



CITY OF FLORENCE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
CITY CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
324 WEST EVANS STREET, FLORENCE, SC
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2026 – 2:00 P.M.

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of Minutes Regular meeting held on September 10, 2025

III. Public Hearing and Matter in Position for Action

DRB-2026-01 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install an internally illuminated monument sign and internally illuminated wall signs at the FSD1 building located at 301 South Dargan Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90087-07-004, in the D-3 Arts & Culture Overlay District.

IV. Public Hearing and Matter in Position for Action

DRB-2026-02 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install internally illuminated wall signs at 135 North Dargan Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90167-02-013, in the H-1 Historic Overlay District.

V. Public Hearing and Matter in Position for Action

DRB-2026-03 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the house located at 608 South McQueen Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90075-10-014, in the D-4 Timrod Park Overlay District.

VI. Public Hearing and Matter in Position for Action

DRB-2026-04 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the building located at 291 West Palmetto Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90087-01-001, in the D-1 Redevelopment Overlay District.

VIII. Adjournment Next meeting is scheduled for February 11, 2026.

CITY OF FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
SEPTEMBER 10, 2025 MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jamie Carsten, Scott Collins, Ahmad Jackson, Tonya Morman Jackson, Dr. John Keith, David Lowe, Mike Padgett, Steve Powers, and David Tedder

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kyle Gunter

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

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Carsten called the September 10, 2025 meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Carsten introduced the August 13, 2025 minutes and asked if there were any corrections or comments. There being none, he asked for a motion. Chairman Carsten moved to approve the minutes as submitted; Mr. Padgett seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously (9-0).

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND MATTERS IN POSITION FOR ACTION:

DRB-2025-12 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the house located at 459 West Pine Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90074-10-012, in the D-4 Timrod Park Overlay District.

Chairman Carsten read the introduction to DRB-2025-12 and asked staff for their report. Mrs. Zlotnicki presented the staff report as submitted. She mentioned that the Historical Commission had received both this and the Jerome Street demolition requests, but as of this time she had not heard back from them. The COA can be issued contingent upon the issuance of the ROAs if the Board so chooses.

There being no questions for staff, Chairman Carsten opened the public hearing. There being no one to speak regarding the request, Chairman Carsten closed the public hearing and called for discussion and a motion. There being no comments or questions, Mr. Padgett moved that the request be approved as submitted pending Historical Commission approval. Mr. Powers seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (9-0).

DRB-2025-13 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install an internally illuminated wall sign at the FSD1 building located at 319 South Irby Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90087-08-005, in the D-3 Arts & Culture Overlay District.

Chairman Carsten read the introduction to DRB-2025-13 and asked staff for their report. Mrs. Zlotnicki presented the staff report as submitted. Scott Collins recused himself because he has a professional interest in the request.

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

Kyle Jones, the deputy superintendent of Florence One Schools and Debbie Jenkins with Tyson Sign Company spoke on behalf of the request. Mr. Jones said that the school district has a number of buildings in the downtown area and they want to identify this building from South Irby Street. He said the sign would be backlit with LED lighting. Ms. Jenkins said they will protect the old library sign behind it and the backer panel will match the bricks. The letters will be halo lit.

Dr. Keith asked the purpose of an illuminated sign. Mr. Jones said it would help identify the building and provide greater visibility. Dr. Keith asked if the other buildings had lit signs. Ms. Jenkins said that some of them have spotlights. There was discussion about the internally lit letters proposed for the Dollar Tree across the street. There was discussion about the letters matching the color of the non-illuminated signs on the other parts of the building. There was discussion about the infeasibility of adding external lighting at that height. Mr. Padgett asked what the options of that would be. Ms. Jenkins said it wouldn't be as clean if downlighting was provided instead of the internal illumination.

Mr. Joey Stewart spoke to praise the beauty of the old library building. Mr. Tedder agreed and said that the proposal is the cleanest way to add signage to it. He moved that the request be approved as submitted. Mr. Lowe seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (8-0) with Mr. Collins recused since the school district is his client.

DRB-2025-14 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install an internally illuminated monument sign at the FSD1 building located at 301 South Dargan Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90087-07-004, in the D-3 Arts & Culture Overlay District.

Chairman Carsten read the introduction to DRB-2025-14 and asked staff for their report. Mrs. Zlotnicki presented the staff report as submitted. Scott Collins recused himself because he has a professional interest in the request.

There being no other questions for staff, Chairman Carsten opened the public hearing. Kyle Jones, the deputy superintendent of Florence One Schools and Debbie Jenkins with Tyson Sign Company spoke again on behalf of the request. Mr. Jones explained the use of the facility, including that there would be students in the building after dark. He said this one will be back lit as well.

There being no one else to speak regarding the request, Chairman Carsten closed the public hearing and called for discussion and a motion. There being no other comments or questions, Dr. Keith moved that the request be approved as submitted. Mr. Powers seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (8-0) with Mr. Collins recused since the school district is his client.

DRB-2025-15 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the shingle roof with a metal roof at the building located at 109 West Laurel Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90089-03-004, in the D-1 Redevelopment Overlay District.

Chairman Carsten read the introduction to DRB-2025-15 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. Mr. Ronnie Banks, the applicant, said that the building has been vacant for at least ten years, and the roof hasn't been maintained. He had a sample of the metal roof, called "Burnished Slate". Mr. Padgett asked if it was standing seam; Mr. Banks said it was ridged. He said he has it on another building and it's lasted very well.

Mr. Padgett asked if there was anything in the Standards about standing seam versus ridged metal roofs. Mrs. Zlotnicki said no, that the only reason he was here was because he was changing the material from asphalt to metal. She said the color meets the Standards, that “red” was incorrect in the staff report.

There being no one else to speak regarding the request, Chairman Carsten closed the public hearing and called for discussion and a motion. There being no comments or questions, Mr. Tedder moved that the request be approved as submitted. Mr. Lowe seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (9-0).

DRB-2025-16 Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the house located at 413 Jerome Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90075-02-006, in the D-4 Timrod Park Overlay District.

Chairman Carsten read the introduction to DRB-2025-16 and asked staff for their report. Mrs. Zlotnicki presented the staff report as submitted. Mr. Collins asked how the demolition program worked. Mr. Dudley explained the program through Community Services and Codes Enforcement, including voluntary versus involuntary demolitions.

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

Mr. Joey Stewart spoke again. He lives at 410 Jerome Street. He discussed the abandoned properties on his street and his desire to see the neighborhood cleaned up for purposes of health and beauty.

Mr. Joe Bailey owns the property beside 411 Jerome Street, and said he's been trying to reach the owner of that lot due to issues with trees overhanging his lot.

Mr. Larry Jackson spoke next. He also owns property at 417 Jerome Street. He thanked the Board for considering demolitions that will improve the neighborhood.

Mr. Powers said he's glad the City distinguishes between voluntary and involuntary demolitions and has the program in place.

There being no one else to speak regarding the request, Chairman Carsten closed the public hearing and called for discussion and a motion. There being no comments or questions, Mr. Powers moved that the request be approved as submitted pending Historical Commission approval. Mr. Padgett seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (9-0).

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Carsten thanked Brice Elvington, Ranny Starnes, and Joey McMillan for their service on the Board, and asked the three new members to introduce themselves. Mr. Ahmad Jackson, Mr. Steve Powers, and Ms. Tonya Morman Jackson introduced themselves and shared their experiences and links to downtown. There being no other business, Chairman Carsten adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for October 8, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Alane Zlotnicki, AICP
Senior Planner

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
STAFF REPORT TO THE
CITY OF FLORENCE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
JANUARY 14, 2026

CASE NUMBER:	DRB-2026-01
LOCATION:	301 South Dargan Street
TAX MAP NUMBER:	90087-07-004
OWNER OF RECORD:	Florence School District One
APPLICANT:	Nichole Blackmon Lee with Tyson Sign Company
PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	Installation of Internally Illuminated Monument Sign and various Non-Illuminated Signage
OVERLAY DISTRICT:	Arts & Culture Overlay District (D-3)

Background Information

The Poynor building is owned by Florence School District One. The three story Neoclassical Georgian Revival school was constructed in 1908. The property is zoned Central Business District within the Arts & Culture Overlay District. It was formerly the location of the Florence Adult Education programs and has been renovated into a magnet high school.

On September 10, 2025, the Design Review Board approved an internally illuminated monument sign at the northeast corner of the parcel to identify the school, facing the intersection of West Palmetto Street and South Dargan Street.

On December 1, 2025, a Certificate of Appropriateness was issued administratively for a non-illuminated wall sign for “McLeod Health” on the right hand side of the building (see Attachment F).

Project Description

The school district is seeking to install eleven additional signs throughout the campus and on the building. They include eight directional signs; a second monument sign; and two more building signs on the front of the building.

A second monument sign identical to the first one is proposed for the southeast corner of the parcel to identify the new school at the intersection of South Dargan Street and West Pine Street. Like the sign approved in September, it also consists of an internally illuminated aluminum cabinet that is 5 feet 10 inches high and 17 feet 10 inches wide, for a total area of 104 square feet set in a brick frame. The total height is

7 feet 2 inches. The face is routed aluminum with 1 inch push through acrylic letters with internal white LED illumination.

In addition to the second monument sign, the applicant is proposing two non-illuminated logo shields and one non-illuminated “Poynor” sign for the front of the building over the main entrance, with a total area of about 31 square feet. A 4 square foot non-illuminated sign is also proposed for a secondary entrance also on the front of the building. Eight directional signs are also proposed, four “enter” and four “exit” signs, that are 2.5 square feet in area and 3 feet tall. These will be placed at the four access points to the parking lot, two along South Dargan Street and two along West Pine Street (see Attachments D and E).

Staff Analysis

According to the *City of Florence Downtown Design Standards*, “internally illuminated letters, neon, roof, and moveable signs must be reviewed by the DRB”, necessitating review by the Board for this particular monument sign, in addition to its materials. The school is permitted one free standing sign per street frontage, and since it has three street frontages, a second monument sign is appropriate.

The *Unified Development Ordinance* permits one wall sign per tenant wall, up to four signs for structures within line of sight of major thoroughfares such as West Palmetto Street. Otherwise, a maximum of two wall signs are permitted. However, the Ordinance does authorize the Board to make findings of fact to decide whether or not the applicant’s plans are appropriate, enabling the Board to consider the third wall sign for the front of the building.

Monument signs are appropriate to identify institutional structures, and the large size of the proposed sign is appropriate for the scale of the parcel it is on. The request is also to complete signage identifying the building as well as the property. The scale of the building supports the three wall signs proposed. The size of the parking lot and number of driveways also necessitates and justifies the directional signage.

