

**The Spartanburg Board of Architectural Design and Historic Review Meeting**  
**Thursday June 10, 2021 at 5:30pm**  
**Zoom Meeting Minutes**

The Board of Architectural Design and Historic Review (HARB) met via ZOOM on Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 5:30pm. The following Board members attended this meeting: Anne Rodrick, Kenneth Brown, Brad Steinecke, Melissa Walker, Ray Trail, Meg Reid, Josh Lonon. Absent was Kathleen Crowley and Rhiannon Leebrick. Representing the Planning Department were Martin Livingston, Community Development Director and Julie Roland, Administrative Assistant.

**Roll Call**

Mr. Trail said good evening, everyone. I'd like to call this meeting to order of the Spartanburg Historic Architectural Review Board, on this June 10, 2021. My name is Ray Trail. I am the Chairman of the Board and will be conducting this evening's meeting.

We have 7 out of 9 members, which does constitute a quorum, and we may continue. Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted and mailed, and in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, and requirements of the City of Spartanburg Zoning Ordinance. Our first order of business will be approval of the agenda. Everyone should have received one, and any questions or concerns about the agenda. Okay, hearing none, would somebody like to make a motion to approve them.

Mr. Brown moved approval of the agenda for tonight's meeting; he was seconded by Mr. Steinecke. The motion was approved by a vote of 6 to 0.

**Disposition of the Meeting Minutes from the May 13, 2021 Meeting**

Mr. Trail said the second order of business would be the minutes from our May 13, 2021 meeting. Has everyone had a chance to review those minutes. Any questions or comments on the minutes. If not, do I hear a motion to accept the minutes as written.

Ms. Walker moved approval of the minutes and was seconded by Ms. Rodrick. The motion was approved by a vote of 6 to 0.

Mr. Trail said minutes are accepted. Mr. Livingston will be presenting for the city on both of our cases. He will have to be sworn in and the applicants or the applicants' representative, will also need to be sworn in. Ms. Meg Reid has joined the meeting.

**Old Business - None**

**New Business:**

**The Board of Architectural Design and Historic Review has received a request regarding a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work – 156 W. Hampton Avenue (TMS# 7-16-02-055.00) in the Hampton Heights Neighborhood – Owner/Applicant is seeking approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of vinyl windows with wood windows in a shed on a corner property located in the R-8/SFD zone district. Applicant and Owner – William McCusker.**

Mr. Livingston was sworn. The property is an approximately 8,400 square foot lot with a colonial revival style home, built around 1922. Author Vivian B. Fisher, in the book, Hampton Heights of Spartanburg; Its History, Houses and Spring Streets, states the home was constructed in 1927. It's located on the corner of W. Hampton Drive and South Spring Street, in the R-8 single-family district, in the Hampton Heights neighborhood. The structure was recently renovated and the owners are requesting to make additional repairs to the improvements to the property. The owners are requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to add windows to an existing detached shed, built at a later date.

The rear of the property is visible from South Spring Street. The owners are proposing to replace two vinyl windows which face the street with similar- sized wood windows and the owners are also requesting to add windows to the south-facing wall of the shed where none previously existed. And so, this is coming before the Board for Certificate of Appropriateness. There are five items under Section 510.6(C) that must be considered. First, is the character and appropriateness of the design. Wood windows will add a historic character to the existing shed structure. The shed itself appears to be architecturally insignificant.

The installation of new wood windows will only add to the complementary nature of the shed. The scale of the buildings is not applicable to the replacement and installation of the windows in this case. Texture and materials, the installation of wood windows would be considered an improvement to the existing vinyl windows, but are complementary in design of material to windows found on the main residence and throughout the Hampton Heights neighborhood. And as for the relationship of such elements with similar features of structures in the immediate surrounding areas, addition of more appropriate wood windows on the shed will only add to the appeal of the neighborhood and the property. Wood windows are common place throughout Hampton Heights, and every effort should be made to replace vinyl windows with those more architecturally significant alternatives. If the property is in the historic district, the extent to which the alteration or construction would be harmonious with the historic district, the proposed new windows will blend harmoniously with the existing neighborhood and the Hampton Heights district.

