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## HPC Members

CHAIR: Jeff Bishop  
 VICE-CHAIR: Heather Fletcher  
 Joanna Beckman  
 Bobbie Epting  
 Worth VanLinden  
 Ellen L. Walker  
 Thomas White

## Support Staff

PRESERVATION PLANNER: Amber Eskew  
 ASSISTANT PLANNING DIRECTOR:  
 Bruce Lonnee  
 ATTORNEY: Austin Jackson

All are invited to attend the HPC  
 hearings held on the 3rd Wednesday  
 of each month at 5:30pm,  
 120 W. Dougherty Street, Athens, GA

[www.accgov.com/208/Historic-Preservation](http://www.accgov.com/208/Historic-Preservation)



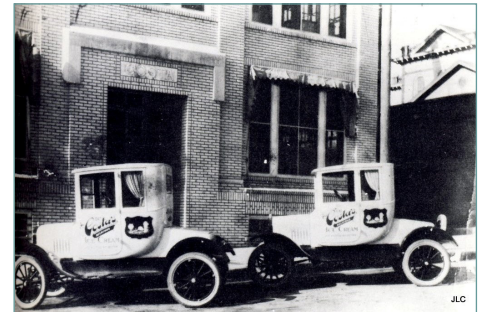
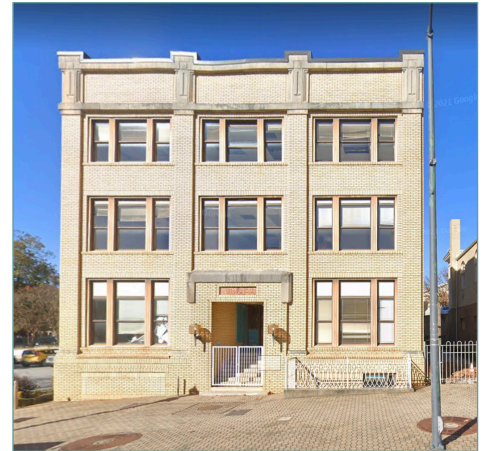
# Athens-Clarke County, Georgia Historic Preservation Commission Annual Report 2021

## Renovating the Costa Building

By Heather M. Fletcher, HPC Vice-Chair

Located at 133 East Washington St. in downtown Athens, the Costa Building will soon undergo a complete renovation. Constructed in 1910 by Joseph Costa to house his family's ice cream factory where it operated until 1939, the building was most recently used as a police substation, though it has remained vacant since the station relocated to College Avenue.

This project was approved as part of the 2011 SPLOST program. The local firm, Architectural Collaborative, has been contracted for the design work with Gabe Comstock as the Project Architect and Lori Bork Newcomer as the Project Manager. Plans include major interior space and layout revisions, provision of ADA access, building code upgrades to the mechanical and energy systems along with the provision of a fire sprinkler system, a modest rear addition, historic restoration of the façade, as well as construction of a staircase to replace the currently gated



The Costa's Ice Cream factory with company cars, photo courtesy of "Growing up in Athens GA," Facebook.