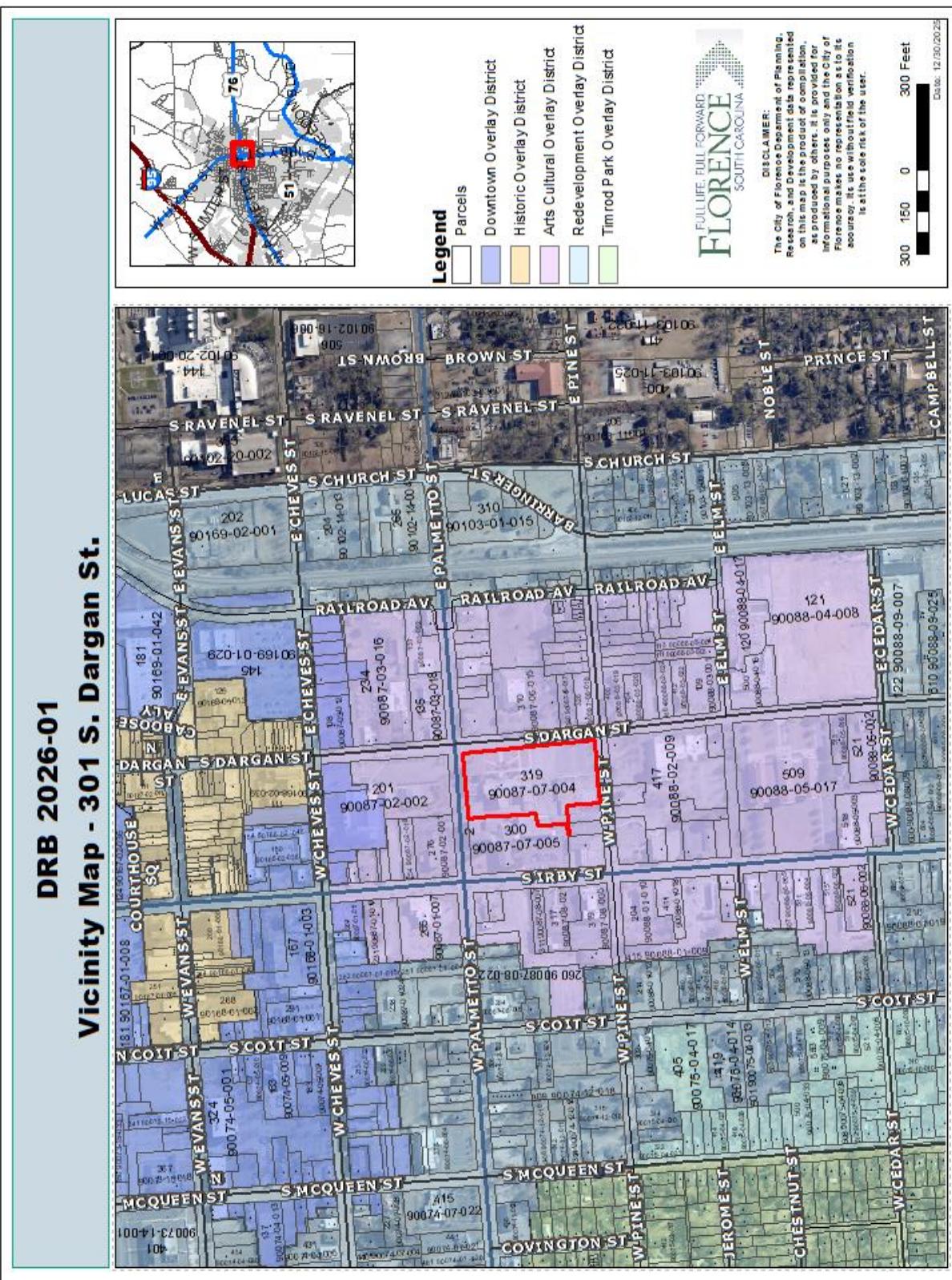
Board Action

1. Consider only the evidence presented before the Board during the public hearing.
2. Apply the intent of the Design Standards to the application, considering the character of the applicable zoning and overlay districts.
3. Based on the determination of appropriateness, make a motion regarding the request to issue or deny the Certificate of Appropriateness.

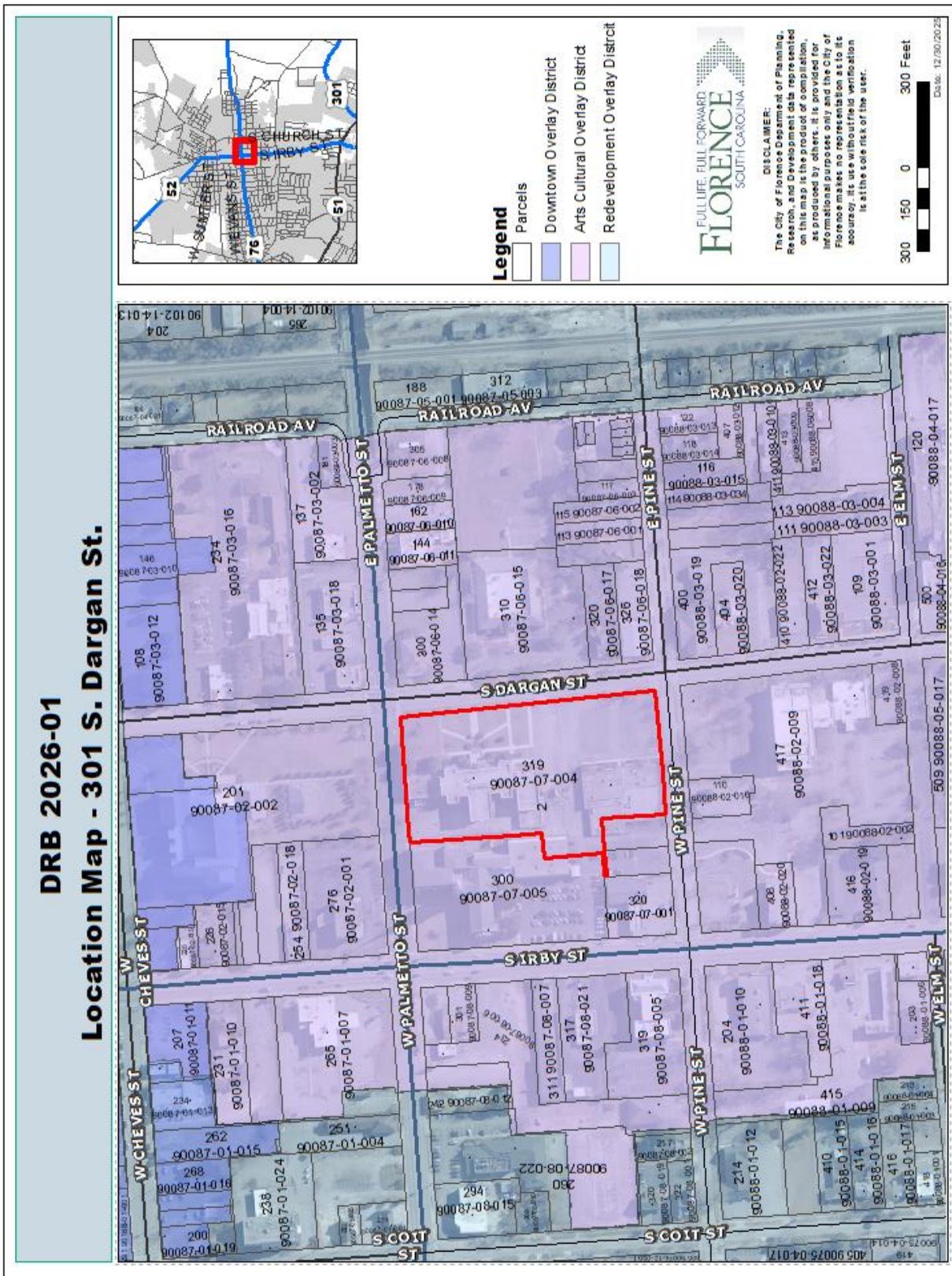
Attachments

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Location Map
- C. Zoning Map
- D. Sign Location Plan
- E. Sign Renderings

