



CITY OF CHARLESTON DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

PUBLIC COMMENT FEBRUARY 6, 2023

A meeting of the Design Review Board (DRB) will be held on **Monday, February 6, 2023** at **4:30 p.m.** in the **Public Meeting Room, First Floor, 2 George Street.**

The following written comments will be provided to the board members on the deadline date and also be acknowledged into the record and summarized. Application information will be available at www.charleston-sc.gov/drb in advance of the meeting. Please check the website on the meeting date to view any withdrawn or deferred agenda items.

For additional information, please contact:

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, PRESERVATION & SUSTAINABILITY
2 George Street, Suite 3100, Charleston, SC 29401 | 843-724-3781

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB)
Public Comments | February 6, 2023 Meeting

First Name	Last Name	Address	Submitted Comment	Date/ Time Submitted
Agenda Item 1: 1731 Savannah Hwy.				
Noah	Sanderson	Wappoo Road Charleston, SC 29407	Please do not tear down this very historic old stone house, all the other ones have already been demolished and this is a small piece of history still standing along the sea of car dealerships in the area.	Feb 1 2023 4:16PM
Sallie	Bendt	360 Huntley Drive, Stono Park	West Ashley is one of the forgotten areas of the City of Charleston. Formerly Saint Andrews Parish, West Ashley struggles with maintaining community because of the commercialization of many areas, specifically Savannah Highway. Lack of concern of the value of the area has already destroyed many of the older buildings that were homes to families of the neighborhood. Can we at least preserve what's remaining?	Feb 1 2023 7:26PM
Jacquelyn Dianne	Wieland	538 Braxton Avenue, Charleston, SC 29407	I was born in Charleston and raised in West Ashley on Braxton Avenue. There is history of the Stono Park neighborhood and I would like to see the Stone House on Savannah Highway preserved as historic due to its role in developing the subdivision in which I was raised. So much has changed in West Ashley. Savannah Highway is now a stretch of commercial businesses and car dealerships, but behind those businesses are neighborhoods that created and maintain, to this day, neighborhoods that helped created West Ashley, the birthplace of the city of Charleston. We do not need another commercially developed building on 17.	Feb 1 2023 7:54AM
Camille	Hamilton	2331 Eades lane Charleston	Please save our west Ashley history. We have seen how saving the cavalero dinner theatre has helped to keep our town grounded on its past. Please do not destruction of this beautiful stone building that marks the stono park area.	Feb 1 2023 9:23AM

Carlton	Swift	1631 Pinckney Park Dr.	<p>On behalf of the Dupont Station Neighborhood Association, we ask that the application for demolition of the historic house at 1731 Savannah Highway be denied. We don't want to see our area continue to lose its history and charm. In recent memory, we've lost the adjacent stone house, one stone entrance pillar to the Stono Park neighborhood, and the train depot at the corner of Wappoo and Savannah Highway. One by one, we continue to lose the historic structures that tell the history and the story of West Ashley. The Stono Park neighborhood, which 1731 Savannah Highway and its demolished neighbor were specifically built to promote, was initially founded in the late 1930s. I am frustrated that West Ashley continues to be held to a different preservation standard than other areas of Charleston. The applicant's argument that the stonework of the house disqualifies it as a contributing structure is disingenuous. As mentioned previously, the demolished house next-door was another stone structure built at the same time with the same stonework. It was demolished in 2004. In fact, its demolition directly led to the Design Review Board having purview over demolishing structures over 50 years of age. A small retaining wall, as well as part of the signpost at the front of the adjacent property of the demolished structure appears to be made of stonework from the demolished house. Additionally, there are structures in the nearby subdivisions which feature similar stonework listed below: Houses: 421 Oak Street (Stono Park) - Built 1964 62 Indigo Point Drive (Indigo Point) - Built in 1992 Other structures: Two stone structures were constructed to mark the entrance of Stono Park. We believe they date back to the early days of the neighborhood, and we have been told the stone on these signs is from the same source in Hendersonville, NC used in the structure at 1731 Savannah Highway, as well as its demolished neighbor. (Continued below)</p>	Feb 1 2023 10:36AM
Carlton	Swift	1631 Pinckney Park Dr.	<p>In 2011, the small stone structure on the east corner of Braxton and Savannah Highway was demolished by a car. The remaining structure at the west corner of the same intersection still stands. The SCDOT has objected to allowing the eastern stone structure to be rebuilt. We have also identified a couple of similar stone structures elsewhere in the neighborhood. These stone structures are on either side of their respective driveways: 300 Betsy Rd (Harrison Acres) - House built in 1900. 301 Susan Dr (Harrison Acres) - House built in 1962. 2 Lord Calvert Dr (Harrison Acres). The remaining stone house and the remaining stone pillar along Savannah Highway give the corridor and our neighborhoods some charm. They tell our history and the story of our neighborhoods. We've already lost one sign and one house. Neither of these are likely to be restored. On behalf of the 17 neighborhoods in the Dupont Station Neighborhood Coalition, as well as the residents of Stono Park, we strongly urge you to help us preserve these historic structures so that they may continue to tell our story. Please deny the demolition request for 1731 Savannah Highway. —Carlton Swift President, Dupont Station Neighborhood Coalition. —Meredith Demetre Vice President, Dupont Station Neighborhood Coalition. —Andy Holsomback Secretary, Dupont Station Neighborhood Coalition.</p>	Feb 1 2023 10:36AM

