



**REGULAR MEETING OF FLORENCE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026 - 3:00 PM

CITY CENTER - PECAN ROOM

324 WEST EVANS STREET

FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Approval of Minutes**
- III. General Discussion Relating to Community Development Efforts for the City of Florence**
- IV. Update on the Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee**
- V. Update on House Demolition**
- VI. Update on Marketing Water Improvements**
- VII. Update From Building Florence Together - CDC**
- VIII. Adjournment**



**MEETING OF FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2026 – 3:00PM
CITY CENTER – PECAN ROOM (4TH FLOOR)
324 WEST EVANS STREET
FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lethonia Barnes, Lawrence Smith, Chaquez McCall (by phone)

STAFF PRESENT: Jerry Dudley, Annie Brown, Scotty Davis, Mary DeLung

MEDIA PRESENT: Dierdre Weaver-Currin with Post and Courier

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Lethonia Barnes called the meeting to order at 3:04pm.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mayor Barnes made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 28, 2026, meeting. Councilman Smith seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

Mayor Barnes opened the meeting by expressing frustration and concern regarding negative comments about the planned demolition of the house at 215 E. Darlington Street. Committee members discussed the matter and agreed that the opposition appears to stem from a lack of communication and the spread of misinformation. It was noted that many individuals speaking against the project do not reside in the immediate area and have no direct ties to the property.

City Manager Scotty Davis stated that, to the best of his recollection, the poor condition of the house was identified during the development of the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy in 2012. At that time, many community members expressed concerns that the house was unsafe and indicated the desire to see it demolished. Mr. Davis added that this property has been discussed frequently over the past 14 years, providing multiple opportunities for public input.

Mayor Barnes shared her desire to initiate a barbershop and beauty salon tour to provide residents with more accessible opportunities to speak with Council members. Councilman Smith expressed support for the idea, noting that citizens may feel more comfortable sharing honest opinions within that setting. Councilman Smith made a motion directing the City Manager to instruct staff to begin planning public

relations outreach events in select beauty salons and barbershops for public input. Mayor Barnes seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Barnes then requested an update on the Affordable Housing Ad Hoc committee. Mr. Dudley explains that the committee is a suggestion as part of the recent housing study and that it is not intended to be a permanent committee. He and Mr. Davis discussed with the Community Development Committee members the purpose, roles, and goals of the ad hoc committee. After discussion, it was agreed that the committee's purpose would be to develop new ways to encourage more quality attainable housing within the City of Florence. The committee will include a member from each of the following: Housing Authority, Association of Realtors, Home Builders Association, a developer, city staff, and two at-large community members.

Mayor Barnes makes a motion to approve the makeup of the Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee, Councilman Smith seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Barnes stated that she, Mr. Davis, and Mr. Dudley will be traveling to Charlotte, North Carolina, in the near future to personally assess improvements made based on recommendations from the Aspen Institute. She extended an invitation to Councilmen Smith and McCall to attend.

Mayor Barnes requested an update on the Special Needs Occupancy Stickers. Mr. Dudley reported that he has spoken with Interim Police Chief Stephen Starling, who approved the program and will develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for distribution of the stickers.

Dr. Annie Brown distributed a printed update on Community Service Department projects. She informed the committee of a recent increase in building material costs, which caused a project bid to come in significantly over budget. As a result, the project will need to be rebid. The committee discussed the bidding process in further detail.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 3:56pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 25th at 3:00pm.