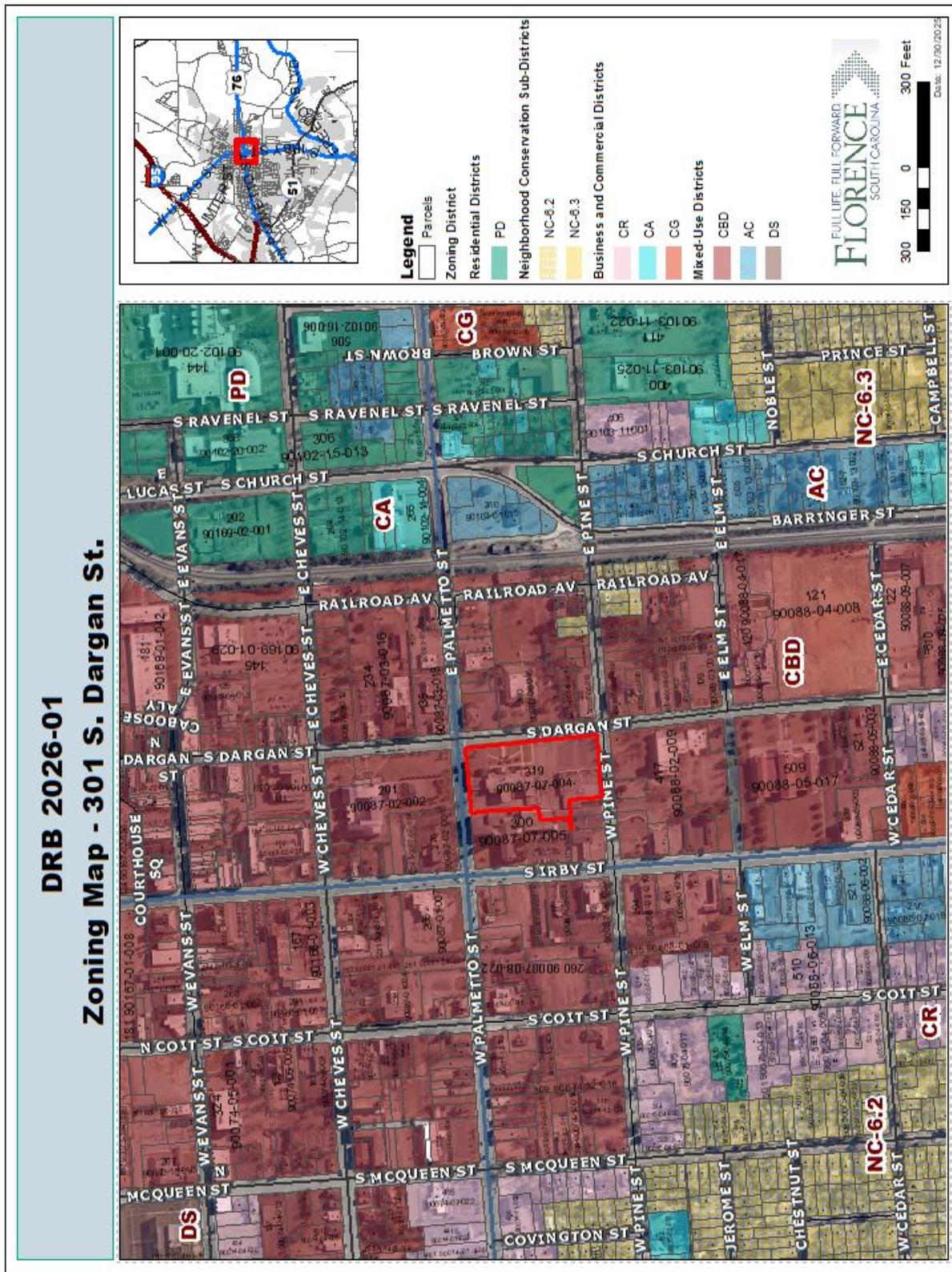
Attachment A: Vicinity Map



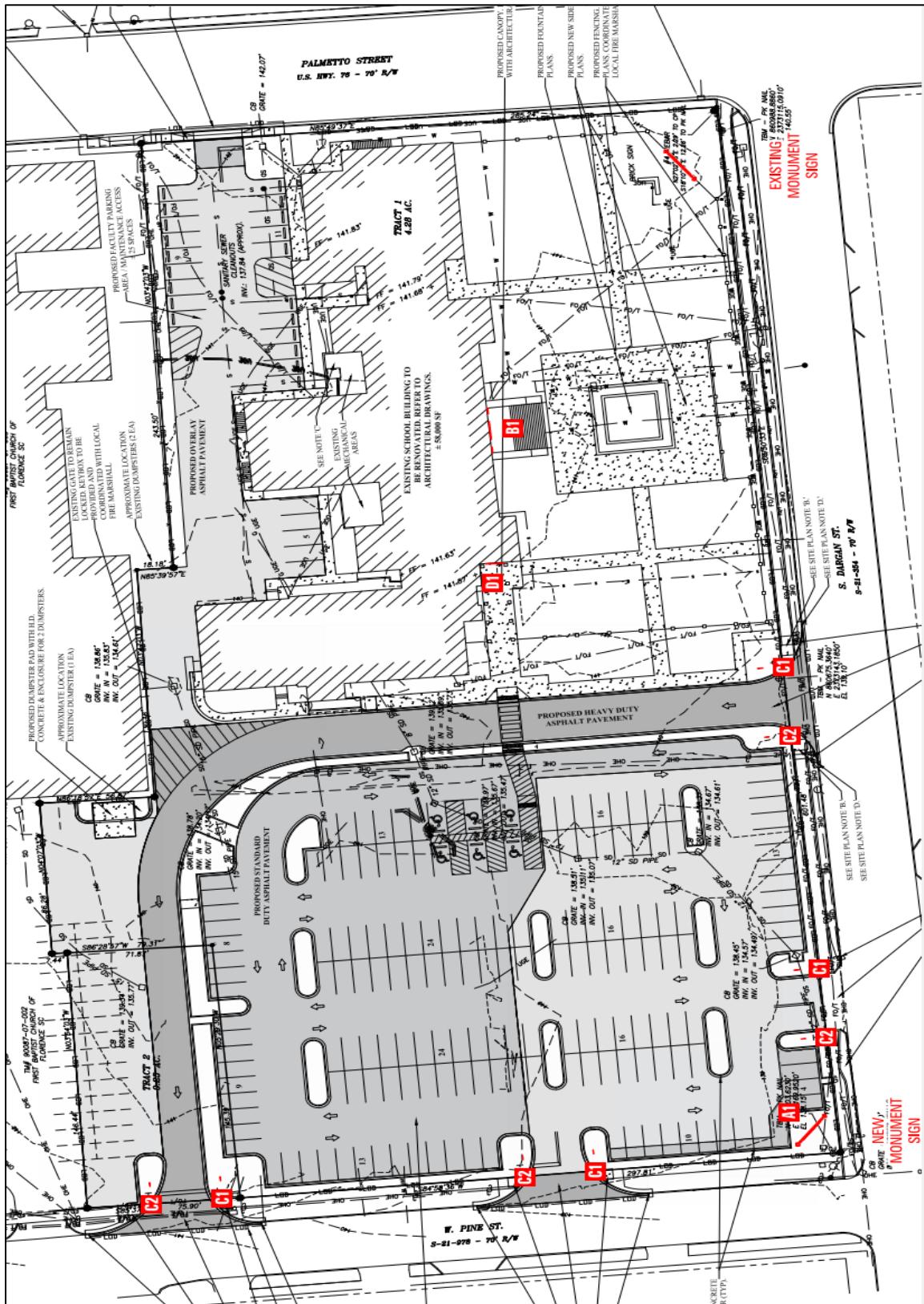
Attachment B: Location Map



Attachment C: Zoning Map

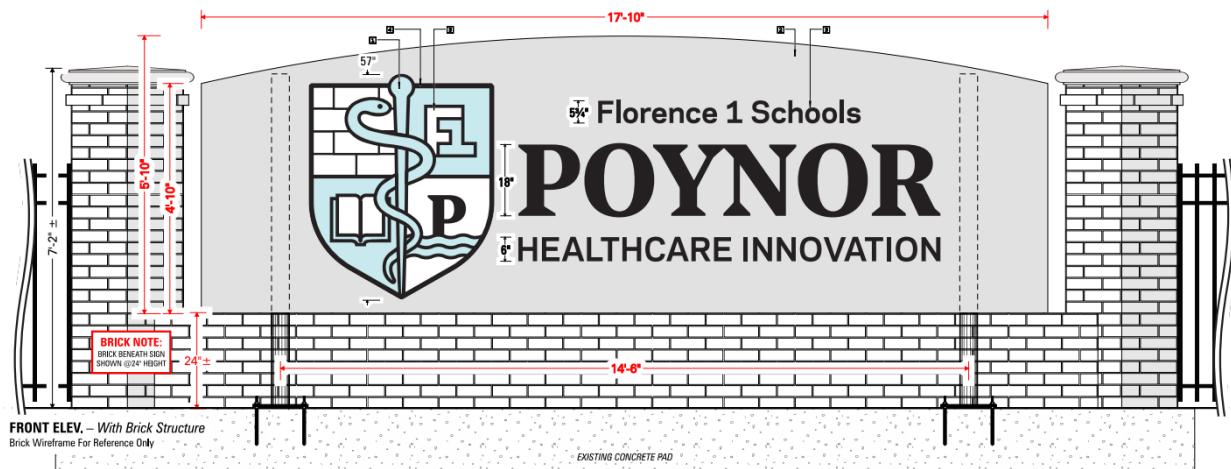


Attachment D: Sign Location Plan



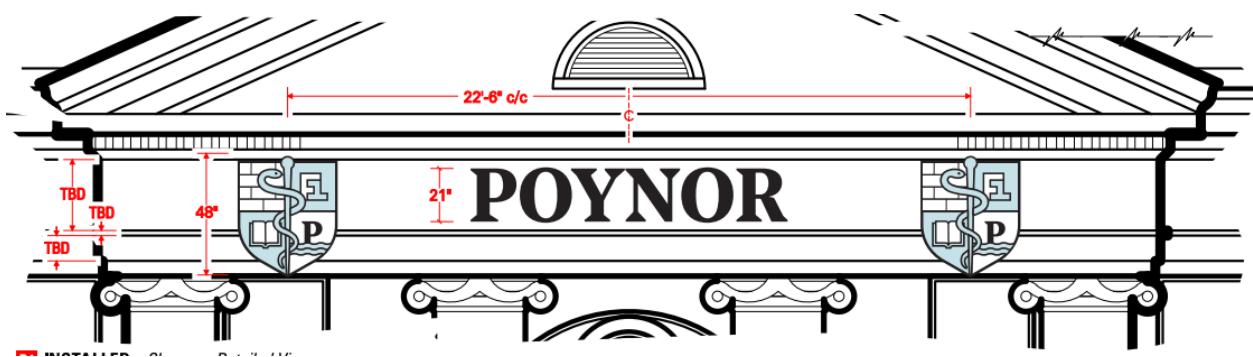
Attachment E: Sign Renderings

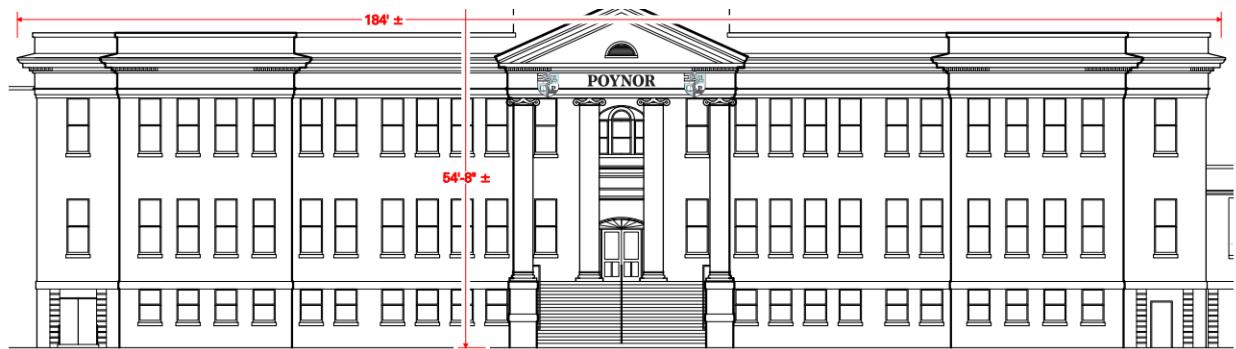
A1: Second Monument Sign – Internally Illuminated



FRONT ELEV. – Color Rendering
Brick For Reference Only | NTS

B1: Non-Illuminated Logo Shields and Letters for Front of Building

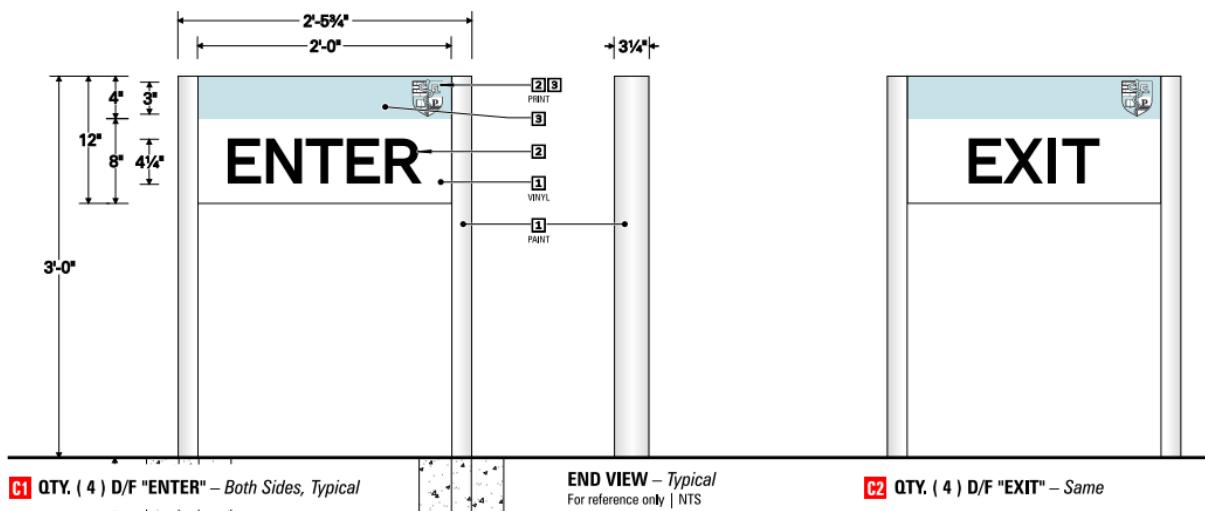




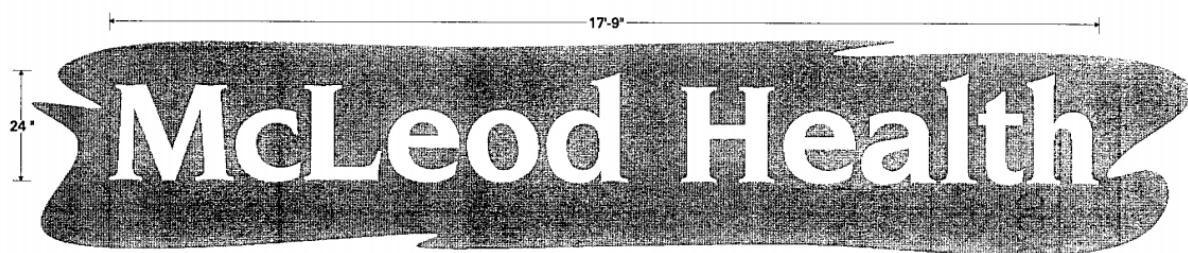
D1: Non-Illuminated Cut Out Letters for Secondary Entrance



C1 and C2: Directional Signs



Administratively Approved Wall Sign – Cut Out PVC Letters



INSTALLED - Photo Edit
For Reference Only | NTS

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
STAFF REPORT TO THE
CITY OF FLORENCE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
JANUARY 14, 2026

CASE NUMBER: DRB-2026-02

LOCATION: 135 North Dargan Street

TAX MAP NUMBER: 900167-02-013

OWNER OF RECORD: ASK Investments & Holdings LLC

APPLICANT: Kristin Leggio with ASL Sign Services

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Installation of Internally Illuminated Signs

OVERLAY DISTRICT: Historic Overlay District (H-1)

Background Information

135 North Dargan Street is a 3,892 square foot commercial building constructed in 1920. The property is zoned Central Business District within the Historic Overlay District. It has a restaurant on the ground floor, and a new bar and apartments on the second floor.

