

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE CITY OF FLORENCE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
VIA ZOOM REMOTE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 2021 – 2:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pierce Campbell, Julia Buyck, and Jamie Carsten (in person); Scott Collins, Erik Healy, Mike Padgett, and David Tedder (via Zoom)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jay Ham and Nathaniel Mitchell

STAFF PRESENT: Jerry Dudley, Derek Johnston, and Alane Zlotnicki; Danny Starling for IT

APPLICANTS PRESENT: Jerry Hudson, Chuck Powell, Stacey Powell, John Deberry, Robert McCrady (in person); Deborah Jensen, Lyles Cooper, and Jesse Wiles (via Zoom).

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Campbell called the May 12, 2021 regular meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. and thanked everyone in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Campbell introduced the minutes from the April 14, 2021 regular meeting and asked if there were any corrections. Being none, he called for a vote. Ms. Buyck moved to approve the minutes; Mr. Carsten seconded the motion. The vote to approve the minutes was unanimous (5-0).

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND MATTERS IN POSITION FOR ACTION:

DRB-2021-08 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a townhouse development on six parcels located at 113, 114, 115, and 116 East Pine Street and 319 & 321 Railroad Avenue, Tax Map Numbers 90087-06-001, 90087-06-002, 90088-03-015, 90088-03-034, 90087-06-005, and 90087-06-006; D-3 Arts and Culture Overlay District.

Chairman Campbell read the introduction of DRB-2021-08 and asked staff for their report. Mrs. Zlotnicki gave the staff report as submitted to the Design Review Board.

There being no questions of staff, Chairman Campbell opened the public hearing. There being no one to speak either for or against the request, Chairman Campbell closed the public hearing and called for a motion.

Mr. Carsten moved to approve the request as submitted. Mr. Tedder seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously (5-0).

*** Mike Padgett and Scott Collins joined the meeting via Zoom. ***

DRB-2021-09 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the house located at 440 West Cheves Street, Tax Map Number 90074-07-004; D-1 Redevelopment Overlay District.

Chairman Campbell read the introduction of DRB-2021-09 and asked staff for their report. Mrs. Zlotnicki gave the staff report as submitted to the Design Review Board. There being no questions of staff, Chairman Campbell opened the public hearing.

Lyles Cooper with Pee Dee Land Trust spoke on behalf of the request. Chairman Campbell asked Ms. Cooper if Pee Dee Land Trust had plans to stabilize the foundation with grass after demolition. Ms. Cooper stated the current plan is to gravel over the foundation and use it for parking. She stated they plan to use the brick pillars as corner stones in the future community garden.

There being no one else to speak either for or against the request, Chairman Campbell closed the public hearing and called for a motion. Mrs. Buyck moved to approve the request. Mr. Carsten seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously (7-0).

DRB-2021-10 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for façade alterations of the building located at 273 West Evans Street, Tax Map Number 90167-01-001; H-1 Historic Overlay District.

Chairman Campbell read the introduction of DRB-2021-10 and asked staff for their report. Mr. Johnston reported that the applicant has asked to defer the request until the June meeting. The motion to defer passed unanimously (7-0).

DRB-2021-11 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a chain link fence on the rear of the lot located at 661 South McQueen Street, Tax Map Number 90076-02-008; D-4 Timrod Park Overlay District.

Chairman Campbell read the introduction of DRB-2021-11 and asked staff for their report. Mr. Johnston gave the staff report as submitted to the Design Review Board.

Mr. Collins asked if the meaning of the ordinance regarding landscaped screening of the fence was for immediate screening or eventual screening. Mr. Johnston stated in the past time has been given to allow for growth for screening vegetation. Mr. Collins asked Mr. Healey if the selected varieties would reach the height of the fence. Mr. Healey stated they would within two or three years. There being no other questions of staff, Chairman Campbell opened the public hearing.

Mr. Jerry Hudson, the applicant, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Hudson stated he erected the fence in order to prevent the constant trespassing which has occurred on his property over the last few years. He also informed the board of the disrepair of many homes in the area. He mentioned his neighbor is re-siding his home in vinyl boards without any zoning or building permits, and the need for Codes Enforcement to pursue the homeowner.

Mr. Robert McCrady also spoke in favor of his neighbor, Mr. Hudson's request.

Ms. Buyck expressed her mutual frustration with Mr. Hudson's situation. Mr. Dudley stated if vinyl siding is being installed without permits, the City will investigate.

There being no one else to speak either for or against the request, Chairman Campbell closed the public hearing and called for a motion. Mr. Carsten moved to approve the request as submitted. Mrs. Buyck seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously (7-0).

DRB-2021-12 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the house located at 404 South Dargan Street, Tax Map Number 90088-03-020; D-3 Arts and Culture Overlay District.

Chairman Campbell read the introduction of DRB-2021-12 and asked staff for their report. Mrs. Zlotnicki gave the staff report as submitted to the Design Review Board. There being no questions of staff, Chairman Campbell opened the public hearing. Stacey Powell, daughter of the owner, spoke in favor of the request on behalf of the applicant.

Ms. Buyck expressed her disappointment that so many architecturally and historically significant homes have been destroyed in Florence especially along Dargan Street. Ms. Buyck asked the applicant if she had researched moving the home or renovating it. She explained the applicant can use the 60-day halt of action by the Historical Commission to research those options. Ms. Powell stated she believed the building is too far gone to save.

Chairman Campbell asked staff what the mechanism for monitoring historically significant houses in the city limits is. Mr. Dudley stated there is no funding for renovations, but the creation of a running list may be helpful.

Ms. Buyck stated the board has struggled with the loss of so many historic structures since its inception. She stated it is not fair so many buildings are not identified prior to them being too far gone to repair.

Chairman Campbell asked if City Police and Codes Enforcement could inform the board and staff of properties in disrepair. Mr. Dudley stated he will research that request.

Mr. Collins stated we should not think of this structure as a residence. He stated the city needs to act now to save endangered structures before it is too late. He suggested property owners should act to protect structures by ensuring the roof and shell of the house are maintained.

Mr. Padgett stated the city has no funds or mechanisms in place to save these buildings.

Mr. Collins stated he understands the applicant's desire to demolish the house but feels a responsibility to protect and preserve what little historical structures we have left.

Mr. Tedder agreed that we need a mechanism to preserve the properties.

Ms. Buyck stated she voted no because the Historical Commission is still reviewing the case.

Mr. Dudley stated he will take all of the board's suggestions to the City Manager and look to work as closely as possible with the Historical Society.

There being no one else to speak either for or against the request, Chairman Campbell closed the public hearing and called for a motion.

Mr. Carsten moved to approve the request for a COA to demolish the house, after the 60 day extension requested by the Historical Commission has passed. Mr. Padgett seconded the motion, and it passed 4 to 3, with Mrs. Buyck, Mr. Healey, and Mr. Collins voting no, and Mr. Carsten, Mr. Padgett, Mr. Tedder, and Chairman Campbell voting yes.

DRB-2021-13 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a sign to be located at 507 South Irby Street, Tax Map Number 90088-06-005; D-3 Arts and Culture Overlay District and Irby Street Corridor Overlay District.

Chairman Campbell read the introduction of DRB-2021-13 and asked staff for their report. Mr. Johnston reported that the applicant has asked to defer the request until the June meeting. The motion to defer passed unanimously (7-0).

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Campbell thanked everyone for their patience and participation, and adjourned the meeting at 2:52 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2021.

Respectfully submitted:

Austin Cherry, Office Assistant III