

CITY OF FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MARCH 11, 2026 MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jamie Carsten, Scott Collins, Kyle Gunter, Dr. John Keith, Tonya Morman Jackson, Mike Padgett, and Steve Powers

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ahmad Jackson, David Lowe, and David Tedder

STAFF PRESENT: Jerry Dudley, Derek Johnston, and Alane Zlotnicki

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Carsten called the March 11, 2026 meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Carsten introduced the February 11, 2026 minutes and asked if there were any corrections or comments. There being none, he asked for a motion. Mr. Powers moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Mr. Padgett seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously (7-0).

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND MATTERS IN POSITION FOR ACTION:

DRB-2026-06 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install internally illuminated monument and wall signs at 726 South Irby Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90089-02-024, in the D-1 Redevelopment and Irby Street Corridor Overlay Districts.

Chairman Carsten read the introduction to DRB-2026-06 and asked staff for their report. Mrs. Zlotnicki presented the staff report as submitted.

There being no questions for staff, Chairman Carsten opened the public hearing.

Dr. Keith asked if the building color would be pure white or if it had grayish undertones. He noted that other MUSC buildings have the gray undertone.

Mr. Lukas Braun spoke on behalf of the request. He said the building would use the MUSC color scheme, with a gray undertone for the bulk of the building.

Mr. Powers asked if Mr. Braun owned the building and was leasing it to MUSC; he said yes. Mr. Powers said he felt it would be a good addition to the corridor.

Mr. Padgett asked why the signs needed to come to the Board; Mrs. Zlotnicki said that they had to get Board approval because they are internally illuminated. She said they all meet the UDO for size and number.

There being no other questions and no one else to speak in favor or against the request, Chairman Carsten closed the public hearing and called for discussion and a motion.

Mr. Padgett moved that the request be approved as submitted; Mr. Collins clarified that it be approved once staff received and approved the final wall color. Mr. Gunter seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

DRB-2026-07 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install vinyl siding at 308 McLeod Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90076-04-017, in the D-4 Timrod Park Overlay District.

Chairman Carsten read the introduction to DRB-2026-07 and asked staff for their report. Mrs. Zlotnicki presented the staff report as submitted.

Chairman Carsten asked about the approval of vinyl siding on existing buildings; Mr. Dudley said the Design Standards don't specifically forbid vinyl for rehabilitation projects, but it does encourage the use of historic materials. For new structures, it lists approved materials and vinyl siding is listed as something that must go to the Board. It is not prohibited, but it makes a strong case against it.

Mrs. Zlotnicki shared an email from a resident of Timrod Park that spoke against the request. Each Board member received a copy of that email. His main concern was the splitting of the porch and the vinyl siding.

Chairman Carsten asked if the Design Standards said anything about split porches. Mrs. Zlotnicki said it only discourages enclosing front porches. Mr. Padgett asked if the house was built as a two family; she said it was according to the property card.

There being no other questions for staff, Chairman Carsten opened the public hearing.

Ms. Monica LaMastus spoke on behalf of the request. She said that they have done a lot to clean up the yard and that now there are no derelict houses on that street. There are a lot of houses nearby with vinyl and she has no problem with it. The side of the house is very visible to the street, and she sees it as a big improvement.

Ms. Marilou Bircher of 310 McLeod Street spoke on behalf of the request. She lives immediately adjacent to the house and said she is glad to see it being fixed up and feels the vinyl siding looks great, as does the porch divider.

Mr. Michael McKenzie said he was there to represent the owner on behalf of the request.

There being no one else to speak regarding the request, Chairman Carsten closed the public hearing and called for discussion and a motion.

Ms. Jackson asked about the rafter tails. Mr. McKenzie said that the rafter tails are in poor shape so they want to cover them to prevent further damage. There are 11 properties on that street; every other property except one has boxed eaves.

Mr. Collins said that the intention of the Timrod Park district is to protect the integrity of the architecture. He feels there have been a lot of breaches to the guidelines, and it would be punitive to zero in on this specific project when many people have installed vinyl siding, windows, and doors without DRB approval, and the aesthetics of Timrod Park have already been breached to the point that this is an acceptable course of action.

Mr. Padgett commented that they can't put the bar too high because then no one could afford it. To encourage people to fix up derelict houses, they need to be flexible.

Mr. Powers said that the improvement to the property needs to be continued to be completed. Mr. Collins agreed, though he said that he's against people coming for approval after being caught without a COA; he wants to encourage people to go through the process. He doesn't think this should be approved just because

they started already, but he would have looked at it favorably if they had applied at the beginning of the project.

Ms. Jackson moved that the request be approved as submitted. Mr. Collins seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business, Chairman Carsten adjourned the meeting at 2:23 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Alane Zlotnicki, AICP
Senior Planner