The Board will review and consider for approval the following: approval of the replacement of existing vinyl windows with true, authentic wood divided-light windows and the addition of true, authentic wood divided-lite windows on the south-facing wall of the shed where none previously existed.

Mr. Livingston stated this property is located on the corner of South Spring Street and W. Hampton Avenue. Here is the address, 156 W. Hampton Avenue on the corner, alleyway access to the rear. This the photo of the main house. This is the photo of the shed. On one side of the shed, facing South Spring Street. So, this vinyl window will be replaced and this vinyl window will be replaced. This is the submission by the owner, showing vinyl and plexiglass in both locations, and would be replaced with a grid-style window in both locations.

Here is the south-facing wall that faces the main house, but still visible from the street. There are no windows in this location. Here is the current plan as submitted by the owner-applicant, and here is the proposed wood window which would be located in this location. Authentic divided-light windows are the ones located here, as we've shown in the past. The Board will review and consider for approval the two items: vinyl windows, replacement of the existing vinyl windows with true, authentic divided-light windows and the addition of true, authentic wood divided-light windows in the south-facing wall. I'll answer any questions the Board may have.

Mr. Trail asked are there any questions for Mr. Livingston. I don't hear any questions at this time, so let's move to our applicant. We have him on screen here.

Mr. William McCusker was sworn in.

**Board Questions for Mr. McCusker:**

Mr. Trail asked Mr. McCusker to tell us about your project.

Mr. McCusker said well, it's only slightly different than those images I shared and I found the windows, but they are true divided-light. They're from a hundred-year-old home in Hendersonville, which where I'm from. You can see them here. And yeah, they're wood, old windows that I'm restoring, and think they'll definitely add character to the building and meet all the Historic prerequisites that we're all trying to abide by. I guess, I hope there's some wiggle room if my design doesn't look exactly like the squares I drew on the page. Do I need to resubmit.

Mr. Trail asked any questions for Mr. McCusker.

Mr. Brown said yes. I don't have any issues at all with your proposal, but I do have one question. I believe it was the south face where you're introducing windows for the first time.

Mr. McCusker said yes.

Mr. Brown said in your illustration, it appeared to have a very, very low ceiling and head relative to the door.

Mr. McCusker said yes, that's just a bad drawing.

Mr. Brown said yeah. I think it'd better if the heads were consistent. Sorry, I'm an architect. That's what I've been doing for 40-plus years.

Mr. McCusker said yeah. Can you explain that quickly what you mean by that.

Mr. Brown said the door head is the top of the door. And so, the window head is the top of the window and I'm asking you to consider making the window head the same height as the door height, so the top of the windows and the top of the door consistent.

Mr. McCusker said yeah.

Mr. Brown said maybe Martin could pull up your illustration again of the façade.

Mr. Livingston said sure.

Mr. McCusker said I have another one. Let me just pull it up, if you don't mind. If I can screen share.

Mr. Livingston said okay. Hold on.

Mr. McCusker said here we go. So, I just lifted them up.

Mr. Brown said great.

Mr. McCusker said this is what I'm proposing now. You like that better.

Mr. Brown said I do.

Mr. McCusker said all right. Yeah, because I got those four windows, and they actually all open in one direction, so I thought it looked better separated anyway. And yeah, I agree, architecturally, that looks much cleaner and nicer.

Mr. Brown said thank you.

Mr. Trail asked are there any other questions for Mr. McCusker at this time. Hearing none, we'll move to our public comments. Mr. Livingston, do we have anyone with us from the public.

Mr. Livingston said Mr. Chairman we have no one from the public.

**Public Comments** – *None*

**Deliberation questions or comments:**

Mr. Steinecke said I would move approval of both items, the replacement of the old windows with new true, divided lite wood windows as submitted by the applicant, and the addition of new windows on the south-facing wall, as shown in the most recent slide by the applicant.

Mr. Brown said Brad, I think I do this to you consistently, but can I ask you to amend your proposal to add my language about the consistency in window heights and door height.

