§ 160D-303. Historic preservation commission.

(a) Composition. – Before it may designate one or more landmarks or historic districts pursuant to Part 4 of Article 9 of this Chapter, the governing board shall establish a historic preservation commission. The governing board shall determine the number of the members of the commission, which shall be at least three, and the length of their terms, which shall be no greater than four years. A majority of the members of the commission shall have demonstrated special interest, experience, or education in history, architecture, archaeology, or related fields. All the members shall reside within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction of the local government as established pursuant to this Chapter. The commission may appoint advisory bodies and committees as appropriate. Members of the commission may be reimbursed for actual expenses incidental to the performance of their duties within the limits of any funds available to the commission but shall serve without pay unless otherwise provided in the ordinance establishing the commission.

(b) Alternative Forms. – In lieu of establishing a historic preservation commission, a local government may designate as its historic preservation commission (i) a separate historic districts commission or a separate historic landmarks commission established pursuant to this Chapter to deal only with historic districts or landmarks respectively, (ii) a planning board established pursuant to this Chapter, or (iii) a community appearance commission established pursuant to this Chapter. In order for a commission or board other than the historic preservation commission to be designated, at least three of its members shall have demonstrated special interest, experience, or education in history, architecture, or related fields. At the discretion of a local government, the ordinance may also provide that the preservation commission may exercise within a historic district any or all of the powers of a planning board or a community appearance commission.

(c) Joint Commissions. – Local governments may establish or designate a joint preservation commission. If a joint commission is established or designated, it shall have the same composition as specified by this section, and the local governments involved shall determine the residence requirements of members of the joint preservation commission.

(d) Duties. – The historic preservation commission shall have the duties specified in G.S. 160D-942. (2019-111, s. 2.4; 2020-3, s. 4.33(a); 2020-25, s. 51(a), (b), (d).)