



**MEETING OF FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2026 – 2:00PM
CITY CENTER – PECAN ROOM (4TH FLOOR)
324 WEST EVANS STREET
FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lethonia Barnes, Chaquez McCall, Lawrence Smith

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

PRESENTERS: Jesse Wiles

MEDIA PRESENT: Emmy Ribero with Morning News

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Lethonia Barnes called the meeting to order at 2:06pm.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Councilman Chaquez McCall made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 29, 2026, meeting. Mayor Lethonia Barnes seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

Jesse Wiles of APD Urban Planning Management began his PowerPoint presentation on the **Florence Neighborhood Plan: Summary Report** by stating the history and culture of a neighborhood are vital to marketing and rebranding for neighborhood revitalization. Mr. Wiles highlighted several historic locations and landmarks included in the study.

Director of Planning Jerry Dudley discussed the importance of previous plans and studies, specifically the 2014 City of Florence Neighborhood Revitalization Study. He noted that the study serves as the key plan the City is building upon and has been a driving force behind many of the improvements made over the past ten years.

Mr. Wiles then reviewed the various sources used to gather information for the current plan. These included five public neighborhood meetings, twenty stakeholder interviews, and input from eight

institutional categories. He noted that the community meetings revealed a significant amount of misinformation and a lack of information among residents of the five neighborhoods included in the study. Mr. Wiles continued reviewing the findings from the community meetings and stakeholder interviews, highlighting key takeaways.

Other topics discussed during the presentation included:

- Housing gap analysis
- Rental supply, housing demand, and rental demand
- Growth capture analysis
- Catalytic project areas and areas of concern for:
 - North Florence
 - Historic West Florence
 - East Florence
 - Maple Park
 - Timrod Park
- Examples of successful recommendations and case studies
- Investing in one growth strategy for all five neighborhoods

Current challenges discussed included realtor steering, conflicts with codes and design guidelines, heir properties, and issues related to property acquisition.

Successes noted included the fast sales of newly constructed homes in East Florence, increased interest from developers, and the excitement expressed by residents regarding the visible improvements along East Pine Street in East Florence.

Mr. Wiles, Mayor Barnes, and Mr. Dudley discussed current zoning, overlay districts, and design guidelines in greater detail. They also discussed the value of adopting the plan, which would address certain zoning issues and allow for changes that could further support neighborhood improvements.

Councilman Chaquez McCall asked City Manager Scotty Davis about funding previously used for affordable housing projects. Mr. Davis outlined several funding sources the City has utilized in the past, as well as potential funding opportunities that may be available in the future.

Mayor Barnes stated that the next step is for the plan to be presented to City Council for adoption.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 3:50pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 30 at 3:00pm.