Mr. Steinecke said absolutely. And just to clarify my point about the most recent slide that's submitted, I was really referring to what he's share on screen here.

Mr. Brown said okay.

Mr. Steinecke said as shown there with the separated windows, matching the head height of the existing door.

Mr. McCusker asked would you like me to send you a new file.

Mr. Livingston said yes, please.

Mr. Steinecke moved for approval and was seconded by Mr. Brown. The motion was approved by a vote of 7 to 0.

Mr. Trail said your application is accepted.

Mr. McCusker said thank you. Have a good one.

Mr. Trail said okay, Mr. Livingston, we will return to you.

**The Board of Architectural Design and Historic Review has received a request regarding a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Work – 708 Southern Street (TMS# 7-08-15-307.00) in the Beaumont Mill Village – Owner/Applicant is seeking approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the restoration of the front porch to original size and appearance in the R-6 Single Family zone district. Applicant – Ben Palmer, Ben Palmer Contracting.**

The Project site is an approximately 5,600 square-foot lot in the Beaumont Mill Village Historic District. The site is located on the Northwestern corner of Southern and King Street. Site is currently owned by Ben Palmer of Ben Palmer Contracting. The house is one of several of its kind within Beaumont. It's considered as house Type 14. In the Mill Village guidelines, this indicates that the house is an end-gabled structure with a front porch built circa 1941. The applicant is proposing to restore the currently- enclosed porch to a style and size that would have been found when the house was first built. This would create an open-air porch supported by some columns. The owners also indicated that the porch will be reduced inside.

Also, proposed is the restoration of broken window sash, which would be considered a minor works. The project meets most of the required standards of the Beaumont Village Historic District guidelines and findings for approval of Certificate of Appropriateness were attached. Staff recommends approval subject to review by the Architectural Design and Historical Review Board, and there's also conditions of approval. If the Certificate of Appropriateness is approved, it must meet Sections 510.6(C). First, the character and appropriateness of the design to propose

alternatives would be consistent with guidelines represented in both the Spartanburg Design Manual, as well as the Beaumont Mill Village Design Guidelines.

The project proposes to return the house to a more original state, utilizing appropriate materials to conduct repair work. The scale of the building's proposed porch will be smaller in size than the existing porch. This would make the front of the porch more historically accurate and would integrate well into the surrounding neighborhoods. The project will use materials and designs that are appropriate and found elsewhere within Beaumont Mill Village. The existing wood front door in the interior of the enclosed front porch appears to be original to the structure and will remain.

The restoration of the original open porch will blend harmoniously with immediately- neighboring structures and a majority of residences in Beaumont Mill, which have a porch retaining their open feature. A minority are screened in an appropriate manner, and even smaller minority are enclosed in an incompatible manner. The restoration of this property will reduce the number of incompatible front porches found within the Beaumont Mill Village. And if the properties in a historic district the extent to which the altered construction would be harmonious within the district.

The proposed front porch will blend harmoniously with the existing neighborhood and the Beaumont Mill Village Historic District in comparison to other structures in the neighborhood. The Board will review and consider for approval the following, approval of the modifications to the front porch to be consistent to the Beaumont Mill Village Historic Standards. And then second, approval of the installation of pickets and railings as minor works, subject to building inspections and planning staff review and approval.

Mr. Livingston said the property is located on Southern Street, on the corner of Southern Street and Kingston Street, with alleyway access to the rear. The property is located at 708 Southern Street, on the corner of Southern and Kingston Street. This photo is the front of the house. It is enclosed and it has a front door and windows. This is the interior of that enclosed front porch. This door will remain. This door will be enclosed and the siding will match across. Here is a side view, Kingston Street View, showing the enclosed porch. This is an art work of Ben Palmer's rendering of what he's proposing for the front porch. This front porch is an example of house Type 14 and end-gable wood shed, front porch, circa 1941.

