is trying to keep his crew busy before the springtime when they would be too busy to fit us in.

We believe these enhancements would improve the appearance of the property while contributing positively to the streetscape on Main Street.

Please let us know if you have any questions or need additional information.

Thank you!

Laura

Laura Stearns

General Manager

Hotel Atlantic

2 North Main Street

Berlin, MD 21811

FW: Atlantic Hotel improvements

From Ryan Hardesty <rhardesty@berlinmd.gov>

Date Mon 1/26/2026 1:12 PM

To Kaitlin Ahlers <kahlers@berlinmd.gov>; Kate Daub <kdaub@berlinmd.gov>



Ryan Hardesty - Acting Planning Director
Town of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, MD 21811

Office: 410-641-4143 |
rhardesty@berlinmd.gov | berlinmd.gov

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From: Norman Bunting Jr

Sent: Monday, January 12, 2026 6:55 AM

To: Ryan Hardesty <rhardesty@berlinmd.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Atlantic Hotel improvements

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: LISA DOYLE

Date: January 9, 2026 at 4:26:06 PM EST

To: Norman Bunting Jr

Carol Rose

, Mary Moore

, John

Hollaway

Subject: Re: Fwd: Atlantic Hotel improvements

Nornie,

I'm in complete support of this project, but the attachment for the pavers is missing.
Can you send?

Lisa

On 01/09/2026 4:08 PM EST Norman Bunting Jr
wrote:

Sent from my iPhone

FW: Atlantic Hotel improvements

From Ryan Hardesty <rhardesty@berlinmd.gov>

Date Mon 1/26/2026 1:12 PM

To Kaitlin Ahlers <kahlers@berlinmd.gov>; Kate Daub <kdaub@berlinmd.gov>



Ryan Hardesty - Acting Planning Director
Town of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, MD 21811

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From: Norman Bunting Jr

Sent: Monday, January 12, 2026 6:56 AM

To: Ryan Hardesty <rhardesty@berlinmd.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Atlantic Hotel improvements

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: CAROL ROSE

Date: January 9, 2026 at 4:59:42 PM EST

To: LISA DOYLE, Norman Bunting Jr, Mary Moore, John Hollaway

Subject: Re: Fwd: Atlantic Hotel improvements

Nornie. Due to time constraints I totally support going forward. The benefits to the property will be so beneficial to our downtown historic charm.

Carol

On 01/09/2026 4:26 PM EST LISA DOYLE wrote:

Nornie,
I'm in complete support of this project, but the attachment for the pavers is missing. Can you send?

FW: Atlantic Hotel improvements

From Ryan Hardesty <rhardesty@berlinmd.gov>

Date Mon 1/26/2026 1:12 PM

To Kaitlin Ahlers <kahlers@berlinmd.gov>; Kate Daub <kdaub@berlinmd.gov>



Ryan Hardesty - Acting Planning Director
Town of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, MD 21811

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From: Norman Bunting Jr

Sent: Monday, January 12, 2026 6:56 AM

To: Ryan Hardesty <rhardesty@berlinmd.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Atlantic Hotel improvements

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mary Moore

Date: January 11, 2026 at 11:09:42 PM EST

To: Norman Bunting Jr

Subject: Re: Atlantic Hotel improvements

As we spoke earlier I am fine with Laura's proposal for the Atlantic Hotel's landscape install.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 9, 2026, at 4:08 PM, Norman Bunting Jr
wrote:

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

FW: Atlantic Hotel improvements

From Ryan Hardesty <rhardesty@berlinmd.gov>

Date Wed 1/28/2026 1:00 PM

To Kate Daub <kdaub@berlinmd.gov>



Ryan Hardesty - Acting Planning Director
Town of Berlin

10 William Street, Berlin, MD 21811

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From: Ryan Hardesty <rhardesty@berlinmd.gov>

