

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE CITY OF FLORENCE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
VIA ZOOM REMOTE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2021 – 2:00 P.M.**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Padgett

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

APPLICANTS PRESENT: Dr. John Keith, Trevis Cooper, Trey Cooper (in person)

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Campbell called the June 9, 2021 regular meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and thanked everyone in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Campbell introduced the minutes from the May 12, 2021 regular meeting and asked if there were any corrections. Being none, he called for a vote. Mr. Carsten moved to approve the minutes; Mr. Ham seconded the motion. The vote to approve the minutes was unanimous (7-0).

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND MATTERS IN POSITION FOR ACTION:

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 gave the staff report as submitted to the Design Review Board.

Mr. Ham asked if the original signage would be replaced. Mr. Johnston stated that there had been no discussion about replacing the signage by the applicant. The request is for the façade surface only. Mr. Dudley clarified that the applicants want to do some exploratory work to see what's behind the stucco and will come back to the Board if it requires major work.

There being no further questions of staff, Chairman Campbell opened the public hearing. Dr. John Keith asked if the brick was part of the façade. Mr. Johnston stated that there probably is some brick there as part of the fire wall.

There being no one else to speak either for or against the request, Chairman Campbell closed the public hearing and called for discussion and then a motion. He said that getting rid of a prohibited material was desirable, although the cinder block isn't desirable. He called for a motion.

Mr. Ham moved to approve the request as submitted. Mr. Carsten seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously (7-0).

*** Julia Buyck joined the meeting via Zoom. ***

DRB-2021-13 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for façade alterations of the building located at 124 North Dargan Street, Tax Map Number 90169-01-032; H-1 Historic Overlay District.

Chairman Campbell read the introduction of DRB-2021-13 and asked staff for their report. Mrs. Zlotnicki gave the staff report as submitted to the Design Review Board.

Chairman Campbell asked what the scope of their decision would be given that there's no details given. Mrs. Zlotnicki indicated that the applicants were seeking approval of the concept before the pursued it further. Mr. Dudley agreed that details regarding colors and materials are necessary.

Mr. Ham asked if demolition would require a different permit. Mr. Dudley confirmed that it would be a different permit entirely, but that usually we require a plan to replace a demolished building. This building has had some issues in the past when the front façade fell off and became unsafe to the extent that the City had to build a protective structure underneath it. He said that Codes Enforcement has a case against the owners and that's why they're here today. Mr. Ham clarified that they are being asked to approve the concept of a 3 story building. Mr. Dudley agreed, and discussed the other 3 story buildings in the vicinity. He reminded them that the Historical Commission would have to also approve a demolition.

Chairman Campbell pointed out that the trend of using shipping containers wasn't around when the Design Guidelines were written. Mr. Dudley said that they would be used entirely as interior structures, hidden inside the shell of the building, so the Design Guidelines wouldn't necessarily apply, but this might come up in some of the other districts in the future. He discussed the use of shipping containers in other places.

Mr. Ham asked if they were the only Board involved. Mr. Dudley said that it was. Standard zoning and building review would be required.

There being no other questions of staff, Chairman Campbell opened the public hearing. Dr. Keith asked if the building would encroach into the alley. Mrs. Zlotnicki said it could not encroach off its own property. He asked about the balconies and if any other properties downtown had balconies. She said that The Lost Cajun has proposed front balconies. Dr. Keith asked the Coopers if they were planning to use the rooftop surface. Mr. Cooper said they would provide access to the roof. Dr. Keith asked about guidelines for the structural support of the multi-level use of the shipping containers. Mr. Cooper said they are constructed so the containers provide the skeleton of the building. He said there's a company in Charlotte that specializes in prefabrication use of these containers.

Mr. Cooper talked about making the exterior look historic, but the interior wouldn't look much different because the containers are upfitted. Dr. Keith asked about the first floor being all glass and then brick. Mr. Cooper said he would use a similar brick color to what's there.

Chairman Campbell asked Mr. Cooper if he wanted to share anything else. Mr. Cooper thanked the Board for letting them share their concept, saying that he was having trouble finding a local architect, but that their resume of past buildings speaks for them. He said he's traveled around the country looking at projects using shipping containers.

Mr. Ham said that he is all for using alternative methods of construction, and that they're mostly interested in the exterior, and just want to get more details about how it would look on the property. He's supportive of the concept.

Chairman Campbell said they are particularly careful in the H-1 district and they want to have specifics before they vote up or down on the project itself. Mr. Cooper said he'd like to defer to give them time to get the details figured out.

There being no other questions or comments, Chairman Campbell closed the public hearing and called for a motion to defer, which passed unanimously (8-0).

DRB-2021-14 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for façade alterations of the building located at 515 South Irby Street, Tax Map Number 90088-06-022; D-3 Arts & Culture Historic Overlay District and ISCOD Irby Street Corridor Overlay District.

Chairman Campbell read the introduction of DRB-2021-14 and asked staff for their report. Mrs. Zlotnicki gave the staff report as submitted to the Design Review Board.

Mr. Ham asked what colors are permitted by the guidelines. Mrs. Zlotnicki said that neutral colors are appropriate and the finishes suggested are permitted. Mr. Ham asked if the old sign was still there; she confirmed that it is but has not received a signage plan yet. Chairman Campbell asked about the blue roof, and staff pointed out that the PAC has a blue roof. Mr. Dudley said they will have to provide landscaping islands in the parking lot.

There being no other questions for staff and no one to speak either for or against the request, Chairman Campbell closed the public hearing and called for a motion to approve the building only, with the landscaping and signage plans to be brought back at a later date for separate approvals.

Mrs. Buyck commented that she is thrilled to see something happen on South Irby Street. Mr. Carsten moved to approve the request for building renovations as submitted. Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously (8-0).

Mr. Dudley mentioned that in light of the lifting of emergency mandates, we were planning to meet in person in July and moving forward, with policies in place.

Mrs. Buyck asked what happened with the first case. She is concerned about painting the cinder block. Mr. Dudley said staff would oversee it.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Campbell thanked everyone for their participation, and adjourned the meeting at 2:46 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for July 14, 2021.

Respectfully submitted:

Alane Zlotnicki, AICP
Senior Planner