



**CITY OF FLORENCE PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
324 WEST EVANS STREET, FLORENCE, SC
TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2025 – 6:00 P.M.
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. Approval of Minutes** Regular meeting on March 11, 2025
- IV. Matter in Position for Action**
PC-2025-15 Request to annex and zone NC-6.3 a parcel along Toscana Drive, identified as a portion of Florence County Tax Map Number 00100-01-101.
- V. Public Hearing and Matter in Position for Action**
PC-2025-17 Request to rezone the parcel located at 1203 Sopkin Avenue from CA to NC-6.1, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90099-12-016.
- VI. Public Hearing and Matter in Position for Action**
PC-2025-18 Request to amend the *Unified Development Ordinance* regarding the preservation of cemeteries.
- VII. Adjournment** Next regular meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2025.

CITY OF FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA PLANNING COMMISSION

MARCH 11, 2025 MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Drew Chaplin, Betty Gregg, Charles Howard, Jerry Keith, Jr., Mark Lawhon, and Bryant Moses

MEMBERS ABSENT: Charlie Abbott, Shelanda Deas, and Xavier Sams

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

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Drew Chaplin called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE: Chairman Chaplin asked Mr. Keith to provide the invocation. He then led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Chaplin asked Commissioners if any changes needed to be made to the February 11, 2025 meeting minutes. There being no changes or discussion, Mr. Keith moved to approve the minutes, Mr. Howard seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Bryant Moses arrived

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND MATTERS IN POSITION FOR ACTION:

PC-2025-12 Request to amend Section 1-2.8.6.A.6 of the *Unified Development Ordinance* regarding tower and antenna structures.

Chairman Chaplin read the introduction to PC-2025-12, then asked Mrs. Zlotnicki for the staff report as submitted to Planning Commission.

Dr. Lawhon asked if the code could be changed just for a specific site. Mrs. Zlotnicki said it made more sense to change it for all future proposals. Mr. Dudley added that this required a special exception permit from the Board of Zoning Appeals, and a variance is not an option on a per case basis. With new technology, it makes more sense to define from a fall zone standpoint, and the applicant will still need to go to the BZA for the special exception permit.

There being no further questions for staff, Chairman Chaplin opened the public hearing.

Chairman Chaplin welcomed attorney Sarah Sprull to speak on behalf of Duke regarding their application for replacing a tower at their facility on North Douglas Street.

Mr. Patrick Bernier with Duke spoke about how they are replacing towers all over the country and the amendment is to address future technology since these towers are expected to have a 50 year lifetime. The plan is to remove the existing tower and its guy wires.

Mr. Caleb Jergensen, the engineer, explained how fall zones work: the bottom members are oversized so that the critical stress points are higher up the tower, so that in case of failure, that's where the break would

happen, and it would fall from the middle or upper portion instead of tipping over. Chairman Chaplin asked if that had actually ever happened, and Mr. Jergensen said no. He asked if all the municipalities they'd dealt with had decreased the setbacks; Mr. Jergensen said they had. Ms. Sprull said there were no examples of the towers failing at the base.

Dr. Lawhon asked for clarification of the location of the proposed tower and its relationship to the nearest houses. It was pointed out that the specific request will be considered by the BZA later. This request is for the amendment to the UDO.

There being no one else to speak for or against the request, Chairman Chaplin closed the public hearing and called for discussion or a motion. Dr. Lawhon moved to approve the request as submitted; Ms. Gregg seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

PC-2025-13 Request to amend the Summersett Acres Planned Development District standards, specifically identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 00100-01-248.

Chairman Chaplin read the introduction to PC-2025-13, then asked Mrs. Zlotnicki for the staff report as submitted to Planning Commission.

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

There being no one to speak for or against the request, Chairman Chaplin closed the public hearing and called for discussion or a motion. Mr. Howard moved to approve the request as submitted; Dr. Lawhon seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

PC-2025-14 Request to annex and zone NC-6.2 the parcel located at 1006 West Marion Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90060-13-005.

Chairman Chaplin read the introduction to PC-2025-14, then asked Mrs. Zlotnicki for the staff report as submitted to Planning Commission.

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

Ms. Carol McClain, who owns the lot behind this one, asked how this would affect her property. Mrs. Zlotnicki said that she wouldn't be affected at all, that only the one property was applying to annex.

There being no one else to speak for or against the request, Chairman Chaplin closed the public hearing and called for discussion or a motion. Mr. Moses moved to approve the request as submitted; Dr. Lawhon seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

In the interest of time, Chairman Chaplin moved PC-2025-16 forward since he needs to recuse himself from the Villa Toscana case.

PC-2025-16 Request for sketch plan approval of the subdivision of lots along East Pine Street and South Gaillard Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Numbers 90103-08-011 and 90103-08-012.

Chairman Chaplin read the introduction to PC-2025-16, then asked Mrs. Zlotnicki for the staff report as submitted to Planning Commission.

There being no questions for staff and no public hearing required for a sketch plan, Chairman Chaplin called for discussion or a motion. Dr. Lawhon moved to approve the request as submitted; Mr. Keith seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

PC-2025-15 Request to annex and zone NC-6.3 a parcel along Toscana Drive, identified as a portion of Florence County Tax Map Number 00100-01-101.

Chairman Chaplin recused himself because he is involved in the real estate transaction. Vice-Chairman Howard read the introduction to PC-2025-15, then asked Mrs. Zlotnicki for the staff report as submitted to Planning Commission.

There being no questions for staff, Vice-Chairman Howard opened the public hearing.

Mr. Ken Wenzl, the president of the Villa Toscana Homeowners Association, spoke to express concerns with the proposal. They are worried about the number of units. He said the water pressure is already low coming into their neighborhood. He pointed out the bufferyard requirements when more intense housing is built adjacent to single family houses. He met with Louie Hopkins. The HOA has been maintaining the 900 feet of right of way along Toscana Drive for the last 20 years.