Martin Meek's the architect that developed the guidelines and prepared a list of all the different houses that meet these requirements. So, the Board will review and consider for approval the modifications to the front porch as presented, as well as the installation of pickets and railings as minor works, subject to building inspections and planning staff review and approval. And the reason this item is included is because the front porch is 30 inches above the ground. And so, for safety and security reasons, the building inspections department will be asking for picket and railings, you'll notice that there are none in this photo, which is original to most of the homes in this neighborhood. And I'll answer any questions the Board may have.

Mr. Brown asked Mr. Livingston can you just briefly go back to the rendering. So, is it my understanding that there's only going to be a door opening and no windows.

Mr. Livingston said that's correct.

Mr. Brown asked can you now go to the photograph of the other house that represents this Type 14.

Mr. Brown asked do we have any way of knowing if the flanking windows are consistent on all the other houses, or is it just unusual there won't be any windows on this front of the house.

Mr. Livingston asked do we know if this style is consistent, or if this style is, flanking windows on both sides are consistent in the other homes.

Mr. Brown said my guess is other homes have flanking windows.

Mr. Livingston said yes, that would be my guess as well.

Mr. Brown said I just wanted to bring that up, because it's a real nuance, but it conceivably might impact the look of this house versus the other ones, especially on Southern Street would have the flanking window. I'm assuming have the flanking windows. I'm not saying they do. I just wanted to bring that up. I'm not saying it's good or bad.

Mr. Trail asked are there any more questions for Mr. Livingston at this time. Okay, hearing none, let's move to our applicant. I think Mr. Palmer is with us. Good evening, sir. I need to swear you in. Do you swear that the information you're about to give us to be the truth.

Mr. Trail said okay, thank you, sir. I couldn't hear you let me make sure you're not muted.

Mr. Livingston asked can you say a few words. You're muted now.

Mr. Trail said say a few words. No, we're not hearing you.

Mr. Steinecke said is he may be able to access the chat feature.

Mr. Livingston said turn your screen on and off and turn your mic on and off. See if that'll work. I think he might have dropped off instead of turning the screen off.

Ms. Reid said sometimes if you come back into the room, it fixes it. It might fix it.

Mr. Trail said still can't hear. The only thing I know would be proceed and ask him yes or no questions. You can either nod for approval or shake his head no.

Mr. Livingston said or use the chat function.

Mr. Brown said I had a question. Looking at the rendering. It seemed that the size of the squared columns was pretty small, but I didn't know if you had a particular size in mind for the columns that would be put in place.

Mr. Livingston said the response was six by six square columns.

Mr. Trail said six by six square. That sounds like it might be a little smaller than those of the other house.

Mr. Brown said I just peered out my window, my columns in front of my house and they're eight by eight.

Mr. Brown said just for what it's worth, my house is a craftsman.

Mr. Trail said all right.

Mr. Steinecke said I'm thinking if there's just a way to gauge how this house type handles columns and other examples, just to make it harmonious with that, whatever that measurement seems to be I think would be acceptable.

Mr. Brown asked Martin, can we look at the image of the other house that you showed of the sort of a template.

Mr. Livingston said sure, hold on. Let me see if I can pull it up. Here you go.

Mr. Brown said those appear to be more like eight by eight or even maybe 10 by 10. That's my guess. I don't have any way to know. I think it's pretty much more than six by six.

Mr. Steinecke said I agree. That's the look I am perceiving from that as well. My understanding, is that there is some degree of variability within these house types. So, I don't know that this single image is necessarily the complete template that everything has to match to.

Mr. Livingston said oh, I understand. Yeah, I agree.

Mr. Steinecke said but if it seems like there are many others of the same house type that have that larger size of column, I'd support us matching to those.

Mr. Brown said it looks like he's offering two match it as eight by eight. I think that's probably sufficient.

Mr. Trail said okay.

Ms. Walker said I just had a question to pick up on what Ken mentioned earlier about those flanking windows. I know that's an extra expense, but it's certainly would, I think, add to both the attractiveness and the livability of that house to have additional windows. I'm just making that as an observation. I don't know, if Mr. Palmer, wants to address that at all.