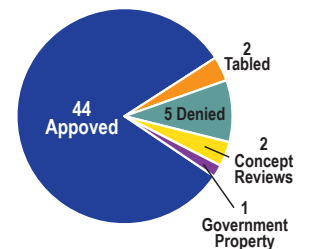
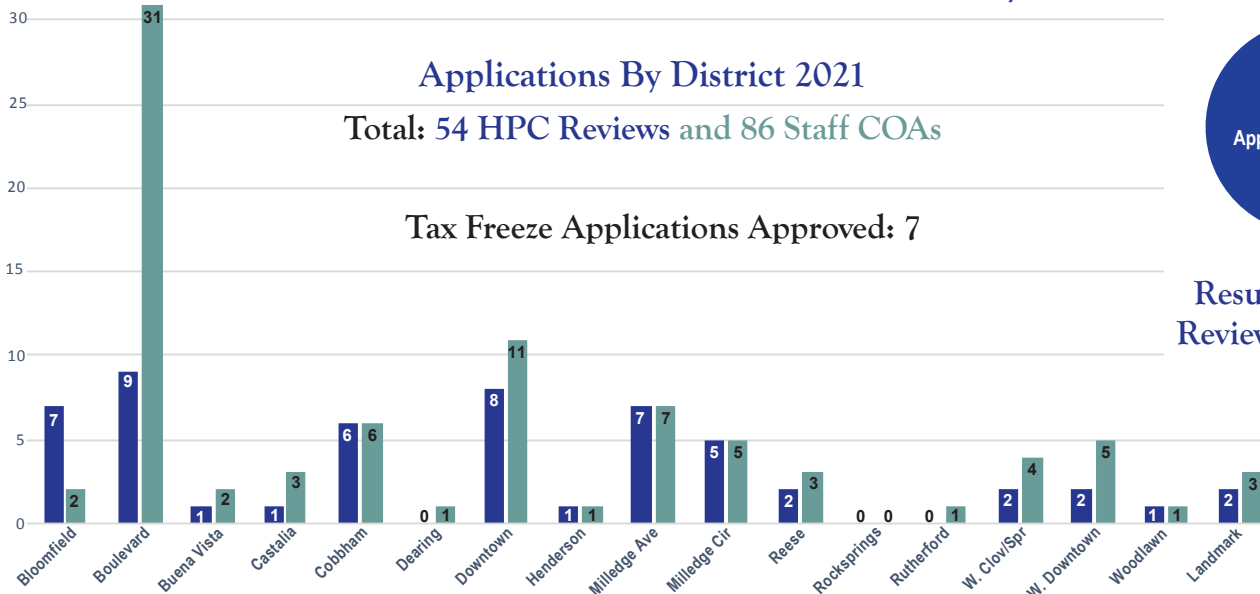
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## The Historic Preservation Commission by the Numbers

### Applications By District 2021

Total: 54 HPC Reviews and 86 Staff COAs

Tax Freeze Applications Approved: 7



Results of 54 COAs  
 Reviewed by the HPC

# The HPC Embarks on Strategic Planning

By Ellen Walker, HPC Member

During the past year, the HPC began a process of strategic planning to discuss the future and how the HPC might better serve our community.

Strategic planning is defined as a long-term, future-oriented process of assessment, goal setting, and strategy building that maps a path between the present and a vision of the future. It is a disciplined effort to arrive at fundamental decisions and commit to actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it. Because strategic planning is a team effort that builds consensus on a future direction for an organization, the process itself is as important as the resulting document. While most non-profits and businesses do strategic planning, it is always a good idea to update the plan as needs and times change. It has been several years since the HPC embarked on this process.

The HPC hopes to complete a 5-year plan as a practical, action-oriented guide, that makes a clear statement of our mission and vision, identifies a set of goals and objectives and formulates key strategies to reach those goals.

Once these components have been defined, we will create an action plan, define how we will develop and implement the plan, and ways to track and monitor progress. A strategic plan should be flexible and adaptable, but a good plan provides the necessary guidelines within which to work.

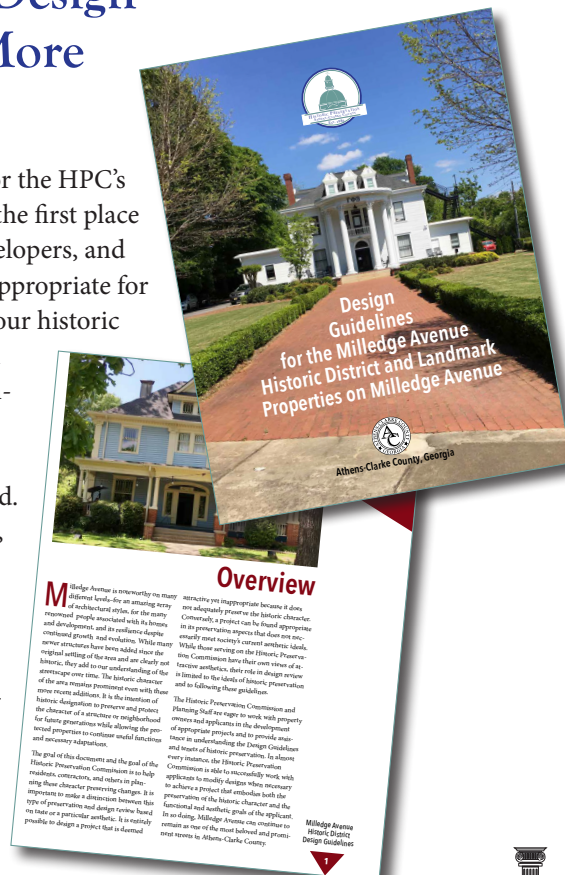
The HPC has already begun writing our mission and vision statements. We hope to finish the bulk of the plan during the 2022 calendar year. We will be inviting other community organizations and individuals that have a stake in the future of preservation in Athens to help guide and create this plan.