Vice-Chairman Howard asked Mrs. Zlotnicki about her meeting with Mr. Wenzl; she said the *Unified Development Ordinance* calls for a maximum of 26 units on this parcel based on its size, all parking would have to be onsite, and a buffer would be required between the two types of development.

Mr. Bob Lichman spoke up next. He said that the original intentions of the plat need to be maintained. He referenced case PC-2020-07. His main concern is about the entrance. He wants to know how access would be granted to the property since they need to stay with the original plat map and the existing brick wall has to be left intact. He expressed traffic concerns and discussed the need to maintain the character of the existing neighborhood.

Ms. Gloria Lussier, who also lives in Villa Toscana, spoke next. She explained that the townhouses in The Reserve are owner occupied. The homeowners are very concerned about the proposed townhomes being rentals, totally different from all the existing owner occupied structures. She feels this will devalue the homes in Villa Toscana because they are basically apartments. She pointed out that they had to install a buffer where it abuts Rutledge Manor, and nothing seems to be required of this proposed development which is a big step down in quality from their development.

Dr. Lawhon asked her what her understanding was of what could be built there now; she said she understands that anything can go there now, but few things would be worse than a bunch of rental units. She'd be happier with the strip mall expanding than adding apartments. The City will be responsible for protecting them.

Vice-Chairman Howard asked if anyone wanted to speak in favor of the request. Mr. Louie Hopkins said his original plan was to build 28 units, but he'll abide with the 26 units. He is willing to abide by the requirements of the UDO. Dr. Lawhon asked if he'd investigated what the county would let him build there; he said that he could build this project today, or even apartments if he wanted to, but he wants City services. Mr. Moses asked if he'd consider selling them, Mr. Hopkins said that was generally market driven. He said he did speak with Mr. Wenzl, and he thinks they've been maintaining a public right of way all this time, but he'd maintain the portion in front of his lot.

There being no one else to speak for or against the request, Vice-Chairman Howard closed the public hearing and called for discussion or a motion.

The Commissioners discussed the conundrum of building something appropriate there that would satisfy both the developer and the residents. The NC-6.3 does allow multi-family as well as townhomes.

Dr. Lawhon suggested that the HOA and the developer get together to see if they could work out an agreement that satisfied both sides.

Mr. Moses moved to defer the request to give the applicant and the homeowner's association time to discuss their concerns; Mr. Keith seconded, and the motion to defer passed unanimously (5-0), with Chairman Chaplin recused from the vote.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business, Chairman Chaplin called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Moses moved to adjourn; Dr. Lawhon seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Chairman Chaplin adjourned the meeting at 7:17 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,
Alane Zlotnicki, AICP
Senior Planner

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
STAFF REPORT TO THE
CITY OF FLORENCE PLANNING COMMISSION
APRIL 8, 2025**

AGENDA ITEM: PC-2025-15 Request to zone Neighborhood Conservation – 6.3 (NC-6.3), pending annexation, the lot located on Toscana Drive, identified as a portion of Florence County Tax Map Number 00100-01-101.

I. IDENTIFYING DATA:

Owner	Tax Map Number
Home Show Center Inc.	00100-01-101

II. CURRENT STATUS/PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

This issue is before the Planning Commission for recommendation of zoning designation to City Council. It was considered and a public hearing was held by the Planning Commission on March 11, 2025, at which time a decision was deferred due to concerns expressed by the Villa Toscana Home Owners Association.

III. GENERAL BACKGROUND DATA:

Current Zoning: Unzoned (Florence County)
Proposed Zoning: Neighborhood Conservation-6.3 (NC-6.3)
Current Use: Commercial and Vacant
Proposed Use: Townhouses

IV. POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- (1) The 4.65 acre commercial lot along Toscana Drive contains the Home Show Center, a two building strip mall with 13 tenant spaces. The request proposes dividing off the 1.467 acre portion that is undeveloped and adjacent to the Villa Toscana subdivision in order to annex it into the City and build townhouses, leaving the remaining 3.35 commercial acres in the County.
- (2) The proposed zoning, pending annexation, is Neighborhood Conservation-6.3 (NC-6.3). Uses permitted under the proposed zoning include single-family detached houses, townhouses, duplexes, multiplexes, and multi-family development. Each type of development has specific development standards laid out in the City of Florence *Unified Development Ordinance*.
- (3) The only uses that may be developed under the proposed zoning are those permitted in the NC-6.3 Neighborhood Conservation zoning district. The property and future development is subject to the City of Florence codes and regulations, including site development standards regarding bufferyards and landscaping.

- (4) Land use of the adjacent properties is single-family residential in the City, and commercial in the County.
- (5) Future Land Use of adjacent single-family properties is General Residential.
- (6) City water and sewer services are available.
- (7) City staff recommends the zoning designation due to the location of the lot as an infill parcel and the appropriateness of townhouses as a transition between the commercial development and single family development.