Mr. Steinecke said Martin, while Mr. Palmer's responding. I wonder if you might go to the slide that shows the current conditions of the interior of the enclosed porch. Okay, so in his response,



it looks like it's left of the front door has no current window. But in this image, it does seem to the right of the door. yeah, there's his response again okay.

Mr. Brown said I would like to ask Mr. Palmer if he would consider providing windows, I don't know that we have the authority to demand it. But I'd like to know if he's perhaps willing to consider it.

Mr. Steinecke said looking at this slide, there's a small notch that's in the siding, in that opening that he's saying was added access. Matt, it looks to me as if it was notching to accommodate a previous window in that spot. It's fairly small, if you all can see it on the screen there. And without being there in person, it'd be a little bit tough to know that yeah, that area right in there makes it seem like there's something going on there with a previous window. And that's siding, my guess would be that that's the original 1941 siding.

Ms. Walker said yeah, which does suggest that there wasn't one on the left side originally.

Mr. Steinecke said I agree with that.

Mr. Brown said I would agree.

Mr. Steinecke said right.

Mr. Trail said yeah

Ms. Reid said it seems like having even one window to the side would be more normal than having no windows on the front, which does give a little bit of an odd appearance. Someone said earlier, there's a bunch of houses in the neighborhood that are built like that. Maybe that's a specific thing. But it does seem like they probably saw an opportunity when they were doing this enclosure to make that window into a door or something. There was already something there cut for it.

Mr. Trail said yeah, you can see the hinge marks where there was a door there at one time.

Mr. Livingston stated the Board can require the installation of a window.

Mr. Brown said with that clarification from Martin, I think it's within our best interest to ask for a window in that location where we think there may originally have been one. I'm not inclined to demand one in another location if one was never there in the first place.

Mr. Trail asked do we have any more questions for Mr. Palmer. Okay, hearing none, Mr. Palmer, we will probably come back to you in just a minute. I want to see if Martin, do we have anyone here from the public that wants to make a comment on this project.

Mr. Livingston said I see no raised hands, Mr. Chairman. We do have someone from the public and nothing in the chat, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Trail said nothing from the public, so we don't need to do public portion of this. Okay, Mr. Palmer. I know this is very difficult for you not being able to talk directly to us but I think you've heard what we've been saying. And it appears that we'd like a couple of members have mentioned a window on the right-hand side. Would that be a possibility for you to think about putting a window on the right-hand side.

Everyone sees his response. Okay. We have any other questions for Mr. Palmer. Okay. I'm going to return it to the Board for deliberation. All right, Board members, do we have any comments or thoughts on this that have not been brought up, or are there any motions that you would like to make.

Ms. Walker said I do think that opening up this porch is a huge improvement, and so thank you, Mr. Palmer for that. I would move that we approve this with the stipulation that the window be replaced on the right side. Reinstalled is probably a better word.

Mr. Trail said okay.

Mr. Steinecke said Melissa, if I can ask in your motion, if that window is intended to match the existing windows on the remaining historic portion of the house.

Ms. Walker said yes. I would amend my motion to indicate that.

Ms. Walker moved to approve and was seconded by Mr. Steinecke. The motion was approved by a vote of 7 to 0.

Mr. Trail said Mr. Palmer, your application is approved. We just added one window there on the right-hand side and make it look more like the original. So, we appreciate you coming before the Board. Thank you, sir.

Okay. The next thing on our agenda is a staff- approved minor works since the May 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. There were three of them. One of them was on Kingston Street in Beaumont, and two are on W. Hampton Avenue. Do we have any questions about these at all. Hearing none, we will move forward.

### **Staff Updates:**

We're going to have one vacancy effective June 30th. That will be myself. There are also two Board member positions that first terms are up at the end of June. And they can apply, if they have not already, for a second term by the Mayor and Council, and that's Kathleen Crowley and Josh Lonon.

Anyway, at this time, what we're going to need to do, you're going to have to select a new Board Chair, because I will not be here next month. So, I'm going to abstain from the nomination and I also will not vote in this, since I'm not going to be here forward. I'll throw it out to you, though, if you have any nominations for the new Chair.

