



Planning Commission

Work Session Minutes – February 18, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

6:45

A work session of the Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Mike Tomy and was held in-person in the Planning Conference Room on February 18, 2026 at 1:05 PM. The meeting was recorded and streamed on Facebook in accordance with City Policy.

ATTENDEES

Members in attendance: Mike Tomy, Chairman, Bill Bardenwerper, Vice-Chairman, Libby Anderson, Clinton Hallman, Kim McFann, Benjie Morillo, and Bill Suter.

Staff in attendance: Curt Freese, Community Development Department Director, Christopher Klement, Planner III and Nicolas Navia, Planner I. Meadors Architecture, joined the meeting via Zoom.

DISCUSSION

7:00

Mr. Tomy asked if there were any general comments.

Eric Clausseen, the new Assistant City Manager, introduced himself.

Public Comment

None.

Public comment closed.

Mr. Freese stated that Adam Biery with the Architecture Firm Design Build is here to give the Planning Commission (PC) a presentation in relation to the liner buildings. Mr. Biery introduced himself and said he is working with Paul Trask to evaluate and/or look at the Code definition of liner buildings and the requirement for two stories; and also has conducted studies showing alternatives for liner buildings that could better address the corner of Boundary Street and Robert Smalls Parkway with incorporating more pedestrian-activated features, such as outdoor patios, walkways, as well as landscaping and preservation of viewsheds in lieu of solely placing 2-story liner buildings. His firm has previously worked with Mr. Trask on the Chipotle and Five Guys Buildings at Beaufort Plaza.

Mr. Freese stated at the last worksession the PC stopped at Section 4.5.12 – Gas/Fuel Stations and Car Washes, page 43 of 72. Mr. Tomy stated that he would like to go back to a detailed discussion after we finish the general discussion. Mr. Freese proposed to rewrite this section, adding the General Architectural Design and Lowcountry Design Elements.

PC agreed to not allow gas stations in the Historic District, referring to the gas station on the corner of Harrison Street and Boundary Street, which is grandfathered, and the gas station on the corner of Boundary Street where Subway used to be.

All were good with the vernacular standards. Mr. Freese referred to Page 46 of 72 and said the sentence *See definition of transparency below* needs to be deleted since it is referenced in another section. Mr. Tomy referred to Section 4.5.13 G.b (page 47 of 72) that says, *blank walls are prohibited along public streets* and feels it needs a definition. Mr. Freese said it is discussed on the previous page under Scale & Proportion. PC agreed to remove the Starbucks picture and the wording below the picture.

Mr. Morillo referred to a few drive-thrus that don't work (Dunkin Donuts and Chick-Fil-A) and he proposed prohibiting drive-thrus within 250 feet of major intersections. Mr. Bardenwerper referred to a Stacking Study he did.

Mr. Tomy referred to Section 4.5.13.g, Drive-Thru Facilities Special Site Requirements and proposed adding the sentence, *Stacking study shall be made to substantiate the proposed stacking design*. Mr. Freese will make a note "TIA may be required at the discretion of the administrator under 50 trips".

Mr. Freese stated that Jeremy Tate, staff consulting architect, put together the Drive-Thru Facilities Special Architectural Requirements. Mr. Tomy proposed under Section 4.5.13 H.b (page 47 of 72) to strike the words *strongly discouraged* and replace it with *not within the city of*. Mr. Tomy feels this needs to be reworded so that there is a stronger language in the code and that it needs to be consistent and coordinated with Lowcountry Vehicular Architecture. Mr. Freese will work on rewording this.

Mr. Freese stated there are not too many changes in Section 4.5.1.4 Civic Buildings. Mr. Tomy explained that he is an anti-terrorism force protection expert and also was a consultant for NY Yankees, Mets, NFL Stadiums, federal court buildings and does anti-terrorism protection. He said the PC should be aware of when designing a new civic or public buildings there needs to be an installation of something in the design stages relating to the exterior facilities. An example would be an old courthouse that has no room for a metal detector at the entryway. Ms. Anderson suggested this take place within the application requirements. Mr. Freese said there are no changes proposed for this section, but we can add a recommendation.