V. OPTIONS:

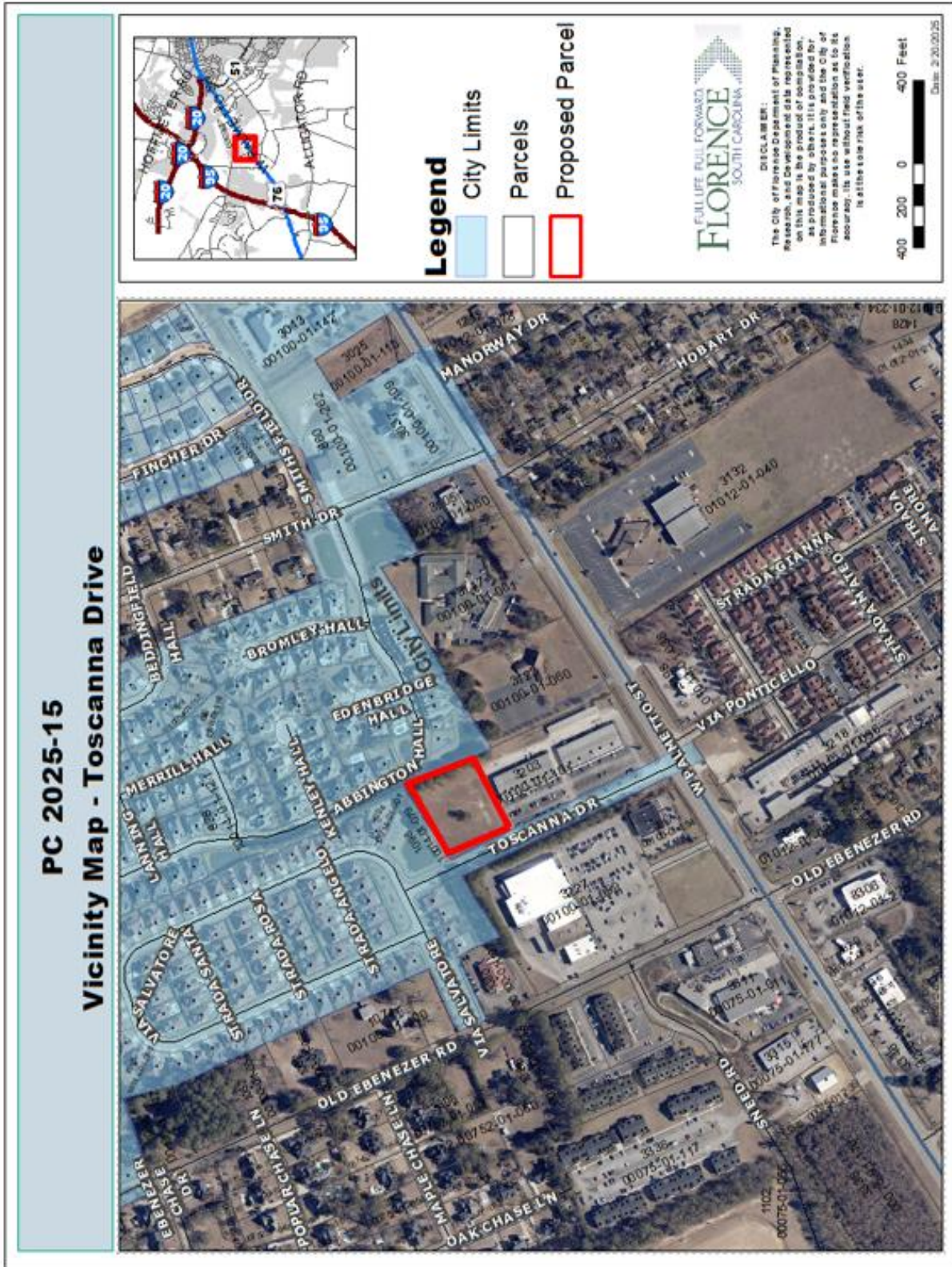
Planning Commission may:

- (1) Recommend approval of the request as presented based on the information submitted.
- (2) Defer the request should additional information be needed.
- (3) Suggest other alternatives.
- (4) Recommend denial of the request based on information submitted.

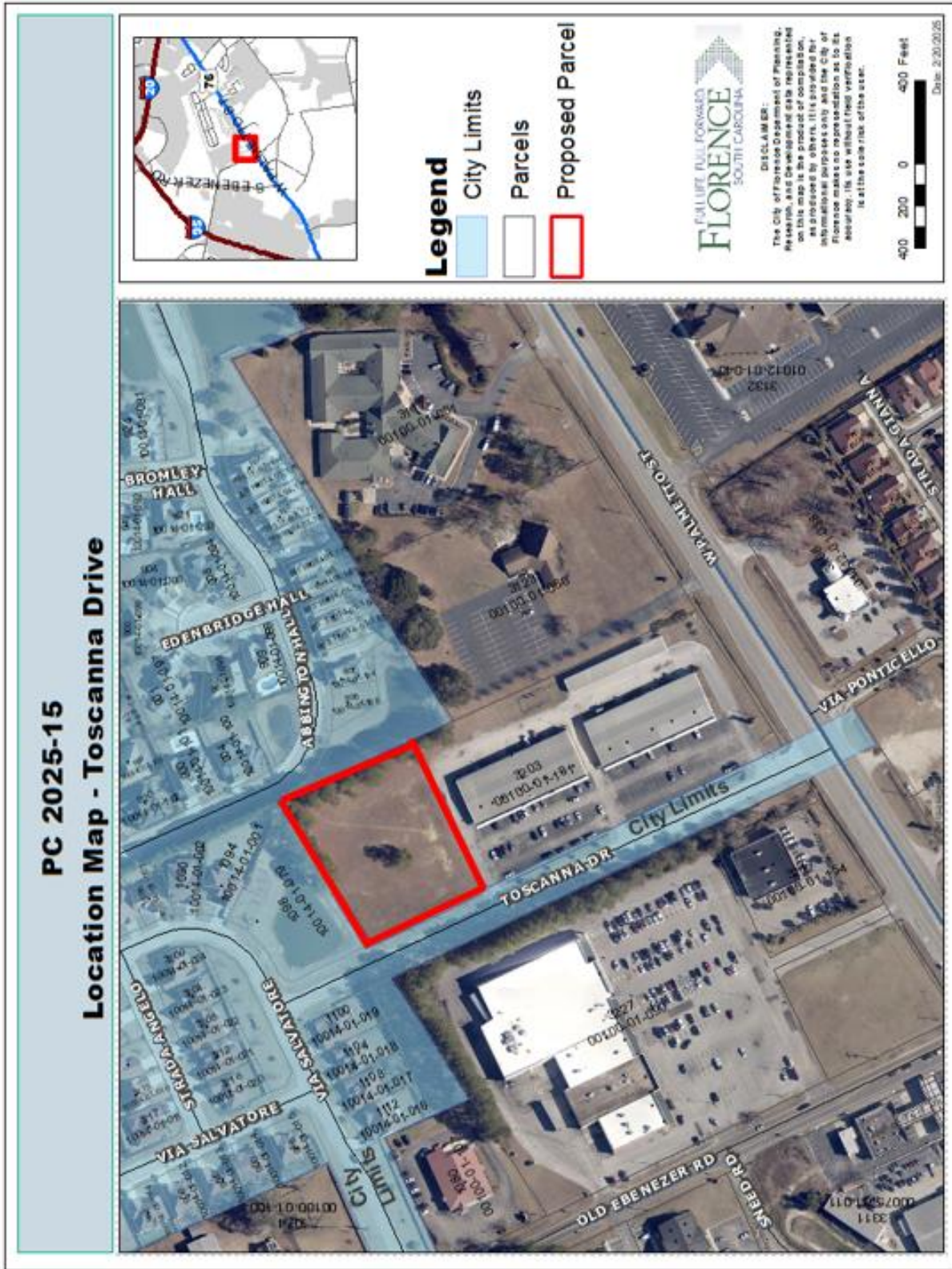
VI. ATTACHMENTS:

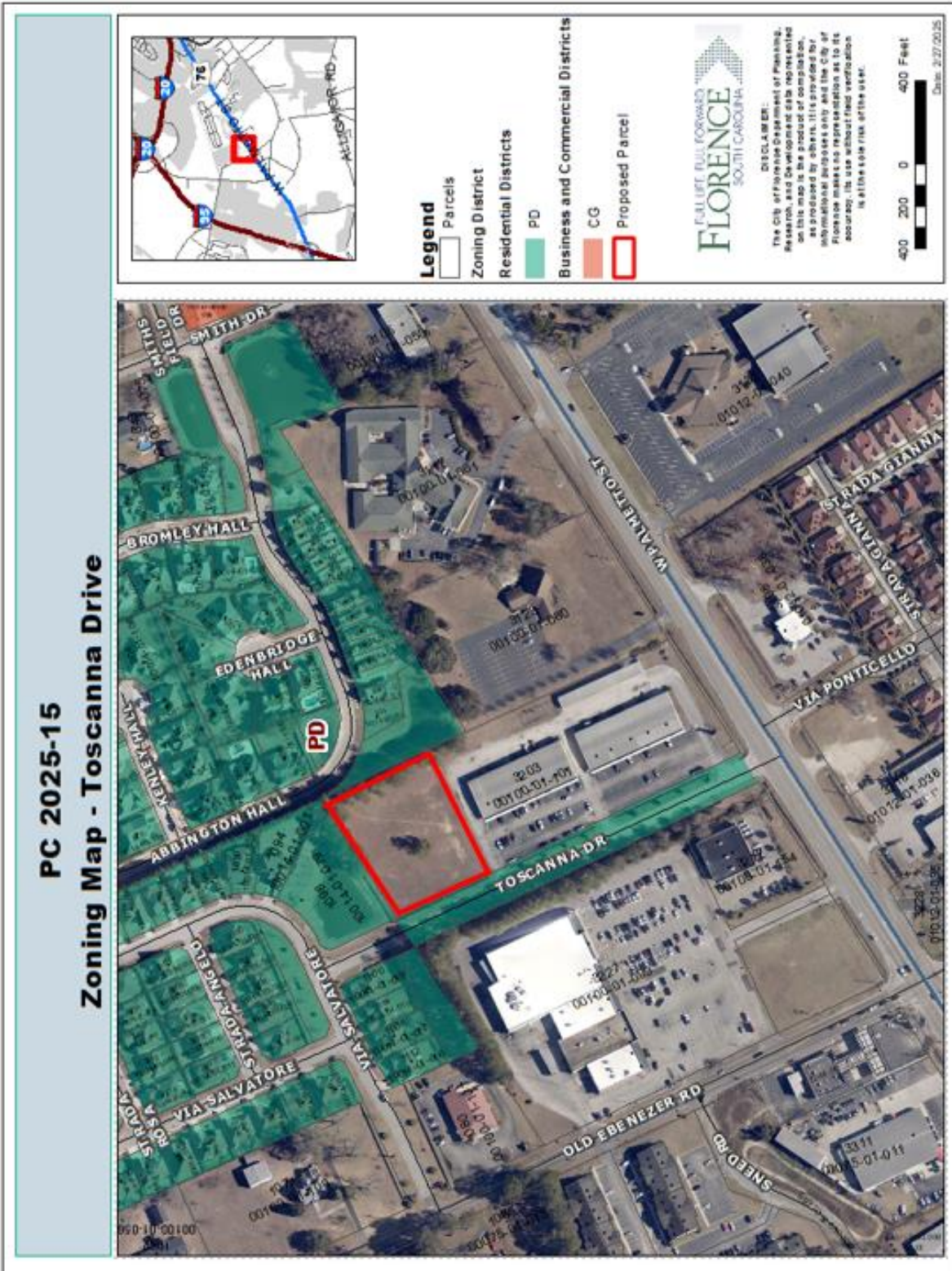
- A) Vicinity Map
- B) Location Map
- C) Zoning Map
- D) Future Land Use Map
- E) Site Photo

Attachment A: Vicinity Map



Attachment B: Location Map





Attachment E: Site Photo



**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
 STAFF REPORT TO THE
 CITY OF FLORENCE PLANNING COMMISSION
 APRIL 8, 2025**

AGENDA ITEM: PC-2025-17 Request to rezone the parcel located at 1203 Sopkin Avenue from CA to NC-6.1, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90099-12-016.