## Reformatting the Design Guidelines to be More User Friendly

The design guidelines are the basis for the HPC's decisions regarding COA's. They are the first place that we hope citizens, architects, developers, and homeowners will go to find what is appropriate for changes to structures that lie within our historic districts or are classified as landmark properties. The HPC Education Committee decided that a redesign of the documents might make them more user friendly and easier to understand. None of the guidelines have changed, they have just been clarified in a new format.

So be on the lookout for these new documents, both at the Planning Department office and online at [accgov.com/812/Guidelines-Examples](https://accgov.com/812/Guidelines-Examples)



## NOTEWORTHY COA APPROVALS IN 2021



**277 HILL STREET:** This project received review and approval in April of 2021. It involved the removal of a non-historic rear addition to a contributing structure to allow a new addition and some modifications to the historic area retained. These involved replacing several front porch columns, some areas of wood siding, and select windows due to their condition. Brett Nave with Studio BNA was applicant for Joseph Pruitt. The demolition portion has been done and the new addition and modifications are underway.



**394 S. MILLEDGE AVENUE:** This project was originally reviewed in February of 2021. At that time it was tabled to allow some modifications to the design to address concerns expressed at the hearing. The revised design was reviewed and approved in April 2021. The property is considered non-contributing to the Milledge Avenue Historic District and the changes to the building entries, especially the new storefront openings proposed, were reviewed to ensure the character of the district was not negatively affected by the project. The approved design was able to take architectural cues from the

*Continued on page 3*



# Meet Your HPC Commissioner - Worth VanLinden

By Ellen Walker, HPC Member



**Worth VanLinden joined the HPC as its newest commissioner in 2020.**

*Tell us a little about your background; where you grew up, how you came to live in Athens, what your job is now.*

I grew up in Pickens County in a little community called Big Canoe. I lived there from when I was born in 1994 until 2012. I worked for many years in the golf course cart barn at Big Canoe where I learned the values of being on time and attention to detail. I went to the local public schools in the county and graduated from Pickens High School in 2013. Starting in 2015, while an undergraduate at UGA, I worked at the intramural fields for the department of Recreational Sports, and in 2017 I was recruited to work inside Ramsey as a facility manager while continuing my work at the I.M. fields. I also interned with the UGA Athletic Department during my time as an undergrad. I was a First Honor Graduate in the fall of 2017 with a major in consumer economics and got a full-time internship with Athletic facility management. At the end of the summer of 2019, I transitioned from working in Butts-Mehre Heritage Hall to the Tate Student Center to act as the Coordinator for Greek Housing Management at UGA.

*What prompted you to apply to be on the HPC?*

While at work one day, I was wracking my brain, trying to find a way to get more involved in the community. I have always been willing to do anything, to just jump in and help, as long as it is supporting the University of Georgia and Athens. One day, I saw on a newsfeed that ACC was searching to fill a seat on the HPC. I didn't have any experience per se, but I love everything about Athens and so I just figured I would give it a try. I really had no idea going into it, what would be involved or if I had the qualifications. But I was willing to give it all I had.

*What has been the most surprising or interesting thing about being on the HPC?*

I am surprised at how much I have learned. I remember in an early meeting, possibly my first, one of the HPC members rattled off all these architectural terms regarding a COA that we were reviewing and I thought, "What have I done?" I didn't know what he was talking about! But I told myself this was my first one and I was "drinking from a fire hydrant." Now, over a year in, I look at buildings in Athens very differently. I also have learned how big of an impact [historic preservation] has on a neighborhood. I tell people I always knew I loved Athens but every day I learn more and have a growing appreciation for everything Athens. I love listening to the other HPC members and learning what they know about Athens. Everyday I become

more "unattachable" from this town. I can't imagine living anywhere else.

*What would you like to see the HPC do in the coming year?*

Meet in person! I am anxious to see what a meeting looks like since I started during the pandemic and haven't been at a meeting in person.