Zach	Liollio	421 Oak St.	This building is a unique piece of West Ashley's shrinking historical landscape. The sister house at 1739 Savannah Hwy. has already been demolished, which leaves this one as the last "stone house" example. Savannah Highway is a prominent thoroughfare--the lifeblood of the bordering neighborhoods--and should preserve the character of prewar West Ashley development which has recently become so desirable for homebuyers.	Feb 1 2023 11:54PM
Andy	Holsomback	325 Swift Ave	This city clutches its pearls when the dashing thought of changing or removing anything historical on the peninsula, but has no qualms about removing or destroying what's left of any historical charm of West Ashley. That house is a reminder of the beginnings of our community and worthy of more than a parking lot for a car dealership.	Jan 31 2023 7:58PM
Catherine	Sobieszczyk	367 Huntley Dr. Charleston, SC 29407	Knocking down this historic stone home would be a tragedy, not only for the neighborhood, but for the memory of this neighborhood's founder. My husband, Troy Sobieszczyk, is Randolph Harrison's great grandson and we currently live in Harrison Acres, across the street from where Opal Deason (his daughter) lived for many many years. We love this stone that was originally brought in from Hendersonville, NC and the labor and love that went into its construction is a rare testament to the people who helped build this area up. Destroying it would be dishonorable and disgraceful. It was built in the 1940s and is one of the oldest homes in the area. Preserving it would be paramount and a true reflection of the importance that Charleston places on history. It doesn't apply only to downtown. We should cherish history this side of the river, as well. If we continue to destroy homes like this in this town, we will set a precedent that signals we care nothing about our founders, our history, and only want cookie cutter new homes that won't last through what this has. Please reconsider keeping it- I'm sure we can arrange fundraising to fix it up. Our family would be honored to help.	Jan 31 2023 8:08PM
Carrie	Dean	322 Jean St 29407	Tearing down this stone home would be devastating to what history remains in this part of west Ashley. In a city that values history, I would ask you to preserve this piece of it.	Jan 31 2023 8:32PM
Erica	Schuler	334 Susan Drive 29407	Opposed to the demolition of the historic old Stonehouse	Feb 2 2023 6:03PM
Colleen	Condon	1705 W Sandcroft Dr 29407	Keep it!!! Allow modifications but it is historic and should not be torn down.	Feb 3 2023 8:39AM

Agenda Item 2: River Rd. (near Swygert Blvd.)

No comments submitted

Agenda Item 3: 3030 Maybank Hwy.

No comments submitted

Agenda Item 4: 2280 Henry Tecklenberg Dr.