I. IDENTIFYING DATA:

Owner	Tax Map Number
Daddy Bummies LLC	90099-12-016

II. CURRENT STATUS/PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

This issue is before the Planning Commission for public hearing and recommendation to City Council. It has not been considered nor has any previous action been taken by the Planning Commission.

III. GENERAL AND SURROUNDING ZONING AND USES:

Current Zoning: Campus
Proposed Zoning: Neighborhood Conservation-6.1
Current Use: Retail
Proposed Use: Single Family Detached House

North: Not in City limits; County zoning designation: B-5
South: NC-6.1: single family detached residential
East: NC-6.1: single family detached residential
West: NC-6.1: single family detached residential

IV. POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- (1) The 11,172 square foot lot is currently zoned Campus (CA), which is intended for suburban campus settings for general, professional, and medical offices; educational and institutional facilities; hospitals; research and development; and light industries. Prior to 2018, it was zoned R-2, which was a single family, medium lot size designation.
- (2) This single parcel was zoned CA when the *Unified Development Ordinance* zoning designations were assigned in January 2018 due to the existence of a small church which had been operating since 2008. Prior to the church, the 1350 square foot building was used for a washerette.
- (3) In December 2018 the lot was purchased by the current owner.

- (4) The site was permitted in 2020 as a retail space, but actually operated as an event space. The owner applied for a zoning permit for an event facility in 2022 but it was never issued due to a lack of compliant buffering and parking.
- (5) The applicant is requesting to rezone the parcel to Neighborhood Conservation-6.1 (NC-6.1), which permits single family detached houses only.
- (6) Lots in the NC-6.1 district are required to have a minimum area of 6,000 square feet and minimum street frontage of 60 feet. This lot complies with those requirements.
- (7) The applicant plans to construct a single family detached house on the site.
- (8) The uses that may be developed under the proposed zoning, per the City of Florence *Unified Development Ordinance*, are those permitted in the NC-6.1 district.
- (9) All development is subject to the City of Florence codes and regulations.
- (10) Land uses of adjacent properties in the City are exclusively single-family detached residential.
- (11) The property to the north is not in City limits and is zoned B-5, which is Office and Light Industrial. There is a warehouse on the 14 acre parcel.
- (12) The Future Land Use Map designates this parcel as Neighborhood Conservation; the requested zoning of NC-6.1 complies with the Comprehensive Plan.
- (13) City water and sewer services are available.
- (14) City staff recommends that the parcel be rezoned to NC-6.1 to return the lot to residential use.

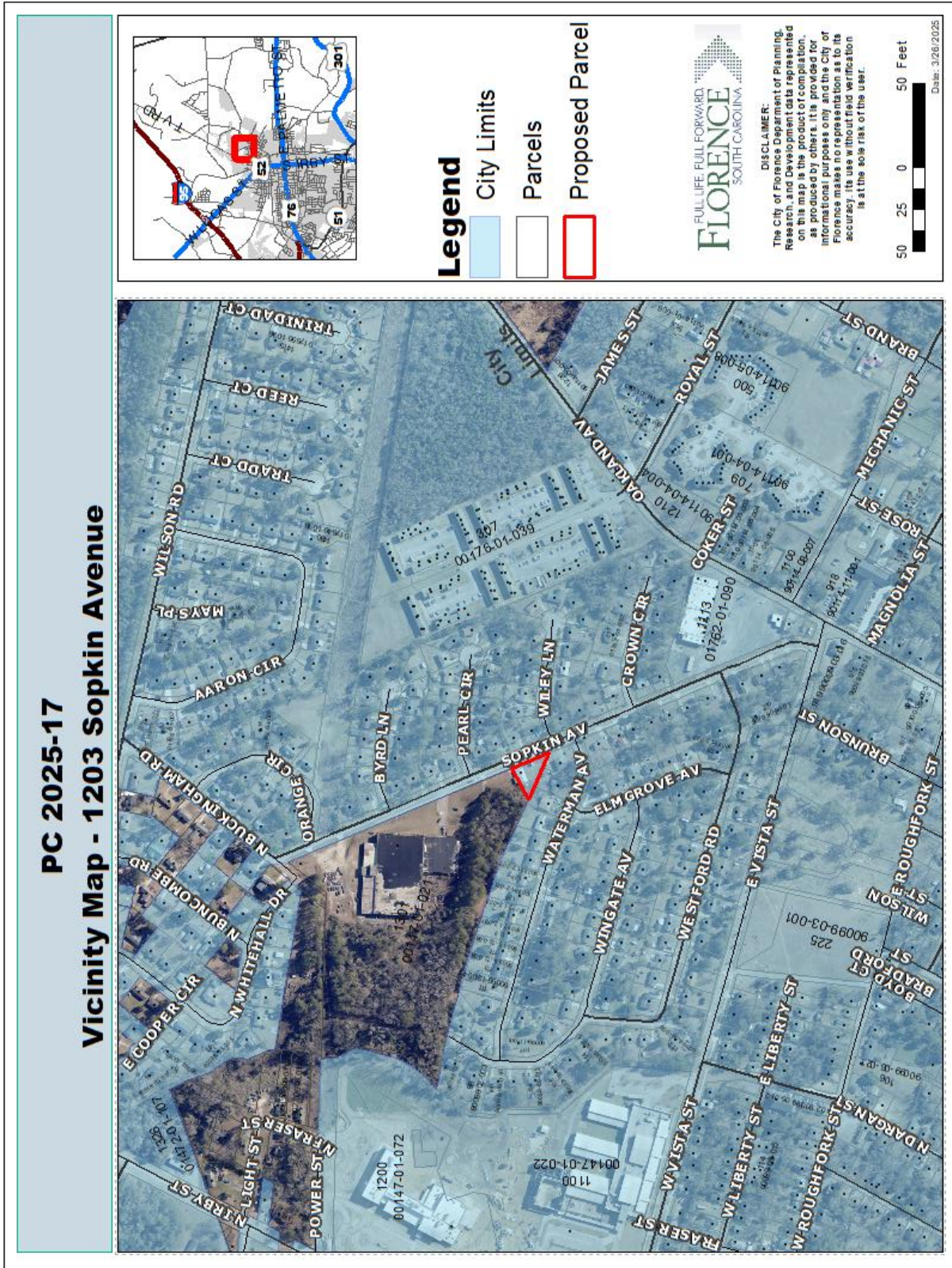
V. OPTIONS:

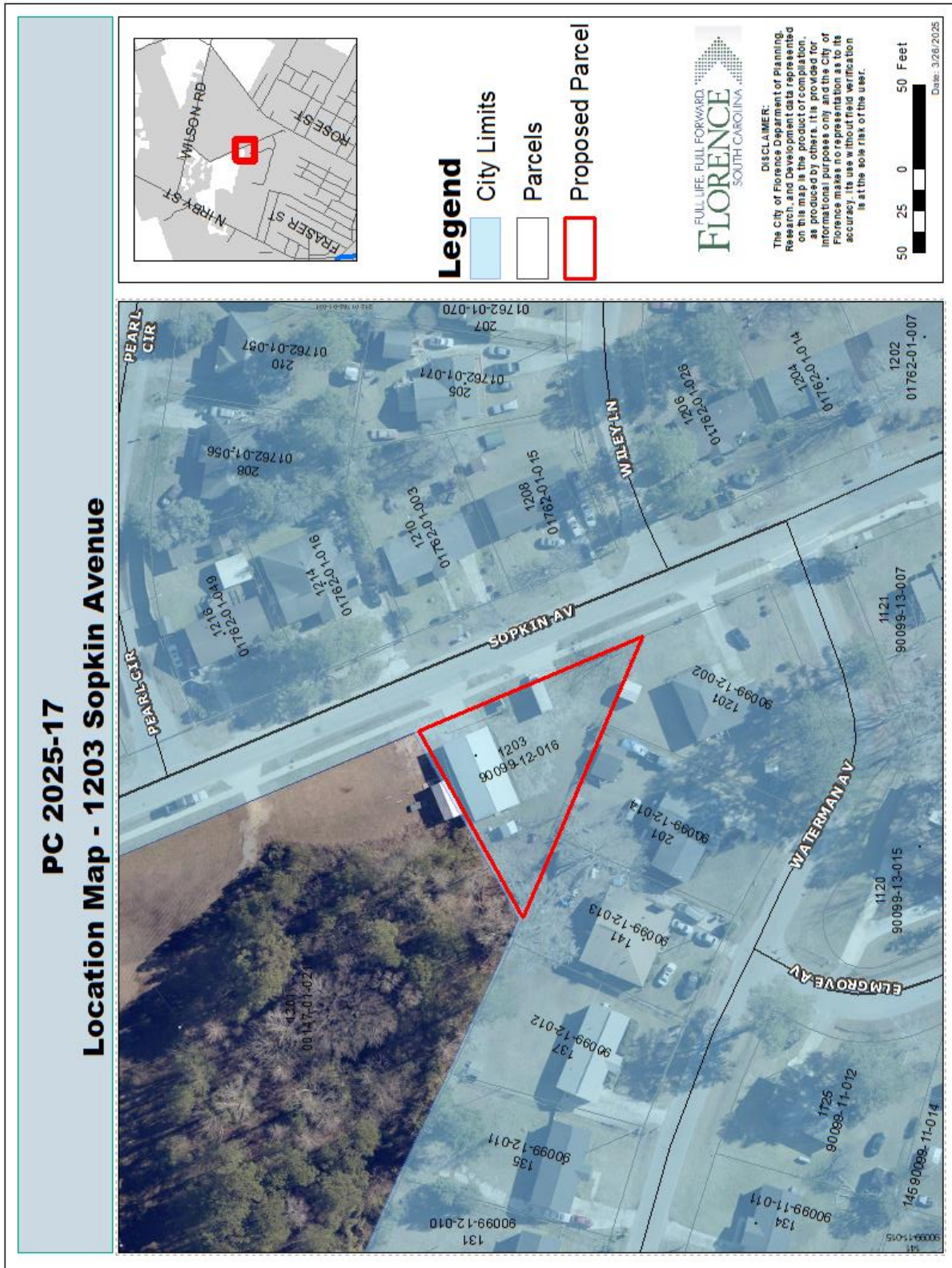
Planning Commission may:

- (1) Recommend approval of the request as presented based on the information submitted.
- (2) Defer the request should additional information be needed.
- (3) Suggest other alternatives.
- (4) Recommend denial of the request based on information submitted.