*What do you see as one of the biggest challenges for historic preservation in Athens?*

Lack of appreciation for Athens' history. That's why the [HPC] education piece is so important. I know that the commercialization and growth of Athens, especially downtown, is troubling for some. But we have more than 40,000 students and there is some need and a lot of benefit to development. But it is no secret that Athens-Clarke County is the land of haves and have-nots. You go from million and half dollar houses to 10 minutes across town to a very different reality. Students are not necessarily aware of these differences and

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**Every space has a history and an essential function and should reflect the people in the space. whether it is a tiny house or the entire town.**

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it's no requirement to be; though I wish more people were invested in the town. Maybe I wish that people in town know what I do now. There has to be a balance between all the interests in Athens. The education piece is so important, because it is not about us, the people sitting on the board who want to protect your windows, but if you change [historically significant buildings] and don't listen, at some point it is going to be too late. You will look back and realize why we are doing what we are doing.



**Noteworthy COA's...continued from page 2**

adjacent Clarke Central High School to achieve this result. The property is now a mixed-use property with several business spaces on the ground floor and apartments on the upper floor. Christopher Evans of E+E Architecture was the applicant.



# Georgia Trust GREEN Program

By: Joanna Beckman, HPC Member

## Energy Conservation for Historic Homes

Making any historical era home energy efficient can present major challenges. Building materials and construction principles have changed over the generations and we may struggle with drafty windows or doors, cold basements, hot attics, and sky-high energy bills just to name a few. But the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation has a program that may offer some help.

Georgia Trust GREEN was developed to help homeowners and business owners work toward environmental sustainability goals within the parameters of historical construction. The program combines advocacy and education to give owners resources necessary to make significant improvements to their property's energy efficiency while still protecting its historic integrity.

By following a three-step process to educate, guide and certify energy conservation, owners will receive both general best practice advice as well as suggestions tailored to their home's particular needs. First, anyone interested in Georgia Trust GREEN certification will need to attend a low-cost workshop that offers ideas for saving energy, including a general checklist of actions that can be taken by anybody. No further measures are obligated after this step unless the homeowner wants to achieve certification.

Next, owners can request a professional whole-house assessment of their property that will identify specific trouble spots in their structure and offer upgrades that target those areas, all with careful consideration given to the complexity of making changes to a historic building. The cost of

the assessment varies, but will likely be a few hundred dollars depending on the size of the building. Suggestions may be as cost effective as changing to LED lighting or adding insulation and vapor barriers to attics or crawlspaces, but could include suggestions about how to gently retrofit HVAC ducting or more energy-efficient mechanical systems.

The items on the assessment checklist are given a point rating based on their impact on overall energy efficiency. In the final step, Georgia Trust GREEN certification is awarded only after sufficient points are earned by making enough recommended energy improvements. There is no deadline for completing the assessment items, and no obligation to do any of it. Homeowners can make the improvements over time, as budget allows, prioritizing quick wins—or major projects—as they see fit.

While the educational workshop will run the homeowner about the cost of a lunch, the cost of the professional assessment and later updates could be a significant financial investment. However, owners may find that the improvements save them much more money each year in lowered energy bills. A commercial historical building might save hundreds of dollars a month, while a homeowner might take longer to recoup the investment.

Whether you participate to learn some easy tips for energy savings or you're ready to be recognized for your conservation efforts, Georgia Trust GREEN certification is a good way to bring energy efficiency, yearly savings, and overall comfort to your property while taking steps toward environmental sustainability.

For more information visit: <https://www.georgiatrust.org/our-programs/georgia-trust-green/>



HPC meetings are currently being held digitally via WebEx with public attendance to view and participate available from the Planning Auditorium.



## Did You Know?

The National Park Service offers free, helpful resources for preserving, rehabilitating, and restoring historic buildings. Before undertaking major renovations, consult the NPS Preservation Briefs to help you recognize and resolve common problems found in older buildings. There are 57 briefs available for download on topics such as Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry, Repair of Historic Wooden Windows, Preserving and Repairing of Historic Stucco, Ornamental Plaster, Slate Roofs, Clay Tile Roofs, Stained Glass, as well as some tips for business owners like Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts and Removing Graffiti from Historic Brick. These detailed resources can be found at : <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm>

## The Costa Building...continued from page 1

alleyway. This last element of the design will provide access to City Hall.

The Hot Corner Mural by Elio Mercado and Broderick Flannigan on the west side of the Costa Building was completed in early 2020 and will be preserved in the renovations. Installation of the "Hot Corner Mural Park" in the adjacent parking lot will follow the Costa Building's long overdue restoration. Together, the two projects will create an attractive and vibrant third-space for downtown Athens.



*The Hot Corner Mural by Elio Mercado and Broderick Flannigan on the west side of the Costa Building. Photo; Nate Hall for the Red & Black.*