Project Description

The applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to install five new signs on the building in addition to the existing non-illuminated blade sign identifying the restaurant. The five new signs include:

1. The Urban Flats – A second non-illuminated blade sign on the front of the building, located on the third floor level with an area of approximately 22 square feet.
2. Soho – An internally illuminated wall sign located on the rear of building at the second floor level, visible from the parking lot behind the building with an area of approximately 52 square feet.
3. Directional – A non-illuminated blade sign on the rear of the building, indicating the apartments as well as the bar, with an area of approximately 9 square feet.
4. Directional – one non-illuminated wall sign with an area of 1 square foot located at the Dargan Street end of the alley.
5. Directional – one non-illuminated wall sign with an area of 1 square foot located at the parking lot end of the alley.

Staff Analysis

According to the *City of Florence Downtown Design Standards*, “internally illuminated letters, neon, roof, and moveable signs must be reviewed by the DRB”, necessitating review by the Board for the Soho wall sign. The Urban Flats blade sign needs review for being a second primary sign on the front of the building since there is already a blade sign in place for the restaurant on the first floor. The three directional signs exceed the number of wall signs permitted.

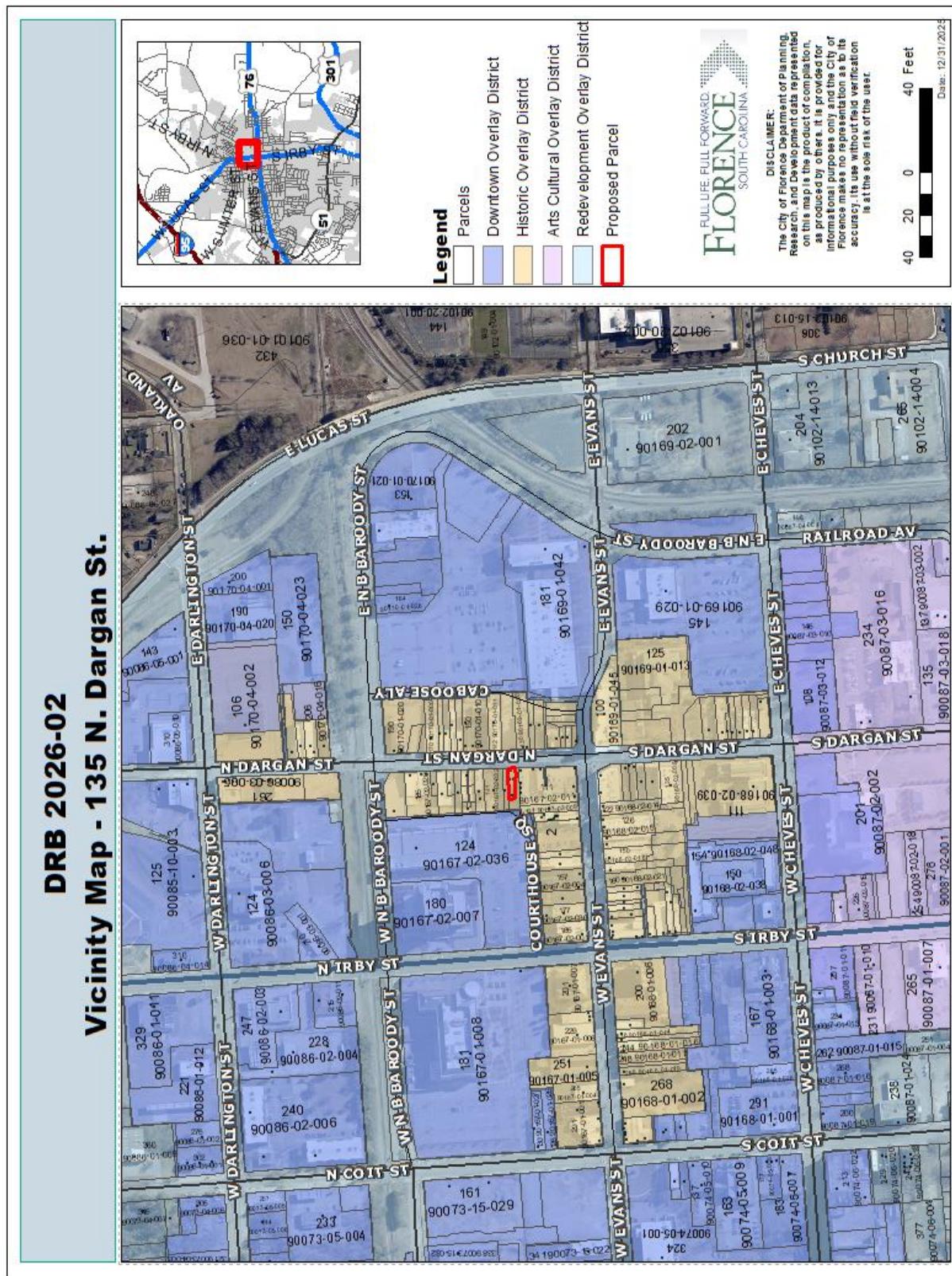
Board Action

1. Consider only the evidence presented before the Board during the public hearing.
2. Apply the intent of the Design Standards to the application, considering the character of the applicable zoning and overlay districts.
3. Based on the determination of appropriateness, make a motion regarding the request to issue or deny the Certificate of Appropriateness.

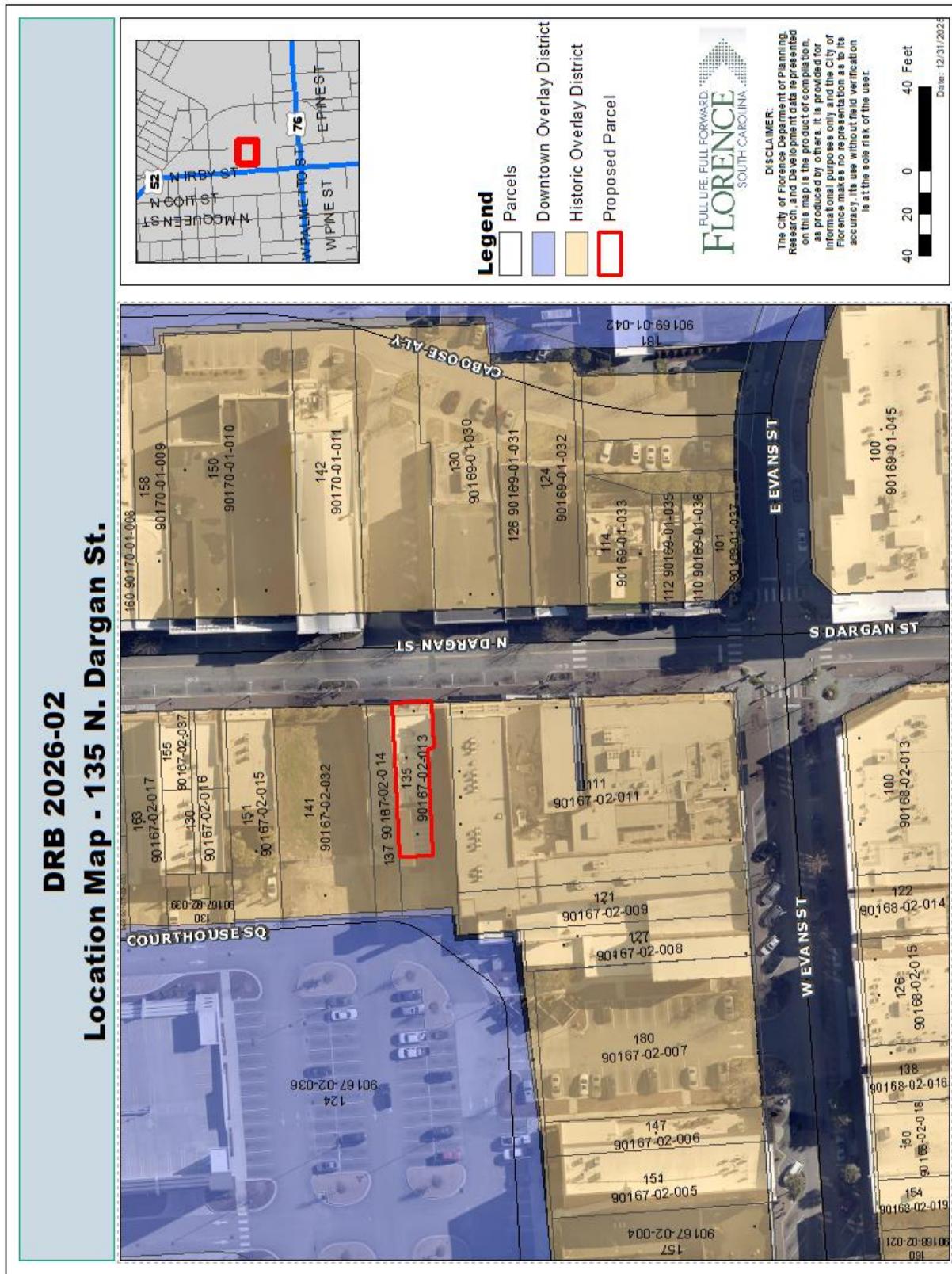
Attachments

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Location Map
- C. Zoning Map
- D. Sign Renderings