Mr. Lonon nominated Brad Steinecke and was seconded by Ms. Walker. The Motion was approved by the vote of 6 to 0.

Mr. Steinecke said thanks. Ray, I hope to serve this Board as well as you have. You've done excellent work for us and for the Historic Preservation of Spartanburg.

Mr. Trail said I appreciate that, Brad, I really do. But now that you're the new chair, we need a new Vice Chair. Do I hear nominations for Vice-Chair?

Mr. Steinecke nominate Melissa and was seconded by Ms. Rodrick. The Motion was approved by the vote of 6 to 0.

Mr. Trail said its unanimous. Congratulations, Melissa.

Ms. Walker said thank you.

Mr. Trail said so, we have a new Chair and a new Vice Chair. There are no new updates from ACOG on the Continuing Ed Training and the new Board member training.

Mr. Lonon said Ray, I'm sorry. I don't know if it's the place or not, but I was asked to bring something up at the meeting today. So, I was asked to check in on the status of the 550 Pinckney Court property. I think the vinyl windows on that were supposed to be replaced. So, the Pinckney Courtly property, the windows were supposed to be replaced. I think it's 550 Pinckney, and I'm told there hasn't been any progress on that.

Mr. Trail said okay.

Mr. Lonon asked Martin do you know the latest.

Mr. Livingston said we reported at the last Board meeting, Brad and Ray Trail, City Attorney and myself had met with the property owners in May to take a look at the windows and to clarify the Boards requirements. And so, one of the issues we're still trying to resolve is the picture window, so they have provided us with some samples. The windows on both sides of the structure have been approved, but the picture window itself, we still don't have any clarification on that, so we're still waiting for more information. The owners have moved forward to try to get the windows on the side of the home replaced with the true dived-light, and then they're trying to work on the picture window. They're trying to get that resolved within the next 30 days.

Mr. Lonon said thank you, Martin.

Mr. Trail said I'll just add one small thing to that. Now she had mentioned to us what type of window she was wanting to put in there, and it sounded like it would certainly meet the guidelines. But she would need to come back to the board, even though we discussed it. She would need to come back to the board and submit an application for that one window. The owner is going to have to bring the approval of the picture window back before the board and submit what type of window that she's wanting to put there. And it has to be approved by the board,

because it's never been approved. At least that's my understanding. Anybody got any other comments. Brad, is that the way you saw it as well?

Mr. Steinecke said I did see it that way, if there were to be a change made, only questions that lingers in my mind is if she submitted something that matched in profile and material to what had been there before she changed it out first place, if that could be a minor work thing. But we did ask her to come back before the board, and she was made aware of that so I would expect that.

Mr. Brown said I'd like to speak up for a second. I was uncharacteristically demanding of graphics in that exchange, because I felt like we could not talk about approving something that we couldn't look at it. I got the sense from the way the conversation was going that she had tried, but not very a hard, to have a graphic for us to look at and was frustrated that we weren't willing to essentially consider this without looking at graphics. Does anybody else remember that exchange.

Mr. Trail said I believe that's correct.

Mr. Steinecke said that rings as true to me and given the repeated miscommunication that was happening with this applicant, it seems only fair to have absolute clarity in this matter.

Ms. Reid said what's the standing of the house. Is it under new ownership at this point., or does she still own it. Is this holding up the transfer of the property?

Mr. Livingston said it is. This is holding up the transfer of the property.

Ms. Reid said so the new owners can't. Okay, so she's got to address it before it can change ownership.

Mr. Livingston said the new buyers are not willing to purchase the property because of this Lis pended that was filed on the property. The Lis Pendens makes the existing property owner responsible for the windows. And so, if the new buyer purchases the property the new buyer becomes responsible for those windows.

Ms. Reid said I understand

Mr. Steinecke asked if she still pursuing the appeal process. Is that part of what the hang up.

Mr. Livingston said no. She's trying to comply with the Board requirements.

Mr. Trail asked has she submitted an application.