Michael	Tuohy	2326 Watchtower Ln	CONCERNS: 1). Site Maps omit or do not show Marshside Towns community and it's proximity to the proposed new development. 2). Request Environmental Impact Study 3). Building next to Marsh land and conservation area. 4). Request Traffic Impact study. 5). Case study of other LIHTC and impacts of property values to neighbor communities.	Feb 2 2023 6:40PM
JENNIFER	FISCHER	2242 Henry Tecklenburg Dr	I am concerned that building low income housing so close to my property will decrease the value of my property. As well as potentially inviting crime and a general lack if care and pride to a community that has thus far been family friendly and well maintained. In addition, building a multi story building so close to us will increase the flood risk of my personal property as well as our entire neighborhood.	Feb 3 2023 9:21AM
Carol	Skenes	2222 Henry Tecklenburg Dr	I am a resident of Henry Tecklenburg Dr and do not support this housing proposal at it's proposed location. Given the number of people who travel to work at medical offices on Henry Tecklenburg, we're already experiencing a shortage of parking for some of the smaller facilities. Just look at the Google maps images surrounding the proposed site or drive along it during the day. Where would there be space to fit an additional housing unit's cars, on top of the displaced cars of the patients and staff of the medical complex? Seems to me like a better location would be further up Henry Tecklenburg, closer to Costco, where the location would not be directly across from an Emergency Room and where there's more space for additional parking. Why attempt to cram in housing on a full and busy portion of the road? This would also exacerbate the traffic jam that occurs at Henry Tecklenburg and Magwood every afternoon, because there'd be an additional housing unit located essentially right at that intersection, adding yet another place to turn into or out of it. It's not a smart location. I also do not support this proposal because I have safety concerns regarding the addition of public housing out this specific portion of the road, as residents here consistently interact with several people experiencing homelessness or asking for money along Henry Tecklenburg and at the Magwood intersection. The addition of public housing would change the dynamics of the neighborhood noticeably and I would question how safe the neighborhood would feel if we were to start to attract additional homeless members of our community.	Feb 3 2023 9:29AM

Marshside Towns	Home Owners	2310 Watchtower Lane	<p>On behalf of the Marshside Towns at Carolina Bay Master Planned Development Community Home Owners Association within Henry Tecklenburg Drive, we oppose this proposal to amend the zoning within our community and expect that you will not approve this application. While we respect the premise and the efforts of research, we expect that you will agree that this should not be supported. We were explained by the Builder and the Seller of the extensive research for the development of Henry Tecklenburg Dr and the reasoning for Zoning within. We were informed that due to the environmental studies results, that the builder was able to narrowly engineer our residents homes to mitigate the severe flood risk of the Marshland adjacent to Henry Tecklenburg Dr. and that the area had been zoned for medical parks in the surrounding areas intentionally because of this. In most of this specific proposal, it was hard to notice that our master planned community home owners had even been considered. Additionally, it is unreasonable to expect that any traffic study could accurately project the further degradation of travel within a busy road that includes Emergency and Medical Services for the community, a future planned development at the intersections of Savage Rd and Henry Tecklenburg Dr by Dominion Energy to result in a State Headquarters for Heavy Duty Service Vehicles and Office buildings, and one that expects to have construction road closings and detours due to surrounding roadways planned expansions. Traffic within this important community roadway has continued to get more severe and so have the traffic accident frequency and severity in the past 36 months. We feel that this project would be best served in another location to mitigate and avoid these concerns. Furthermore, our residents currently are seeing increases in vagrant travelers that appear to homeless with reports of trash, vandalism, begging, and crime rising within the roadway and we expect this is an additional challenge this development can avoid by choosing a different location. In summary, this is a conservation area that provides environmental stability for a busy roadway that supports local travel, emergency and medical solutions, as well a quality of life for current residents and all this can be prevented from changing by opposing this application. We expect you to do the right thing for all the parties involved and for the future of the community and environment. Thank you.</p>	Feb 3 2023 11:29AM
Linda	Reardon	2339 Watchtower Ln, Charleston, SC 29414	<p>I am vehemently opposed to this project as presented. The addition of a very large building and 109 parking spaces with its vast concrete to this little oasis of wetland sounds like a nightmare to me. 1. Intersection at Magwood and Tecklenburg is subject to extreme congestion at times already. There is often an overflow of parked vehicles around the Dermatology Clinic in the area. All worrisome for emergency vehicles accessing the Hospital. 2. Property values may be affected and not in a good way. It appears wetlands (even if not officially designated as such?) will be adversely impacted. All in all a very sad idea. Please, please deny this one.</p>	Feb 3 2023 11:46AM