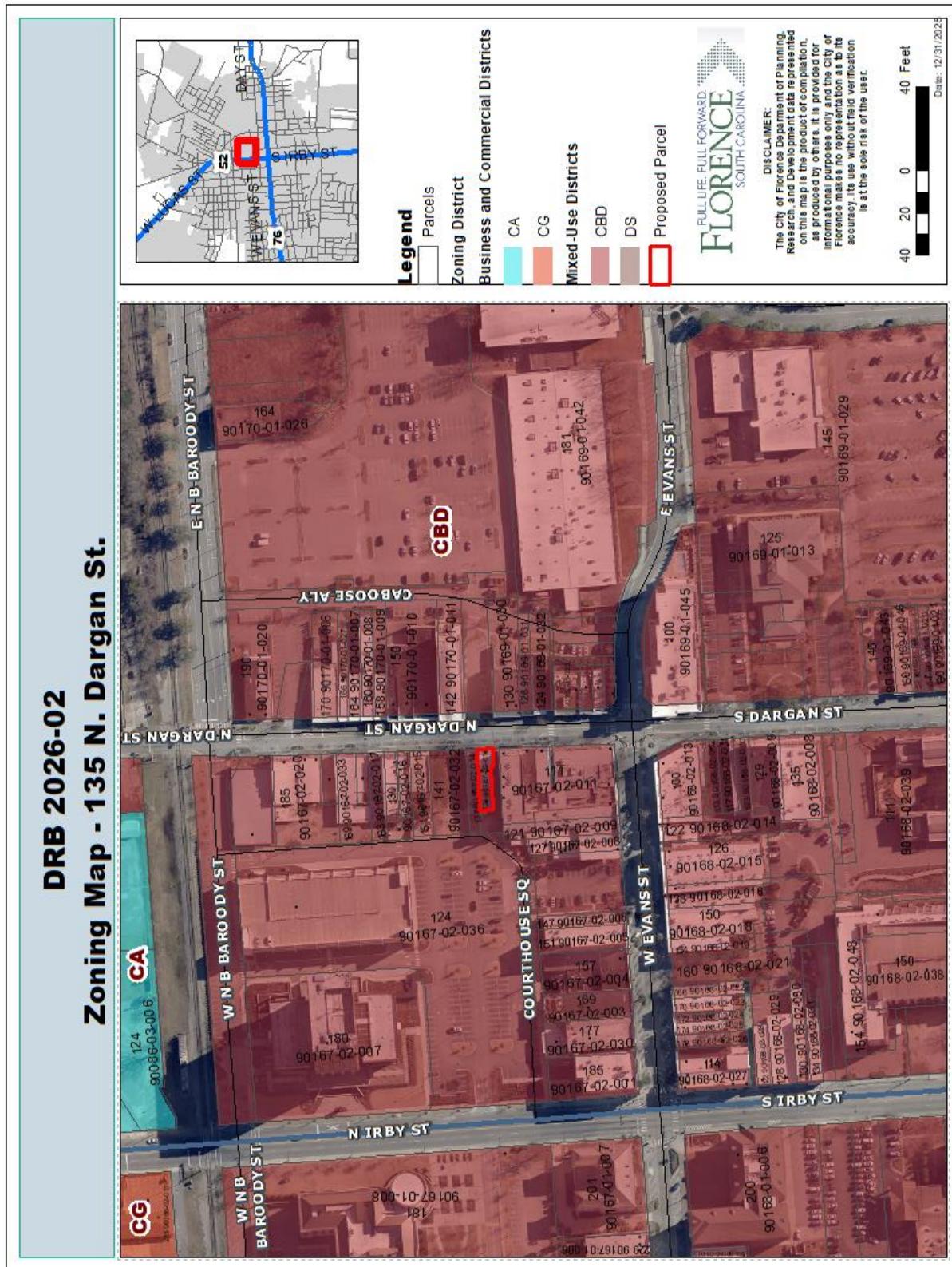
Attachment A: Vicinity Map



Attachment B: Location Map

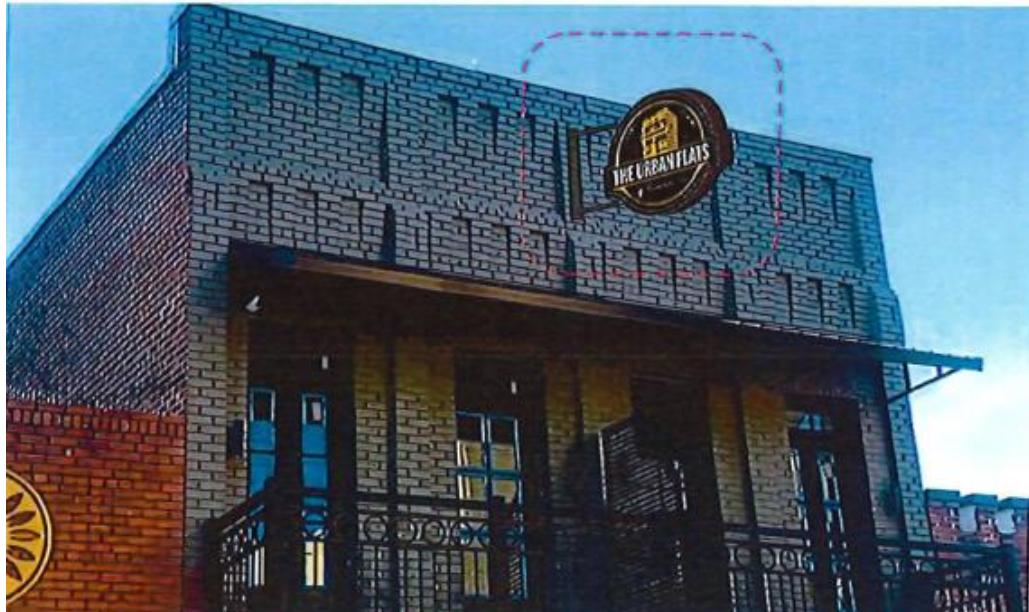


Attachment C: Zoning Map

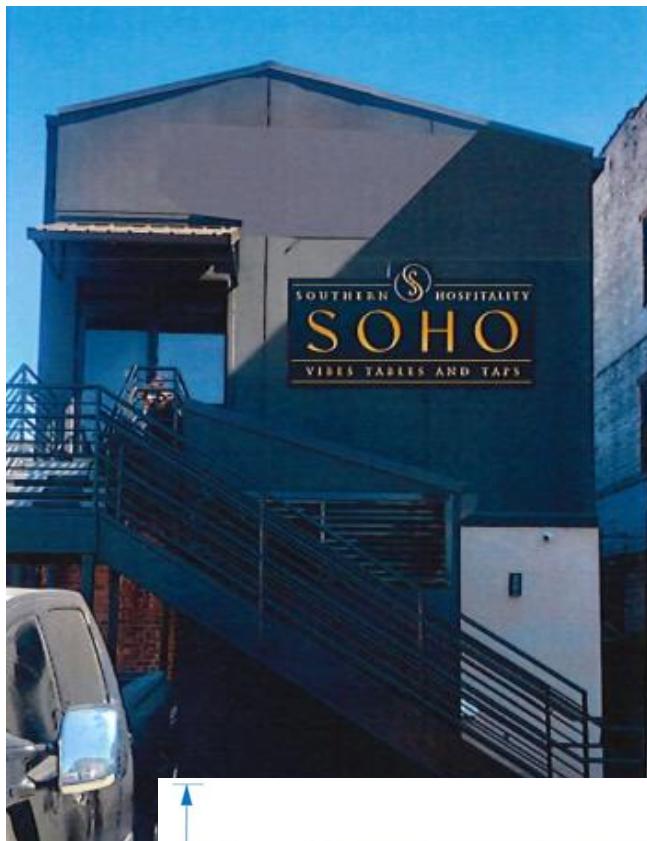


Attachment D: Sign Renderings

Sign 1: The Urban Flats – Front of Building Non-Illuminated Blade Sign – 22 SF



Sign 2: Soho – Rear of Building Illuminated Wall Sign - 52 SF



LED ILLUMINATED WALL SIGN

- FABRICATED ALUMINUM SHOEBOX ROUTED FACE
- PAINTED BLUE GRADIENT
- BACKED WITH WHITE ACRYLIC WITH DIGITAL PRINT
- 2" DEEP FABRICATED HALO AND FACE CHANNEL LETTERS
- MOUNTED ON 1" STANDOFFS
- DIGITAL PRINT APPLIED TO FACE AS SHOWN
- WHITE LED ILLUMINATION
- INSTALL ON WALL AS SHOWN

Sign 3: Directional – Rear of Building Non-Illuminated Blade Sign - 9 SF



HANGING BLADE SIGN

- 2" HDU ROUTED, PAINTED TO MATCH
- DOUBLE SIDED
- "VIBES & TABLES" AND BUILDING ARE WHITE VINYL APPLIED TO SIGN FACE
- SIGN HANGS FROM CHAINS ON EXISTING BLADE HANGER
- INSTALL BY ASL SIGNS

Signs 4 & 5: Directional – Two Non-Illuminated Wall Signs – 1 SF each
Sign 6: Restaurant Blade Sign - Existing



ACM WALL SIGN
• LAMINATED DIGITAL PRINT APPLIED TO ROUTED ACM PANEL
• SINGLE-SIDED
• SIGN MOUNTS FLUSH TO WALL WITH VHB TAPE
• QUANTITY: 1



ACM WALL SIGN
• LAMINATED DIGITAL PRINT APPLIED TO ROUTED ACM PANEL
• SINGLE-SIDED
• SIGN MOUNTS FLUSH TO WALL WITH VHB TAPE
• QUANTITY: 1

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
STAFF REPORT TO THE
CITY OF FLORENCE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
JANUARY 14, 2026

CASE NUMBER:	DRB-2026-03
LOCATION:	608 South McQueen Street
TAX MAP NUMBER:	90075-10-014
OWNER OF RECORD:	Norwood & Norwood LLC
APPLICANT:	Fields Norwood
PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Demolition of Single Family House2. Construction of Two New Houses
OVERLAY DISTRICT:	D-4 Timrod Park Overlay District

Project Description

The applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to demolish a single family house located at 608 South McQueen Street in the City's Timrod Park Historic Overlay District. Once the original house has been removed, he is seeking to subdivide the double lot and construct two single family houses. Certificates of Appropriateness are also being sought for the two proposed houses.

Background Information

According to the Florence County Property Card File, the 2,306 square foot house was built in 1930. There is also a small shed that is to be removed as well. The property is zoned NC-6.2, which is a single family designation, although historically the house has contained up to three units. The lot is 14,400 square feet in area. The buildings are both in an advanced stage of deterioration.

The Florence City-County Historical Commission was sent this request on December 23, 2025. They are scheduled to meet about this request on January 12, 2026.

Staff Analysis

Section 6-20.3.3 of the *Unified Development Ordinance* states that the Downtown Planning Coordinator shall “ensure that all applications for new construction, renovation, rehabilitation, and **demolition** shall require a Certificate of Appropriateness if the property involved is located within the overlay districts”. Neighbors have complained about this house for a number of years; it is considered a nuisance and a blight on the Timrod Park neighborhood.

Figure 2.3 of the *Downtown Design Standards* requires DRB approval for new construction of principal buildings. Building design standards for new residential buildings are laid out in the *Downtown Design Standards* (see Attachment G).

Three different house styles have been put forward by the applicant as possible replacements for the original house. The *Downtown Design Standards* state the intent of the Timrod Park Residential District is to maintain the general quality and appearance of the area as well as to encourage redevelopment that preserves and promotes the historic and varied character of the neighborhood. The Board is expected to use the standards outlined to determine the suitability of the proposals but may provide parameters for staff's discretion for final approval of specific details such as colors and landscaping.