Mr. Livingston said no, we don't have an application yet.

Mr. Trail said all right.

Mr. Livingston said I think she's still trying to make sure she's got the windows right. Still at that point, trying to make sure that the windows she's submitting for that picture window is correct.

Ms. Walker said and the conversation about her coming back to the Board was, I believe, reflected in the minutes that we approved.

Mr. Livingston said it was in the minutes. That's correct.

Mr. Trail asked any other business we need to address.

Mr. Steinecke said if I could have one other item. If my fellow members are amendable to it, I'd like to suggest that our July meeting be in person, whether that's in the Council Chamber or at C.C. Woodson or any other city facility, if you all are willing.

Mr. Brown said I'm willing, because I want to meet some of you guys face to face. I've been on this Board for almost a year, and I only know Anne.

Ms. Rodrick said and I only know ken. Well, I know Melissa, too.

Mr. Trail said it's a whole lot easier to conduct a meeting in person than on a zoom call. You all have seen all the things that can go wrong, even with our applicants or storms and all kinds of things.

Mr. Brown said I'm totally on board for getting together face to face. It's high time.

Mr. Trail said yeah, I would highly recommend you all do that.

Mr. Lonon said I'm hesitant to speak up because this might be my last Board meeting. I'm actually seeing if I can get on the planning commission so I can work on the, whatever, the plan that's coming up. It's actually a contested seat, which is crazy. Not crazy, good thing, but anyway, were I to continue on the HARB or asked to be on the HARB, I would feel strongly otherwise. I think that not only do these virtual meetings accommodate us, I think they also accommodate the applicants.

I think there's some things that we can do to make it go more smoothly, and we should talk about that. But I think it's a huge timesaver. And I can tell you that I have staff at my office that are still concerned about the virus and are still pushing for masks in the office, as much as some of us might think it's over. I mean, even in my mind, I'm double vaccinated, it seems like it's all over for me, it's not all over for everybody. I'll just throw that out there. My suggestion would be that we wait several more meetings before making that decision.

Mr. Steinecke said I wonder if it's possible, if there can continue to be a recording or a hybrid model where there's the ability for someone to dial in and speak to us remotely. I have not attended any other City Board meetings, except for main Council meetings. There's a filming

that's done, but I don't think it's set up to allow folks to make a public comment from that. Martin, do you have any awareness of other Boards that have a hybrid approach.

Mr. Livingston said no, I'm not aware of other boards that use a hybrid approach. But the United Way has started an approach where they're having actually in-person and online meetings, which allows you to see everyone in the room, and then still be able to hear everyone. But I understand it is extremely complicated. I think other cities have been using a hybrid model and have found ways to use a hybrid model. It's been extremely expensive from what I understand.

Mr. Brown said as much as I'd like to meet all you guys face to face. I'm totally on board with whatever our consensus may be.

Mr. Lonon said yeah. I am, too, of course. I just wanted to throw that out there. Martin, what are the other boards doing.

Mr. Livingston said so there are total of four planning Boards. The Design Review Board is still meeting online. They have not met the last two meetings. The HARB has had more business to deal with over the last two meetings. The Board of Zoning Appeals is meeting in person, and has been meeting in person since, I want to say, November or December. The Planning Commission has been meeting online and still meets online. They have not met the last two meetings. I am sure both of them will have a conversation about whether to meet in person or not in July. So only one of the four boards right now is meeting in person.

Mr. Steinecke asked do they meet at C.C. Woodson.

Mr. Livingston said they meet at the City Hall.

Mr. Steinecke said okay.

Julie Roland: C.C. Woodson, do not meet there, you all, but the only meeting that's good from there is council and they have to pay a lot of money to get the sound good and right. We've done BZA there and it was awful, awful, awful.

Mr. Lonon said the issue, I think, part of the issues, too, as uncommon as it might be, not everyone can get vaccinated. There are people who have certain health conditions that don't allow them to get vaccinated. I don't know how rare that is. But I know that's something that's been discussed in my office. I don't know if there's anyone in my office in that situation because of HIPAA rules or whatever, but it certainly been thrown out there as a reason why we continue with our protocols. But I'm like Ken, whatever y'all are comfortable with, I'm fine with. I'm just throwing that out there for consideration.