Sent: Monday, January 12, 2026 2:56 PM

To: Norman Bunting Jr <norman_bunting@msn.com>

Cc: laura@fagers.com

Subject: RE: Atlantic Hotel improvements

Thank you for providing the description of the proposed landscape improvements at the Atlantic Hotel and for outlining the intent and public benefit associated with the project. The enhancements described would certainly improve an area that sees heavy pedestrian use. That said, I would strongly recommend holding off on moving forward with any work at this time. Given that all of the proposed items constitute exterior improvements requiring Historic District Commission approval, and in light of the circumstances outlined in your email, it would be advisable for the Town Attorney to first review this matter. Specifically, we need confirmation as to whether informal review or post-completion approval would be consistent with the Maryland Open Meetings Act, and whether proceeding without prior HDC approval could place the project, or the Town, in violation of applicable law or established procedure. While there may have been instances in the past where projects were reviewed after completion, those situations should not be relied upon as precedent without legal guidance. Obtaining the Town Attorney's input will help ensure that the process is transparent, defensible, and consistent with both state law and the Town's adopted procedures. Once we receive clarification from the Town Attorney, staff will advise on the appropriate next steps and timing for HDC review. Please let me know if you have any questions in the meantime, or if additional information would be helpful as we work through this review.

Best regards,



STAFF REPORT

TO: Town of Berlin Historic District Commission

FROM: Ryan Hardesty, Acting Planning & Zoning Director

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, February 4, 2026

SUBJECT: 2 North Main Street – Atlantic Hotel

SUMMARY

The Town of Berlin Planning and Zoning Department has reviewed an application for exterior site improvements at 2 North Main Street, a property within the Berlin Historic District, also known as the Atlantic Hotel. The application described improvements at the front of the hotel, including the installation of brick pavers and bluestone tree surrounds, replacement of landscaping, and painting of an existing fence.

At the time the application was received and reviewed, the improvements had already been completed. Work on the project had commenced prior to submission of the Historic District Commission application. While the completed improvements enhanced an area of high pedestrian activity, staff identified significant procedural and legal concerns related to compliance with the Town of Berlin Code and the Maryland Open Meetings Act.

BACKGROUND

The Atlantic Hotel is located within the Berlin Historic District and is therefore subject to review by the Historic District Commission for exterior changes, including modifications to appurtenances and environmental settings, such as landscaping, walkways, and site features.

The completed scope of work included:

- Installation of brick pavers on both sides of the sidewalk at the front entrance
- Installation of new landscaping
- Installation of sleeve for the sign to be removed easily
- Painting of an existing fence black
- Installation of electrical

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Staff determined that the proposed improvements were undertaken prior to submission of an application to the Historic District Commission, without prior approval, and without payment of the required permit fee.

Additionally, the Historic District Commission is an official body established under the Town Charter and is subject to the Maryland Open Meetings Act (MD Code, General Provisions §3-301 et seq.). The Act requires that Commission deliberations occur at properly noticed public meetings, with agendas posted in advance and the public afforded an opportunity to attend and observe.

Because the work was completed prior to Historic District Commission review, the matter was not presented to the Commission at a properly noticed public meeting before the work occurred, and the public was not afforded the opportunity for advance notice or observation as required by State law.

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

- The completed work did not constitute an emergency that would have justified deviation from established Historic District review procedures.
- In addition to not receiving prior HDC approval, Town building permits and Worcester County electrical permits were also not obtained.
- While the Commission may ultimately determine that the completed improvements are substantively appropriate, the absence of advance review prevented the Commission from exercising its full statutory role.
- The manner in which this matter was handled presents a risk of undermining the perceived consistency and integrity of Historic District enforcement if not addressed in a transparent and procedurally sound manner.

The completed site improvements constitute exterior changes requiring review by the Historic District Commission under the Town Code. Considering the project only after completion raises questions about compliance with both local ordinance requirements, County requirements, and State law governing public bodies.

CONCLUSION

The completed improvements at 2 North Main Street provide aesthetic and functional benefits within a highly visible, pedestrian-oriented area. However, adherence to established Historic District procedures, compliance of the Town of Berlin code and State law is essential to maintaining transparency, fairness, and public confidence in the Historic District review process. Failure to follow these procedures shall be subject to Town Code penalties.