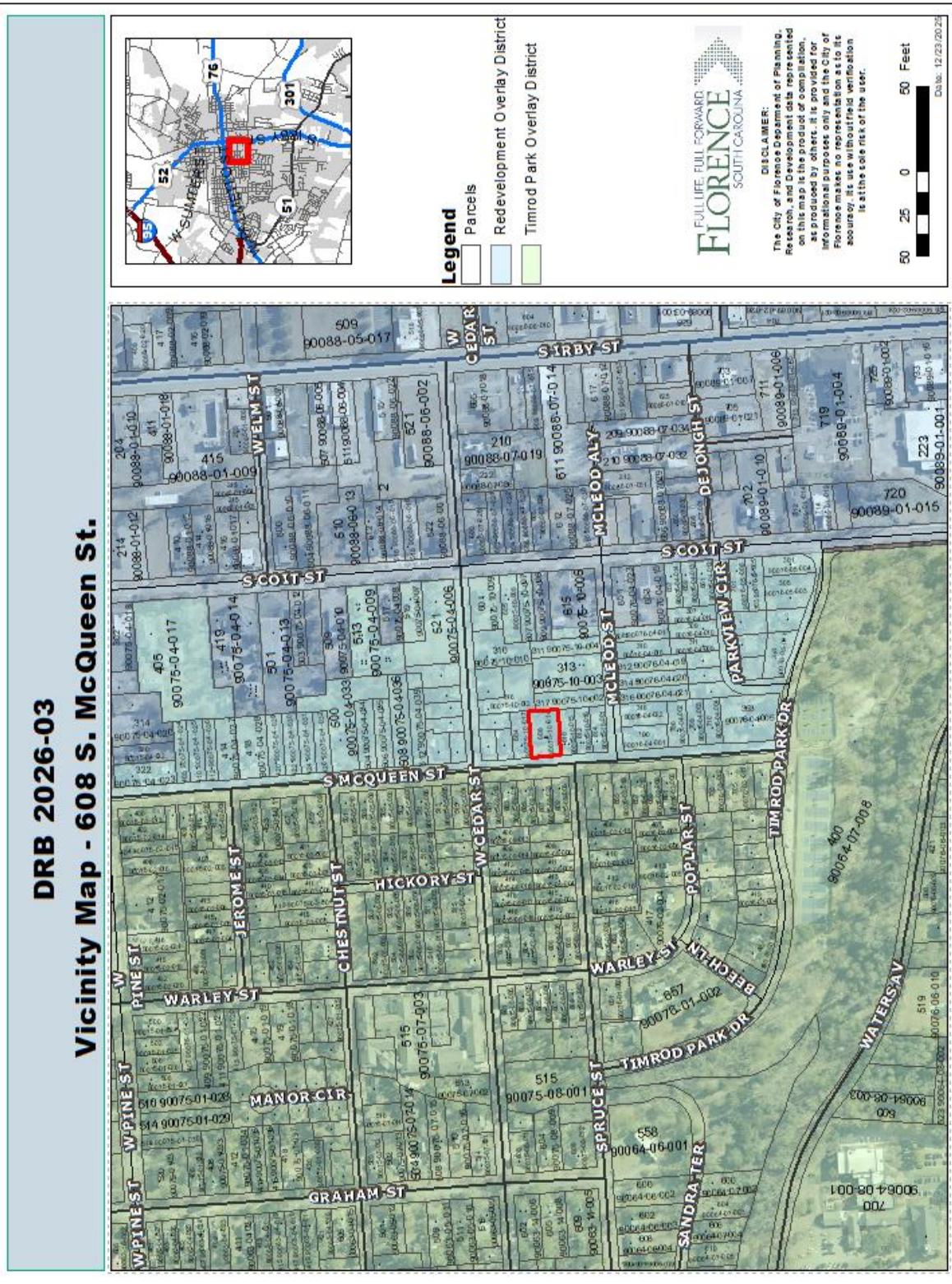
Board Action

1. Consider only the evidence presented before the Board during the public hearing.
2. Apply the intent of the Design Standards to the application, considering the character of the applicable zoning and overlay districts.
3. Based on the determination of appropriateness, make a motion regarding the request.

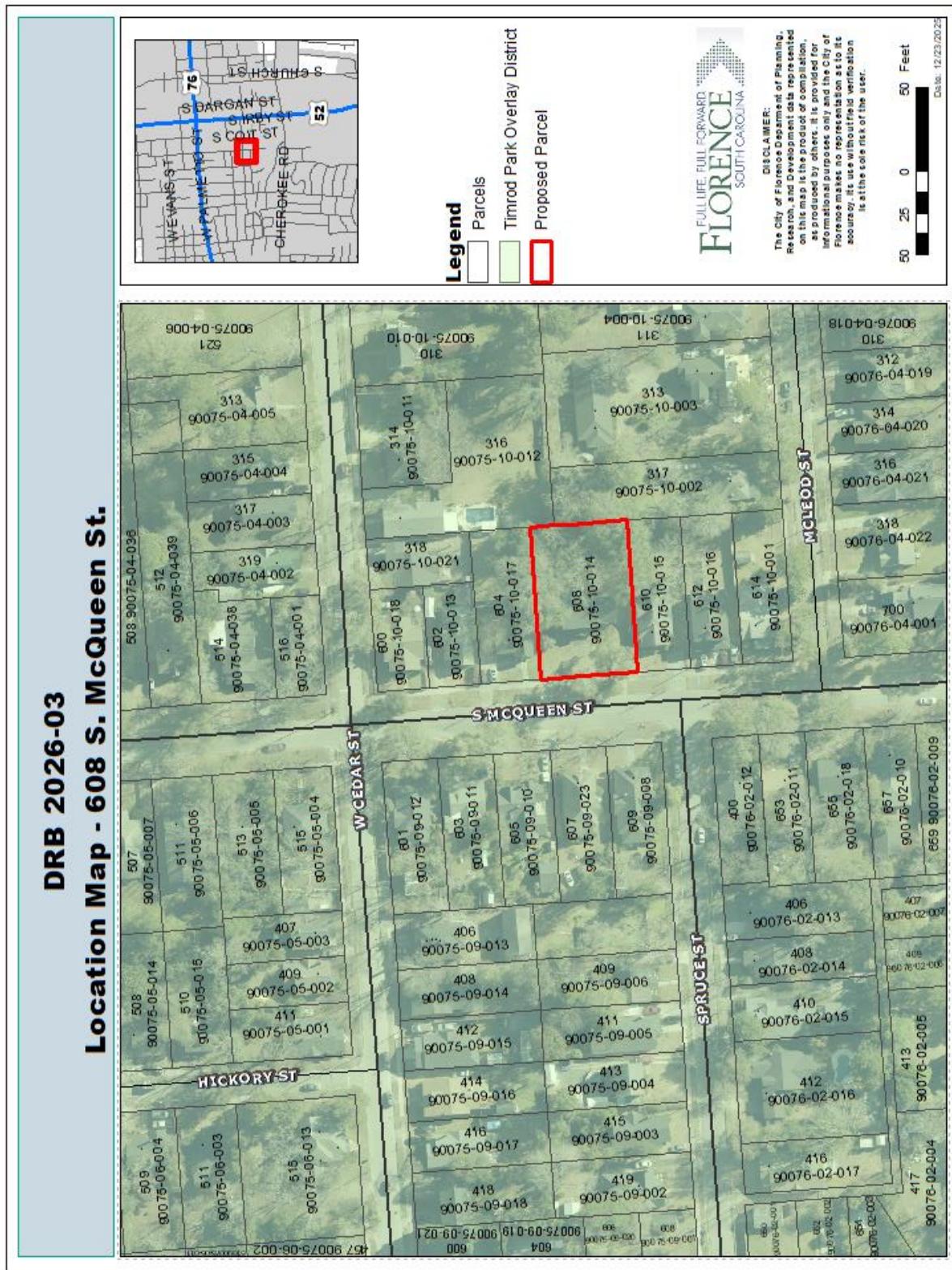
Attachments

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Location Map
- C. Zoning Map
- D. Property Card
- E. Site Photos
- F. New Build Options
- G. New Residential Building Design Standards

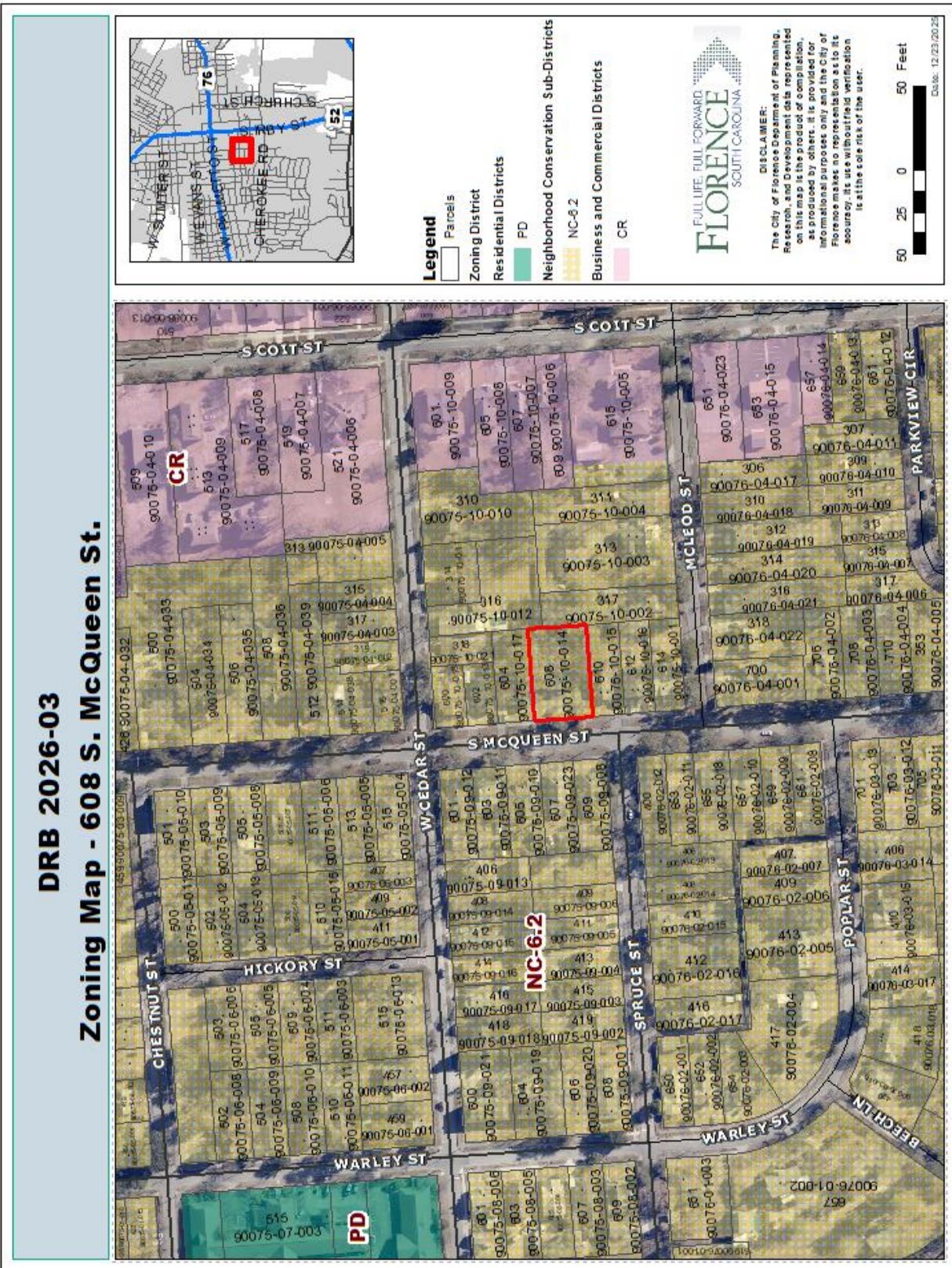
Attachment A: Vicinity Map



Attachment B: Location Map



Attachment C: Zoning Map



Attachment D: Property Card

FLORENCE COUNTY TAX ASSESSOR Property Card Record for MBP: 90075-10-014 TAX YEAR: 2025 9/22/25 10:55:11 PAGE: 72745			
PROPERTY LOCATION Address Number: 00608 Suffix: Street Name: MCQUEEN ST Street Suffix: City: State: Zip: 00000 0000 District: 110 Land Class: RI RESIDENTIAL IMPROVED Legal Desc: S MCQUEEN LT 8 PT 9		PROPERTY BILLING NAME/ADDRESS COOPER BRIANNA 608 S MCQUEEN ST FLORENCE SC29505	
Land Characteristic Selections 01 Topography 1 Level 02 Street 1 Paved 02 Street 5 Curb & Gutter 02 Street 6 Sidewalk 03 Utilities 1 All Public Utilities 03 Utilities 2 Public Water 03 Utilities 3 Public Sewer 04 Fronting Traffic 4 Med. 05 Ownership 1 Private L A N D Lots: Eff Frontage: 96 Eff Depth: 150 L A N D Gross Acres: Site Value .00			
R E S I D E N T I A L MBP: 90075-10-014 BUILDING ID#: 001 SUFFIX#: 000 Building Use Code: RESIDENTIAL 1 FAMILY Age Erected: 1930 Grade: D Story Height: 25 2 STORY Bedrooms: 05 Full Bath: 1 Half Bath: 1 Fireplaces: Heating & Air Conditioning: 2 UNITS Total Living Area: 2,306 Exterior Wall Construction: F STUD FRAME 02 SF-METAL/VINYL SID. Ext.Feat.Code: 11 Description: OFP Area: 64 Ext.Feat.Code: 11 Description: OFP Area: 220 Ext.Feat.Code: 11 Description: OFP Area: 56 Ext.Feat.Code: 130 Description: F:CARPORT Area: 198 OBY Code: 4 SHED Size: (len,wid,ht) 16 16 AREA: 256 Improvement Cost with Additions: .00 Yard/Other Bldg Values: +NH%: 30 Total Buildings Value: 54,926.1 Improvement Cost with Additions: .00 Yard/Other Bldg Values: +NH%: 30 Total Buildings Value:			
--- Totals for MBP --- # Buildings: 2 Building Value: 54,926.18 Land Market Value: 12,000.00 Market Acres: .00 Use Acres: .00 Land Use Value: .00 Bld/Land Use Total: 54,926.18 Bld/Land Mar.Total: 66,926.18 6% Bld Value: 0 # of 6% Bld: 0 Rental Acres: 0 Rental Acres Value: 0 Ren.Acres-Mar: 0 Ren.Acres Value-Mar: 0			

Attachment E: Site Photos



Attachment F: New Build Options



Craftsman



Cottage



Modern Farmhouse

Attachment G: New Residential Building Design Standards

Building Elements

Architectural details such as colors, materials, and textures should be compatible with the surrounding historic buildings. When designing new elements, maintain a balance with the overall character of the property and its environment.