Mr. Tomy suggesting doing something simple under Civic Buildings & Institutions to say, *in consideration regarding security and anti-terrorism and force protection shall be provided for the proposal*. Mr. Tomy intends to do a presentation to the Fire Department as well as the Police Department.

PC agreed to what was done in the new Section 4.5.14 – Church and Institutional Buildings.

Mr. Freese stated that the PC has not reviewed Section 4.6: Building Design Standards yet. It needs to be clarified when it says, *district* is it referring to the historic district.

Mr. Tomy referred Section 4.6.1.H.3.a and wants to add to it the sentence *only be located on the property and on a public right-of-way*. PC member referred to Section H.3.c which doesn't read grammatical right. PC agreed to after add the words *within public* after the words *displayed on*.

Mr. Freese stated that the Fencing in Section 4.6.I.1 and 4.6.I.2 have been moved to Chapter 5 under Landscaping.

Mr. Tomy referred to Section 4.6.3.A.1.b, and Section 4.6.3.A.5.c delete the words *smooth finish*.

Mr. Freese said in Section 4.6.3.A.9.h Faux wood grain textures will be removed.

PC agreed to put back into Section 4.6.2.c *Tabby*.

PC agreed to put back into Section 4.6.3.A.1.f, *Tabby (or stucco with oyster shell aggregate, typ.)*.

PC agreed in Section 4.6.3.A.4.d to remove *PVC*.

PC agreed in Section 4.6.3.A.7 to remove the entire paragraph.

PC agreed in Section 4.6.3.A.9.c to research the new product – do not prohibit.

PC agreed in Section 4.6.3.A.9.b to remove the words *and trim*.

PC agreed in Section 4.6.3.A.9.i to remove the entire sentence.

PC agreed in Section 4.6.3.A.9.l.iii remove entire sentence.

PC agreed in Section 4.6.3.B.ii. – staff will research to match this to other color recommendations in the Code.

Mr. Freese referred to added Section 4.6.4.C.1 – Windows/Doors. All agreed after Fenestration/Transparency to add *With the exception of residential uses*. Also, add at the end of the paragraph, *The Planning Commission may consider design exceptions to this requirement to include spandrel glass and/or higher percentage opacity in cases where the applicant can prove these are critical functional (privacy?) areas*.

PC agreed in Section 4.6.4.A.1.f. to unstricken the sentence *Tabby (or stucco with oyster shell aggregate, typ.)*

PC agreed in Section 4.6.4.A.2.c to unstricken the word *Tabby*.

Mr. Tomy suggested the PC and staff research the term *stucco* to include modern materials.

Mr. Freese went over the three big issues that were not resolved today (garage issue and multi-family). At the next meeting first the PC will go over the major things and then go over the final things. Next worksession can be March 16 in the afternoon since we don't have any agenda items for the regular PC meeting.

Ms. Anderson stated she would not be at the next meeting but will send her comments to Mr. Freese.

Mr. Tomy asked what Mr. Freese has in final or in an update to date form for the Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) & Short-Term Rentals (STRs). Mr. Freese said that's going to council next month. Mr. Tomy would like a copy of what was presented to council. Mr. Freese will send it to the PC.

Public Comment

Merritt Patterson spoke. Mr. Patterson stated he does commercial development and is a long-term resident within the city. He does a lot of commercial work, particularly light industrial properties (Beaufort Industrial Village, Commerce Park and the land on Depot Road). He talked about how the Code is trying to group together light industrial and commercial types buildings as if they are residential looking. The document being reviewed does not address light industrial properties. The industrial properties should have the same rules as the Commerce Park does.

Public comment closed.

The Worksession ended at 3:21 pm.

3:21:33