Austin	Doyle	2242 Henry Tecklenburg Drive 29414	<p>This would be a mistake. To even consider providing Affordable Housing in a conservation Marsh area in general is disappointing. This area has been deemed to be severe flood zone AE and you would potentially environmentally risk all the current homes and business of the area that used studies to validate their designs and elevations. The traffic is already extreme with a busy connected road within the area, as well as it is a emergency hospital artery with several medical businesses in the area as well as future Civil Service Office Buildings and Electrical Trucks for Dominion Energy expected to start construction on the road in the near future. Combine this with the expected road closures and detours due to other construction and development, and it would seem imprudent to introduce a housing solution like this in this location. We currently are working with local authorities on issues such as increased and more severe traffic accidents, local homeless citizens, increased trash, begging, and crime and fear that this would be exacerbated by accepting this proposal as these potential residents may be ill-equipped to experience challenges such as this. We were solicited to live here by a Builder who conveyed the intentional zoning of this road and area were in synergy with the community development goals and that it would not be subject to change. I voted for you all and hope that you can agree that this great idea of affordable housing is best serving to their potential customers by being located in a different location. Please vote to oppose this application.</p>	Feb 3 2023 11:47AM
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From: [Charlie Smith](#)
To: [Meeks, David](#)
Subject: February 6, 2023 DRB Agenda: 1731 Savannah Highway: DRB2022-000131
Date: Thursday, January 26, 2023 7:18:14 PM

CAUTION: This email originated outside of the City of Charleston. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To: The Chairperson and Members of the Design Review Board
From: Charlie Smith

I wish to object to the request for demolition of the historic structure located at 1731 Savannah Highway. Virtually no effort at all has been made in this current request to address any of the specific concerns raised by the comments of the Board at its August 15, 2022 meeting when this request was first made. Failure to respond directly to the comments of the Board at that meeting is not respectful of the public process and should not be rewarded.

The applicant stated in his response to Part 7 of the Motion and Comments from the DRB meeting of August 15, 2022 *"It should be noted that 1731 Savannah Highway is not in the Savannah Highway Overlay Zone. Therefore it can be assume[d] that it was not a high priority to preserve residential structures in this area."* Mr. Ramos is badly mistaken in this assumption.

1731 Savannah Highway is the very building whose importance to our community nineteen years ago resulted in the first expansion of demolition protections for non-peninsula buildings 50 years or older in our suburban commercial corridors (see 2004 Post and Courier article below). Former Councilmembers W. L. Stephenson and Anne Frances Bleecker understood what "death by a thousand paper cuts" would do to preservation efforts outside the peninsula. We have them to thank for our ability to now protect at least some of these important pieces of West Ashley history. 1731 Savannah Highway deserved that protection nineteen years ago and it still deserves it today.

Mr. Ramos is a talented professional who has demonstrated in downtown projects like 48 Bogard Street that he understands how to create contemporary adaptive additions that respect the constraints of mid-century architecture. We would appreciate his thoughtful design considerations on this project.

West Ashley deserves the solutions of talented professionals when our historic structures are threatened. Unfortunately we do not always receive the benefit of those solutions because only our commercial corridors are under the jurisdiction of the DRB.

I do not object to the removal of non-historic additions to this property that are not 50 years or older. I do however ask that the Board deny this request for demolition and

require that the applicant incorporate the historic core of the building into any future development. A vote to allow the demolition of this structure would undermine seven years of preservation efforts by the West Ashley Revitalization Commission and nineteen years of DRB preservation advocacy in our community. As was stated in Comment 6 of the Motion and Comments from the DRB meeting of August 15, 2022 "Although the building has defects it is not beyond repair."

Thank you for your continued advocacy of preservation and good design in our community.

Charlie Smith

333 Wappoo Road
Charleston, SC 29407
843-813-0352

Demolition evaluations may extend to suburbs

March 14, 2004 | Post and Courier, The (Charleston, SC)

Author/Byline: JASON HARDIN; Of The Post and Courier Staff | Page: B1 | Section: LOCAL / STATE

Photo: A small stone house similar to the one on the left once existed where the new Luxury Cars of Charleston now stands along **Savannah** Highway near Wappoo Road.

Rule would affect buildings over 50

The demise of a small stone house in the heart of strip-mall suburbia might lead to one of the broadest expansions of Charleston's preservation powers since the creation of the Board of Architectural Review decades ago.

The change could bring a huge array of buildings on main suburban roads, from generic fast-food franchises to older homes to quirky local landmarks, into the city's jurisdiction.

The recent demolition of the house, which sat at the edge of Savannah Highway's "Auto Mile," did not create the kind of public fuss that the loss of landmarks generated in the past. But it did not go unnoticed either.