Foundations

- Match the foundation height and material of new buildings to those of nearby historic structures.
- Lowering the grade is strictly forbidden.
- Slab foundations shall be avoided. Foundations shall be constructed in a similar style or character of adjacent historic homes utilizing similar elevations, materials, and styles.

Roofs

- Use gable or hipped roofs that relate to surrounding buildings.
- Consider roof dormers if commonly used nearby, matching the house's style.
- Reflect the roof pitch and gable orientation of surrounding historic buildings.
- Keep the roof size proportional to avoid overwhelming the structure.
- Use eave designs and materials that complement the block's original buildings.
- Match new roof materials to those used in the surrounding context.
- Place skylights, solar panels, and vents in less visible areas.

Trim

- Use trim details inspired by adjacent historic buildings to enhance the new building's design.
- Match the scale and proportion of trim to that of nearby historic buildings.
- Avoid using the "pork chop" triangular box detail on eave returns.

Doors, Windows, & Shutters

- Relate window and door openings to historic context by the solid to cased opening ratio, rhythm and

placement, width-to-height proportion, and general size.

- Respect traditional opening designs—recessed in masonry, raised trim in frame buildings. Flush openings are not allowed.
- Use wood doors (preferred). Metal-clad or fiberglass may be considered for side/rear doors case-by-case.
- Use windows with true divided lights or fixed muntins with spacers. No flat muntins, removable grilles, or grills between glass.
- Avoid tinted, frosted, or mirrored glass on major elevations. Low-e glass may be approved.
- Use wood or composite shutters (no faux wood grain), sized to fit windows, functional, and mounted on hinges. Avoid shutters on bay, double, or ganged windows.

Porches & Balconies

- Include a porch or balcony if most surrounding houses have one.
- Design porches and balconies to match the size, proportion, and placement of nearby historic ones.
- Use materials compatible with the building's style, such as concrete with brick edging, brick, or tongue & groove. Bluestone is not appropriate.
- Porches should be at least 8 feet deep.
- Do not use substitute materials for front porch or balcony floors. Use tongue & groove floors on frame porches.
- Design stoops, recessed entries, and balconies to match existing styles.

Cladding

- Cladding materials should enhance the building's appearance, align with the architectural style, and ensure durability.
- Acceptable cladding materials for residential development include brick, natural stone, stucco, fiber cement siding, treated or engineered wood, vertical or horizontal lap siding (wood or fiber cement), high-quality metal panels (limited use in modern designs), or precast concrete (finished or textured).

Building Colors

- Residential building colors should similarly follow the same principles of non-residential development, ensuring cohesion and compatibility with architectural style and context.
- Residential development should adhere to these guidelines:
 - a. Use colors that complement the architectural style and surrounding context, emphasizing natural and historically appropriate tones. Homes with historic designations should adhere to historically accurate paint schemes appropriate to their architectural period.
 - b. Preferred colors include those inspired by natural materials, such as muted or earth tones, including browns, tans, reds, greens, grays, and off-whites.
 - c. The main body of homes should be limited to one or two cohesive colors.
 - d. Preferred trim colors include white, off-white, dark gray, black, or darker shades of red, green, or blue.
 - e. Colors should coordinate with roofing and foundation materials to create a unified look.
- Prohibited colors include neon, fluorescent, or highly reflective finishes that could disrupt the streetscape and character of the particular district.
- Non-conforming paint colors require review and approval by the DRB.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
STAFF REPORT TO THE
CITY OF FLORENCE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
JANUARY 14, 2026

CASE NUMBER:	DRB-2026-04
LOCATION:	291 West Palmetto Street
TAX MAP NUMBER:	90087-01-001
OWNER OF RECORD:	Palmetto Industrial Development LLC
APPLICANT:	M. Padgett Engineering & Construction LLC
PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	Demolition of Commercial Building
OVERLAY DISTRICT:	D-1 Redevelopment Overlay District

Project Description

The applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to demolish the commercial building located at 291 West Palmetto Street in the City's Redevelopment Overlay District. The demolition is being pursued by the owner following a collision that resulted in severe damage to the building.

Background Information

According to the Florence County Property Card File, the 1,392 square foot structure was built in 1940. The lot is 10,450 square feet in area. The building was severely damaged when a truck struck it in July, 2025.

A Certificate of Appropriateness to remove the damaged Porte cochere for public safety purposes was issued administratively on July 23, 2025. The owner is now requesting permission to demolish the entire remaining building.

The Florence City-County Historical Commission was sent this request on December 23, 2025. They are scheduled to meet about this request on January 12, 2026.

Staff Analysis

Section 6-20.3.3 of the *Unified Development Ordinance* states that the Downtown Planning Coordinator shall "ensure that all applications for new construction, renovation, rehabilitation, and **demolition** shall require a Certificate of Appropriateness if the property involved is located within the overlay districts".

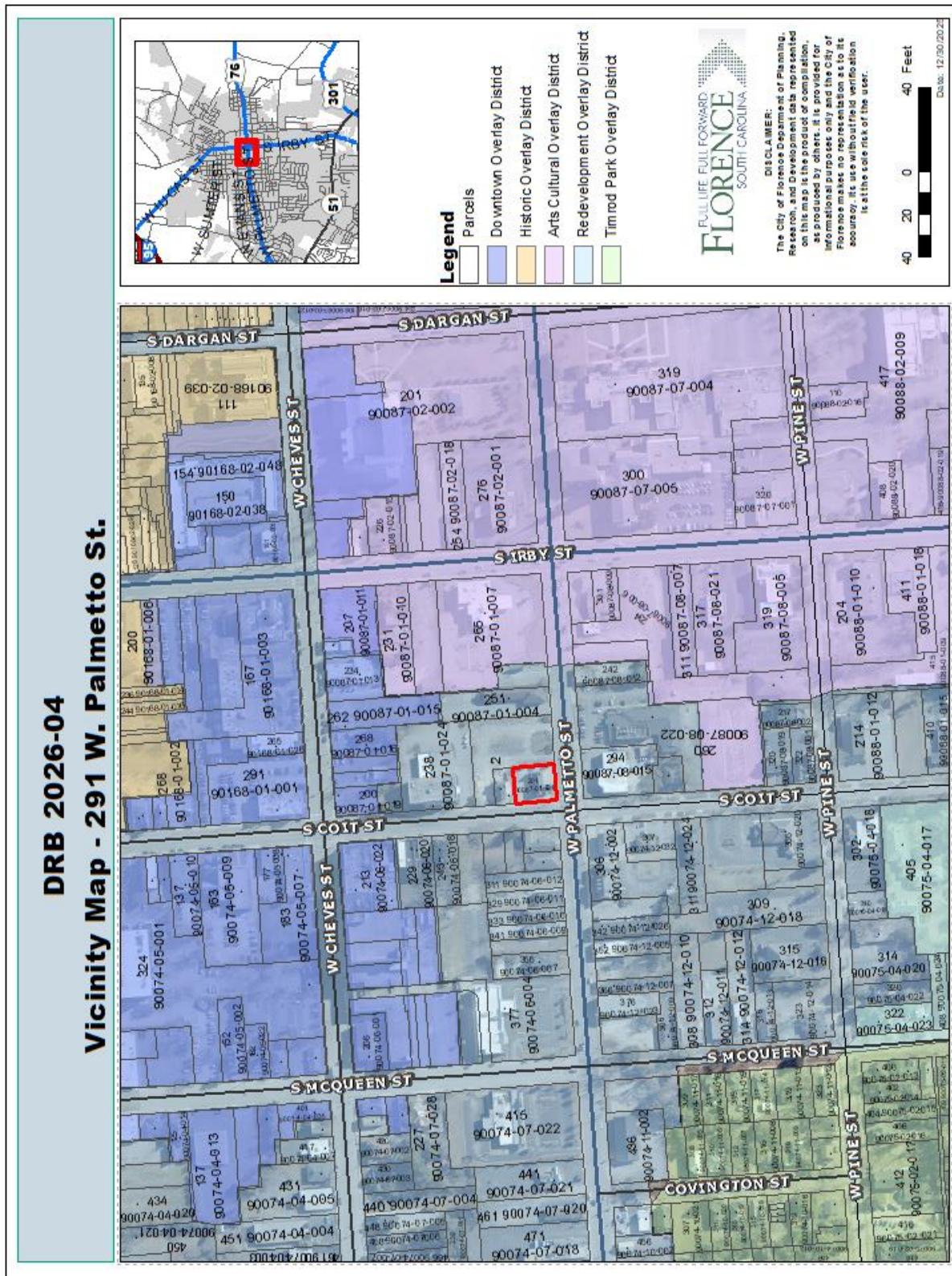
Board Action

1. Consider only the evidence presented before the Board during the public hearing.
2. Apply the intent of the Design Standards to the application, considering the character of the applicable zoning and overlay districts.
3. Based on the determination of appropriateness, make a motion regarding the request.