VI. ATTACHMENTS:

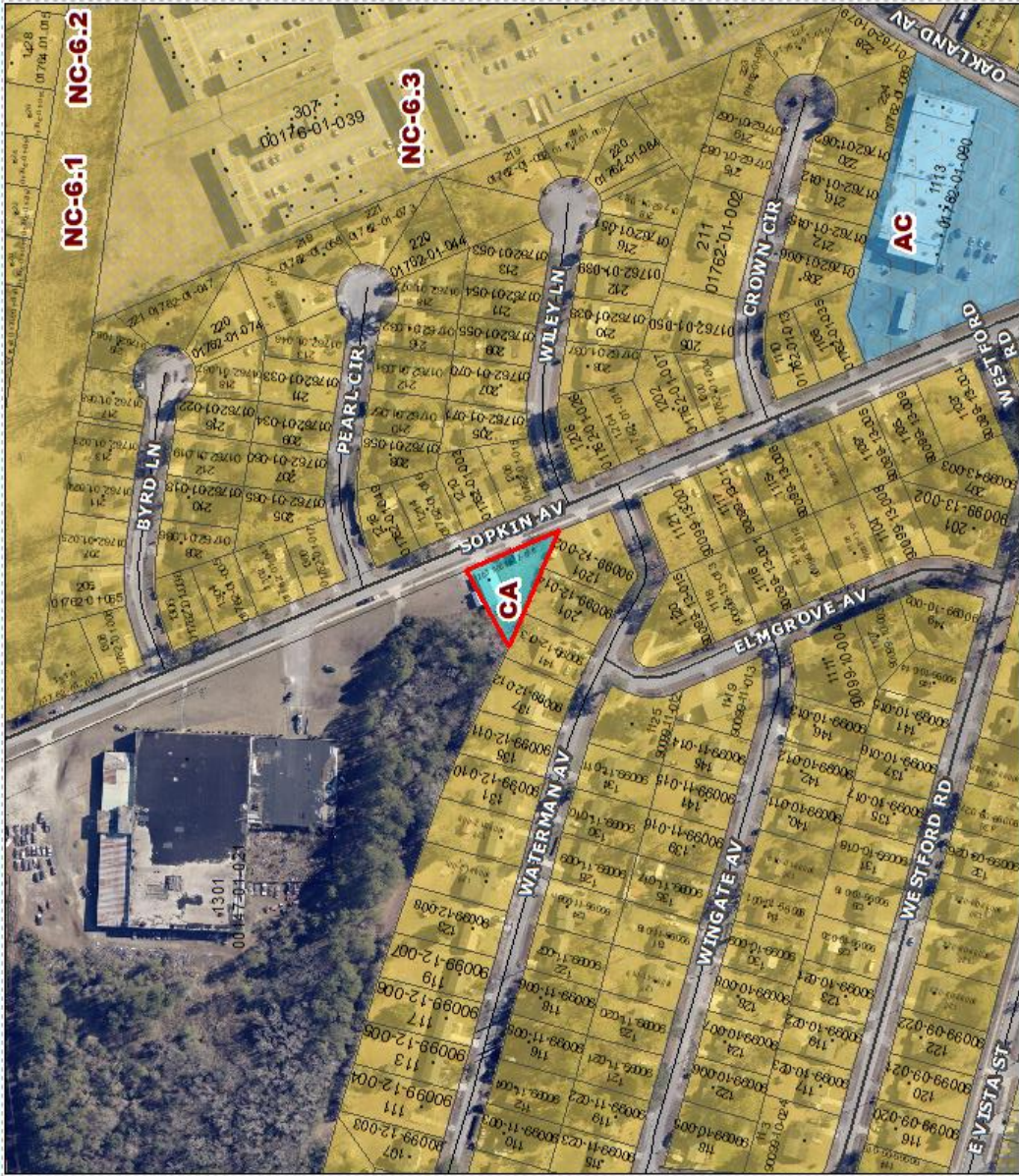
- A) Vicinity Map
- B) Location Map
- C) Zoning Map
- D) Future Land Use Map
- E) Site Photos