Former City Councilman W.L. Stephens, who lives in one of the neighborhoods that sit between the highway and the Stono River, was dismayed by the loss of the house, which he called a kind of landmark.

Joining him was current Councilwoman Anne Frances Bleecker, who also lives in the area.

Both agreed that the house had provided a touch of character to the road and that it was an unfortunate loss.

"You can't get it back. It's gone," Bleecker said. "People who have lived in these neighborhoods along Savannah Highway for a while, it raised their eyebrows."

After she and Stephens talked, Bleecker began to push for expanding the city's powers to review demolitions. The city has long had that power over older buildings on the peninsula but not over those in the suburbs that ring the city.

Now, the city is considering giving the city's Commercial Corridor Design Review Board - the suburban equivalent of the BAR for new construction - the ability to allow or deny demolitions of buildings more than 50 years old. The board's authority would be limited to main suburban roads such as Savannah Highway, Folly Road and Clements Ferry Road, not smaller neighborhood streets. Still, the change would vastly enlarge the area where older buildings are protected.

The move is being hailed by preservationists, who argue that Charleston's historic downtown does not have a monopoly on buildings worth sparing from the wrecking ball.

A number of suburban neighborhoods are at or nearing the 50-year mark, said Robert Gurley of the Preservation Society of Charleston. Longtime residents grow attached to the buildings that they pass every day on their way to school and work and that eventually become landmarks, he said.

"There is an emotional attachment to these buildings," Gurley said. "They don't have to be 150 or 200 years old to be worth saving."

Some, however, say the change would go too far.

Tommy Bessinger Jr. of Bessinger's Barbecue on Savannah Highway said the city would be stepping on the rights of property owners.

"I just don't like them telling us what we have to do," he said.

There are precedents for preserving older suburban buildings. A few years ago, public affection for the old Cavallaro restaurant played a role in persuading the Rick Hendrick auto dealership to save and reuse the building.

"People, I think, are becoming more proactive and more sensitive to the potential loss that you suffer when these buildings disappear," Gurley said. "They can be powerful emotional anchors in people's lives."

Examples of older structures worth saving include the buildings in the Avondale Point commercial area and homes and churches on Ashley River Road, said Yvonne Fortenberry, head of the city's design, development and preservation department.

Conceivably, the change could protect examples of the kinds of buildings - fast-food franchises, "big-box" retail stores - that many say have made the suburbs an architectural wasteland. Although most of those buildings are razed before their 50th birthday, it could be that some might be deemed worth saving in the future, Gurley said.

"It's quite possible," he said. "It depends on the importance the building has in the emotional memory of the community."

Others are more skeptical that, say, a McDonald's might someday be seen as worth saving.

"I don't think so," Stephens said. "It's a little bit temporary. It has no architectural value."

It's not clear how many buildings would immediately be affected by the change. Fortenberry said no survey has been done to identify the number of buildings older than 50 in the review board's territory.

"My gut feeling is it's not a tremendous number, but it might be a little more than you would think," she said.

Charleston City Council has given initial approval to an ordinance expanding the review board's power. The ordinance will go before the city's planning commission in April.

A similar ordinance a few months ago gave the board demolition review over a small part of West Ashley close to downtown. Backers hope to extend that throughout the city.

Stephens said buildings not protected can vanish quickly. That was the case with the stone house, which has since been replaced by an auto dealership.

"Now you see it, now you don't," he said.

PRESERVATION
ESTD SOCIETY 1920
of CHARLESTON

Position Statement
Design Review Board
February 6, 2023

Re: 1731 Savannah Highway

Dear Board Members:

In accordance with our previous comments, the Preservation Society urges study of preservation options for this historic structure. Research presented by local historian, Donna Jacobs, and reflected in the application materials exhibit significant associations between the house and development of the Stono Park subdivision in the 1930s. Given the building is one of the last remaining structures from this time period along this section of Savannah Highway, we feel its retention should be considered to speak to the previous residential character of the corridor. While we do not object to removal of later, non-historic alterations and additions, we encourage the applicant to preserve and incorporate the most historic portion of the building into future redevelopment plans to help showcase the evolution of the site and broader Savannah Highway context.

Sincerely,



Erin Minnigan
Director of Preservation & Planning