Mr. Steinecke said my feeling has been that sometimes the conversations don't happen as fully this way as they do in person, that there might be information that we're missing out on or difficult to pull out. So really, I would prefer to go that way if we can. In the case of an applicant not feeling comfortable coming in or having a reason that Council Chambers wouldn't work for them, I wonder if there is some combination that we could do either for the meeting to take place

online, or if there's some technological approach that would allow them to just at least speak to us while we meet in person.

Ms. Walker said I would just add that I am willing to go with the consensus. I do think we have better conversations when we meet in person, but I also, I mean, aside from the people who aren't vaccinated and cannot get vaccinated, I think it possible we have to be flexible. Because in the fall, we could have another surge among unvaccinated people that might make it wise to go on zoom again.

Ms. Reid said yeah. I think that a more flexible model where we could go back to in person. It would be good to know what other boards are doing, and I think there's an accessibility issue. A lot of people phoned into these zoom meeting from their phones, from work sites and things like that. And so, I do think that there's a wonderful accessibility factor. And I don't think that's necessarily a point for staying on zoom, but it does seem like the ability to zoom into this board is something that is good for the community and good for the oversight aspect of it. So, if we could maintain that with us all in one room or something like that, and then flex back to some zoom if we needed to. Hopefully not because of any other reason, but because of somebody needing us, too. That what would seem to be the best for me. Besides just propping a computer in front of the City Council Chamber, which sounds crazy, but I mean, it also doesn't sound like the worst thing, if they could hear us.

Ms. Walker said actually, Meg, I've been on some meetings at Spartanburg Regionals where that is exactly what we did. We had four people in the room. Regional uses Microsoft teams instead of zoom. There were people who called in, and then there were the rest of us who were in the room and it worked.

Julie Roland: when they did the meeting in Council Chambers, BZA, both meetings went fine in there and everybody wore masks. But everybody seemed to be fine in there, but I would not do it at C.C. Woodson. You have to pass the microphone from one person to the next person. Nobody can hear in that room. Council, it's different. But I was told they pay out the rear to have the extra speaker accommodation and everything they've be got in there, and it wouldn't be done for other boards.

Mr. Lonon said definitely don't want to meet in person if we're required to have a mask. I don't think we'll communicate well at all with masks on there.

Julie Roland: said well I mean plus you're speaking at the podium.

Mr. Steinecke said there have been previous meetings that we've had on zoom in which the public participation has been way higher than I've seen just about at any other in person meeting. It'd be a shame to lose that. I think the idea, yeah, a laptop in the room somewhere that can accommodate those folks this is the better venue for them that'd make a lot sense to me. Well, Marin, if this is giving you any clarity about the opinion of us, maybe if you have a suggestion for us before our next meeting or before public notice has to go out for the next meeting, maybe we could figure that out by email.

Ms. Walker said or maybe we give Martin a little more time to investigate how that might work.

Mr. Steinecke said yeah, let's do that.

Mr. Brown said he doesn't have enough to do anyway, right.

Mr. Livingston said I agree. Let's shoot for August. Let me do some research. I think the city leadership is going to tell staff that the Board can do whatever you guys want to do. But let me check with the City Manager and find out what he recommends. I'm hoping by August, if we are able to meet in person, that we meet at the Council Chambers. Regarding having folks online, we will have to try to figure out what that looks like and how we can have both online and in person discussions.

Mr. Trail said okay. Before we adjourn, I just want to let everybody know how much I've enjoyed being part of the Board. Many thanks to Julie Roland and Martin Livingston for all their help from the city, and for each of you Board members. You all have been wonderful. And it was a pleasure to be on the Board with you and I wish you all the luck in the future. So, I'm leaving all in good hands.

There being no other business the meeting is adjourned

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "B. Steinecke", written in black ink.

Brad Steinecke, Chair

Minutes edited by Tia C. Beatty and Julie Roland