Attachment C: Zoning Map

PC 2025-17
Zoning Map - 1203 Sopkin Avenue



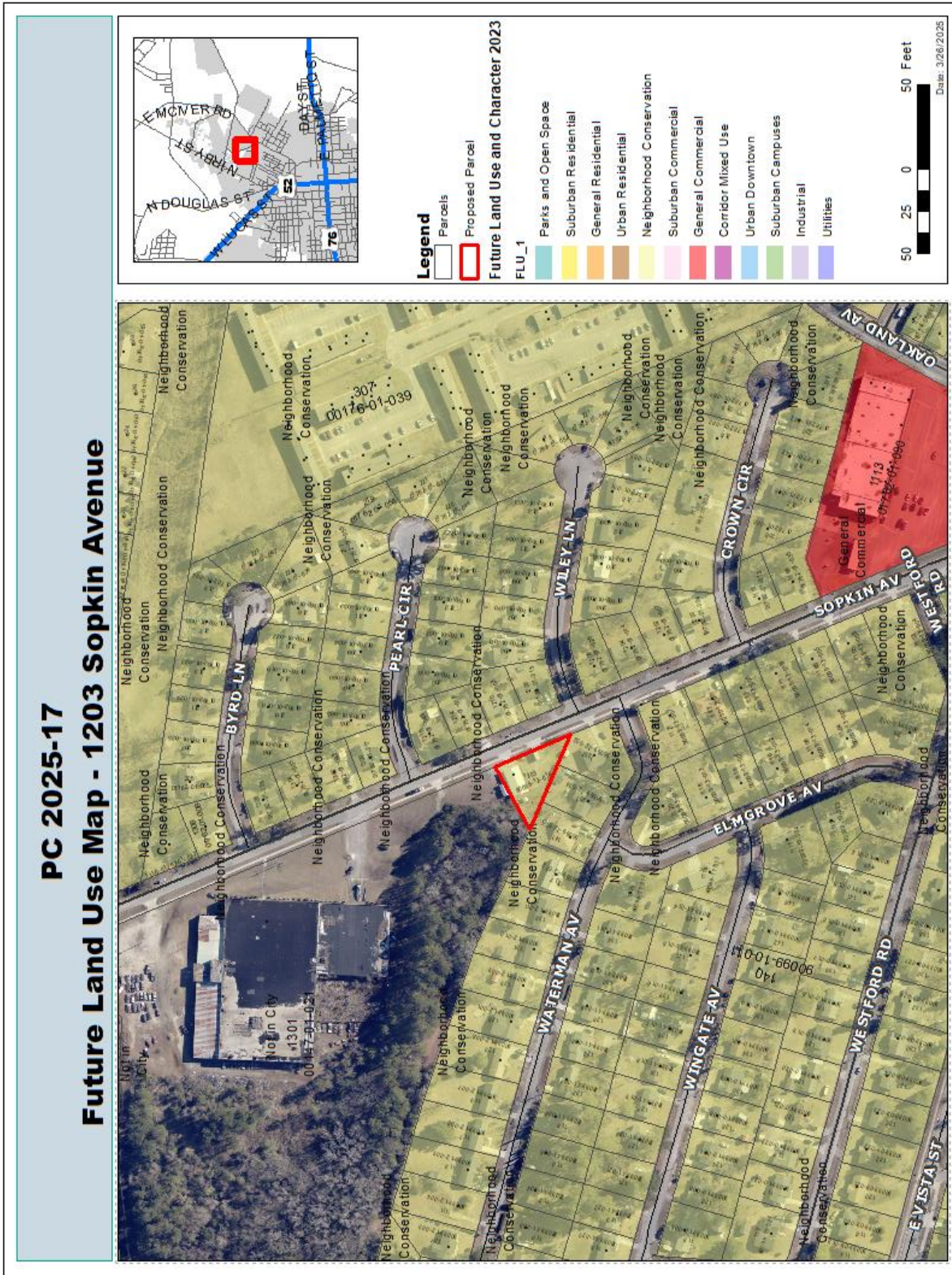
Legend

- Parcels
- Zoning District
- Agricultural and Open Space Districts
 - OSR
- Neighborhood Conservation Sub-Districts
 - NC-6.1
 - NC-6.2
 - NC-6.3
- Business and Commercial Districts
 - CA
- Mixed-Use Districts
 - AC
- Proposed Parcel

FULL LIFE FULL FORWARD
FLORENCE
SOUTH CAROLINA

DISCLAIMER:
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50 25 0 50 Feet
Date: 3/26/2025



Attachment E: Site Photos



Existing commercial building on north side of lot.



South side of lot.

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
STAFF REPORT TO THE
CITY OF FLORENCE PLANNING COMMISSION
APRIL 8, 2025**

AGENDA ITEM: PC-2025-18 Proposed text amendment to the City of Florence *Unified Development Ordinance* regarding the preservation of cemeteries.

I. ISSUE UNDER CONSIDERATION:

An amendment to the *Unified Development Ordinance* to provide regulations for the preservation of cemeteries on development sites.

II. CURRENT STATUS/PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

This issue is before the Planning Commission for recommendation to City Council.

V. POINTS TO CONSIDER:

Division 4-16.1 of the City of Florence *Unified Development Ordinance* regarding Special Site Development Standards requires an amendment to provide a section addressing the preservation of cemeteries on development sites.

IV. OPTIONS:

Planning Commission may:

- (5) Recommend approval of the amendment as presented based on the information submitted.
- (6) Defer the request should additional information be needed.
- (7) Suggest other alternatives.
- (8) Recommend denial of the request based on information submitted.

VI. ATTACHMENT:

Section 4-16.1.14 Requirements for Properties Containing Graves, Cemeteries, and Graveyards

ARTICLE 16 SPECIAL SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Division 4-16.1 Special Site Development Standards

Sec. 4-16.1.14 Requirements for Properties Containing Graves, Cemeteries, and Graveyards

- A. **Application.** The requirements for the development of properties that contains graves, cemeteries, graveyards, or other like facilities for the final disposition of human remains apply in all zoning districts and to all development including the subdivision of land.
- B. **Boundary and Documentation.** Graves, cemeteries, graveyards, or other like facilities shall be determined by an applicant's professional archaeologist or other methods as deemed appropriate by the Planning Director to determine the boundary and confirmation of the cemetery.
1. The archaeologist or other licensed professional shall be responsible for determining the approximate boundaries of the cemetery and shall provide information on the history of the cemetery. A final report shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Map(s) portraying the location and orientation of graves within the cemetery.
 - b. Map(s) depicting the location and orientation of the cemetery relative to the site and recognized landmarks such as public roads or benchmarks visible on a USGS map.
 - c. Description of field and archival methods and results used to document the cemetery.
 - d. Coordinates of the boundary in SC 83 State Plane Coordinates.
- C. **Requirements.** The following requirements are as follows:
1. Existing cemeteries or like facilities shall be deeded as a separate lot and shall be accessed by a minimum twenty (20) foot wide private or public easement.
 2. Lot size. Lots deeded separately containing the grave or like facility shall include the boundary of the cemetery as determined by the professional and shall include the bufferyard requirements established within Sec. 4-16.1.14(C)(4) below.
 3. Access. Must be an improved surface and must meet the requirements outlined within Section 4-13.3.10 Construction Specifications.
 4. Bufferyard. A twenty-five (25) foot bufferyard shall be provided around the perimeter of the cemetery and shall not include the location of any graves. No landscaping is required within the bufferyard.
 5. Existing cemetery fences and walls shall be repaired and maintained.
 6. Fencing. Fencing of cemetery or like facility is permitted but is not required. Fencing material shall be made of a material which is compatible with the material of the new development. Fencing shall not be greater than four (4) feet in height around the entire perimeter of the property and shall be fifty (50) percent opaque.
 7. Construction. During construction of the development the property corners of the cemetery must be clearly staked until the public infrastructure is complete and all public roads and facilities have been deeded to the City; and until the Certificate of Occupancy is achieved for any contiguous properties.