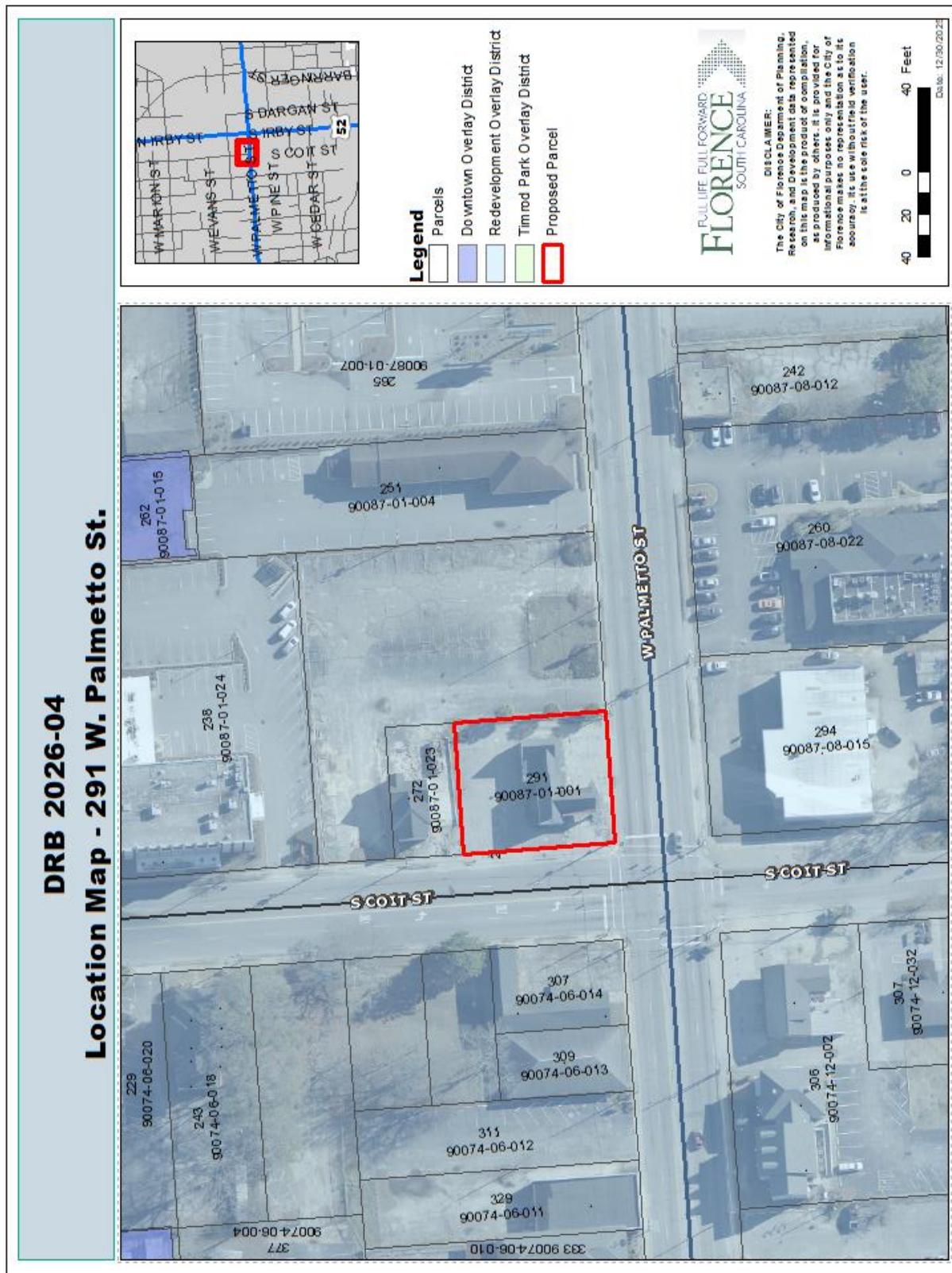
Attachments

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Location Map
- C. Zoning Map
- D. Property Card
- E. Engineer's Notes
- F. Site Photos

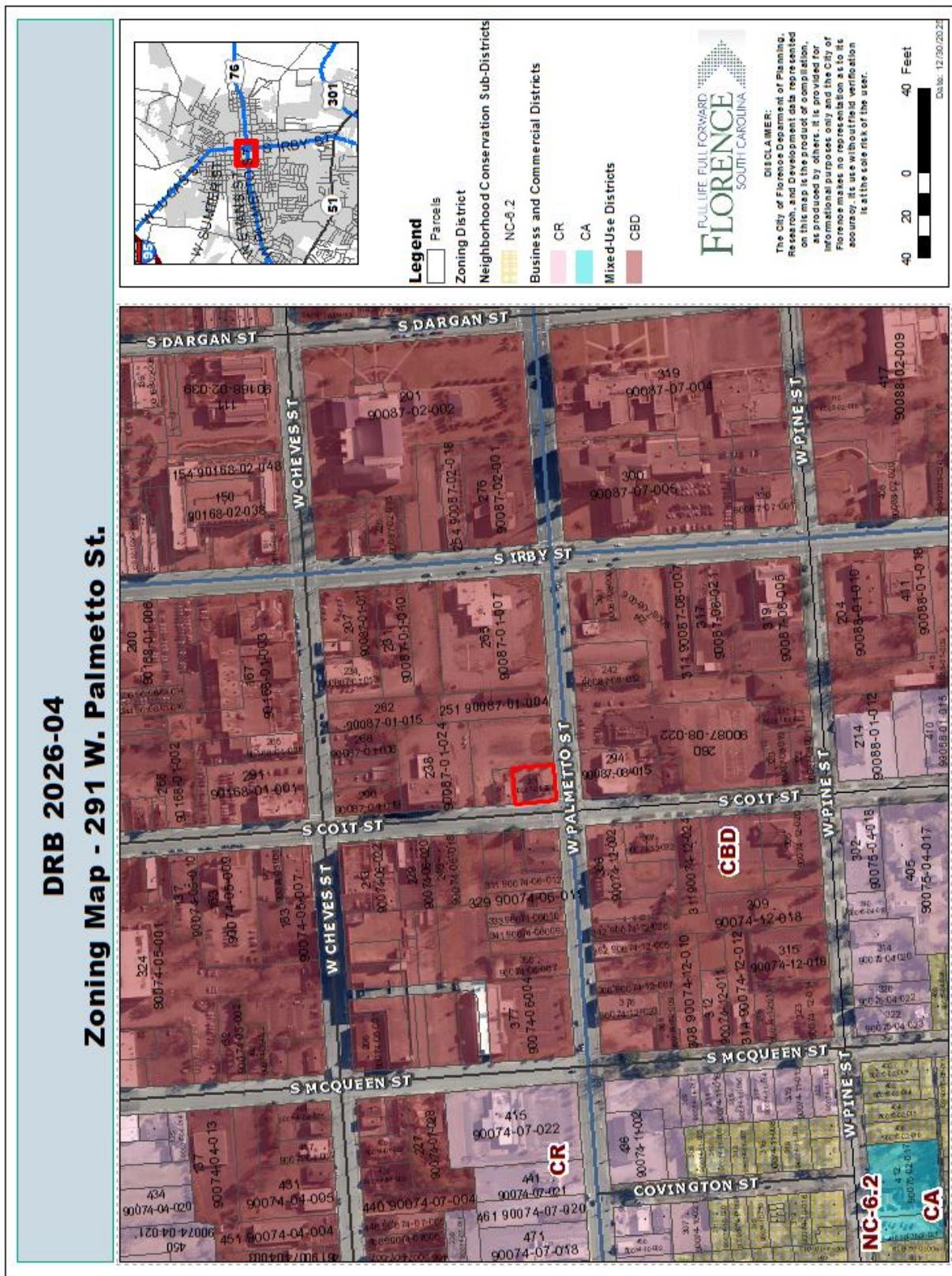
Attachment A: Vicinity Map



Attachment B: Location Map



Attachment C: Zoning Map



Attachment D: Property Card

FLORENCE COUNTY TAX ASSESSOR		PAGE: 73901	
Property Card Record for MBP: 90087-01-001 TAX YEAR: 2025		9/22/25 10:55:11	
----- PROPERTY LOCATION Address -----		===== PROPERTY BILLING NAME/ADDRESS ===	
Number: 00291 Suffix:		PALMETTO INDUSTRIAL DEV LLC	
Street Name: PALMETTO Street Suffix: ST			
City: FLORENCE State: SC Zip: 00000 0000		611 W PALMETTO ST STE B	
District: 110 Land Class: CI COMMERCIAL IMPROVED		FLORENCE SC29501	
Legal Desc: W PALMETTO & S COIT			
Land Characteristic Selections			
01 Topography	1	Level	
02 Street	1	Paved	
03 Utilities	1	All Public Utilities	
04 Fronting Traffic	5	Heavy	
05 Ownership	1	Private	
L A N D Lots:	Eff Frontage: 95	Eff Depth: 110	
L A N D Square Feet:	10,450		
L A N D Gross Acres: Site Value	.00		

C O M M E R C I A L MBP: 90087-01-001 BUILDING ID#: 001 SUFFIX#: 000			
Category: 307 RESTAURANTS - FAST FOOD		Yr.Built: 1940 Area Sq.Ft: 1,392	
Improvement Cost with Additions: 43,261.82 Yard/Other Bldg Values: 7,603.42 Total Buildings Value: 50,865.24			

--- Totals for MBP ---			
# Buildings:	1	Building Value:	50,865.24
Market Acres:	.00	Land Market Value:	145,820.00
Bld/Land Use Total:	50,865.24	Bld/Land Mar.Total:	196,685.24
Rental Acres:	0	Rental Acres Value:	0
Transfer Date:	07/10	DEED Book:	B311
Page:	1194	Sales Price:	85,000

Attachment E: Engineer's Notes

My observations and assessment of the building are as follows:

- Per GIS the building is circa 1940, about 1400sf. Observations from my site visit agree with this.
- The envelope of the building is compromised. The front of the building, on the roof and other wall areas are exposed to the weather from the porte cochere demo and water is entering the building causing mold and moisture issues.
- The front wall appears to have been damaged some from the impact and/or the twisting that resulted from the porte cochere falling. It will be necessary to gut at a minimum the front wall, remove the drywall and spray foam insulation to properly assess the wall for structural evaluation. It also appears to have notable rot in places as well.
- The GIS lists the building as worth approximately \$50,000. While I'm not a realtor or an appraiser, this does seem like a reasonable value. It's small, older, and not in the best shape. The lot is listed on the GIS to be worth approximately three times that amount.
- The power on this building appears to have been off for more than 6 months. Per building code, if the power has been off for more than that time the electrical service and likely much of the circuits in the building will be required to be brought back up to current code.
- The renovation and repair scope for this would qualify for a Level III alteration, per Ch 9 of the IEBC, various sections, and as referred to in current IBC 101.4.7. Because the repairs qualify as a Level III alteration under IEBC, the building cannot simply be "patched"; it must be substantially upgraded to modern standards.
- I estimate that the costs to properly repair this building to where even nominally for it to be structurally sound, and nominally code compliant would be well in excess of \$150,000. You have mentioned that in discussion with a contractor, he had stated something similar in regard to cost.
- There are signs that homeless people have been staying in the building. Thus, the building is becoming a liability and a potential safety hazard for the neighborhood.

In my opinion:

- The building as it stands now isn't currently in immediate danger of collapse, but it does need very substantial repairs to make it safe to occupy, be practically useable, and generally be brought up to a code compliant condition. Some of these existing condition issues are due to the vehicle impact, and others are just due to the age and wear and tear on the building.
- If money were not an issue, the building could be fixed and returned to a useable condition. However, in my experience working on projects similar to this, I don't see how you will be able to reasonably recoup any justifiable portion of the money needed to properly repair/improve the building to be able to create a space where it could receive the rents needed to do so. The current assessed value of the structure is approximately \$50,000. The minimum cost to bring the building into structural and code compliance is estimated to exceed \$150,000. This creates a "Rehabilitation to Value" ratio that is a minimum of 300%. Under standard International Existing Building Code (IEBC) Level III Alteration requirements, you would be forced into a cycle of diminishing returns where the cost of mandated upgrades far exceeds the post-renovation market value of the asset.

- The building, while somewhat historic and unique, is small and does not appear to be well suited for retail, office, or other types of use as indicative of its rental history.
- A vacant, decaying building in a D-1 Overlay district, on a major throughfare, provides a negative visual impact compared to a clean lot or a potential future development that meets modern DRB standards.
- There is no reasonable economic use for the property in its current state, nor is there a viable path to renovation that does not result in a substantial financial loss to you, the owner. The building does not currently meet the standard for a safe, occupiable space and has become an "attractive nuisance" for vagrancy.
- Given that the land value is approximately three times the value of the building, the highest and best use of the site—and the most beneficial outcome for the Florence streetscape—is the demolition of the current structure to allow for future compliant development

Attachment F: Site Photos





