

A meeting of the Historic District Review Board was held on **August 17, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.** in the City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Joel Newman and board members Barbara Laurie, Quinn Peitz, John Dickerson, Chuck Symes, and Lauren Kelly, planning staff.

In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d) as amended, all local media were duly notified of the time, date, place, and agenda of this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Newman called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

MINUTES

Mr. Peitz made a motion, seconded by Mr. Dickerson, to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2016 Historic District Review Board meeting. Mr. Symes said to add that there were no public comments made. **The motion to approve the minutes as amended passed unanimously.**

REVIEW OF FULL BOARD PROJECTS

1511 King Street, Identified as R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 595

Alterations and additions

Applicant: Allen Brooker (HR16-26) / (BB16-03)

The applicant is requesting approval for alterations to the structure, along with Bailey Bill approval for this project.

Ms. Kelly said this structure is contributing and appears on the 1905 Sanborn maps. The footprint has been modified; the wing with the existing bathroom, dining room and kitchen was added after 1958. The applicant is proposing interior renovations, restoration/repair of the front porch, and the addition of a window to the rear. The applicable guidelines are listed in the staff report, she said.

The footprint in the Bailey Bill application is confusing, Ms. Kelly said: Will the whole concrete porch be removed? If so, staff recommends that the applicant use period construction (i.e., a pier foundation porch) for replacement.

There is a window in the King Street-side bedroom that has been discussed with the applicant, Ms. Kelly said. Is there a way to use plantation or other shutters so the boards can be removed? The history of the windows is that a modification occurred at the time of the addition, and it doesn't match the original windows, so the rear window should be made to match the historic windows.

Staff recommends approval with consideration of staff and board comments, Ms. Kelly said.

Mike Sutton said the porch is “a typical 1950s-era porch replacement” of CMU block with a concrete cap and piers made of “brick of that era.” It will be repaired, not replaced. He described what had happened to it, and said the house had begun to rot away at the front as a result. The intention is to pull the staircase off, remove the tree root from in front of the house and the concrete cap, repair the front of the house, recast the concrete cap, and add a wooden staircase. If they pull off the cap, and because of “the amount of work required to repair the house,” or if “crumbling effects happen on the CMU, and it gets to the point of no return,” Mr. Sutton said, they will take it down and put on a wooden porch, as staff suggests, but they don’t anticipate that happening.

Chairman Newman asked, when the slab is off, if there will be enough height to build a wooden porch. Mr. Sutton said there’s a chance of that, and they “could frame it with conventional framing and do a wooden porch deck,” which he thinks the owners would like. He expects to find pier and framing damage when he pulls off the cap, and they will spend time “fixing those initial piers.” The columns are original, he said, and they intend to keep those and the piers, but the bottoms of the original columns will be gone “once we touch them.”

The plantation shutters are “an interior issue,” Mr. Sutton said, and they’re “a non-issue” for the homeowners. He considers them “a furniture issue, in the interior” of the house, so he feels shutters should not concern him or the HRB.

Maxine Lutz, Historic Beaufort Foundation (HBF), asked if the plan was to keep the brick encasement, and Mr. Sutton said yes. HBF’s Preservation Committee would prefer a wooden deck, Ms. Lutz said, but they understand the process. Mr. Sutton said they would offer the homeowners a cost analysis/comparison on a wooden deck.

Mr. Symes asked about the back deck. Mr. Sutton said there are two non-functional chimneys to be removed. There was probably a window that was converted to a closet, and that’s the location for the new window. They need an egress window there per code, so they will have to have a larger window, in any case.

Mr. Dickerson thanked the homeowners for taking on the project. **Mr. Peitz made a motion to approve the project based on staff recommendations; if the porch cannot be repaired, the board asks that the applicants build a wooden porch, per staff’s comments. Mr. Dickerson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

802 Bay Street, Identified as R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 938

Alterations and additions

Applicant: Beaufort Build Design, LLC, for 303 Associates, LLC (HR16-29)

The applicant is requesting approval for alterations to this structure, specifically modifications to the shopfront windows and doors along Bay Street and additions of window openings along Scott Street.

Ms. Kelly said this property is the Saltus House building, circa 1796. It was a house, and it has gone through many evolutions over time “as shopfronts.” The applicant wants to modify the fenestration in the shopfront along the front and side of the original historic structure, and add fenestration on the side of the rear addition as well as some functional outdoor space.

Applicable guidelines are listed in the staff report. Staff feels this is a great project, Ms. Kelly said. The Preservation Manual focuses on restoring the original façade, but that does not seem appropriate in this context, since it is a commercial building. Ms. Kelly said the restoration of a wood shopfront with additional glazing, and “glazing and activation” further down the Scott Street façade, is “a welcome modification.” The patio component encroaches into city right-of-way; HRB approval would not release the applicant from the need to obtain leases or an encroachment permit from the city. Staff recommends final approval of this request as submitted, Ms. Kelly said.

Ms. Lutz said HBF thinks it’s a great project. They have asked **Adam Biery** to let them know “if there is any original tabby exposed” when he goes into the original building. Ms. Laurie asked what the purpose of the building would be, and Mr. Biery said it would be a restaurant downstairs, with the upstairs use unchanged.

Mr. Symes asked about a plan involving the store to the right of this building, and Mr. Biery said, “We’re still working through that.” There was general approval for the plan and design from the members of the board. Chairman Newman said it’s a great improvement to animate the Scott Street side. **Mr. Dickerson made a motion for final approval of the project, second by Mr. Peitz. The motion passed unanimously.**

707 Church Street, Identified as District R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 902

New construction, alterations, additions

Applicant: Tom Michaels (HR16-30)

The applicant is requesting approval for modifications to an existing structure, as well as approval for a new residence.

Ms. Kelly said this project involves the HRB and the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBOA), because part of the application is to subdivide the existing lot, which requires a variance, and the ZBOA has stated that it prefers to have the HRB’s recommendation first.

The lot, on the corner of Duke and Church Streets, has an existing structure on the rear of the lot, Ms. Kelly said. It is an old structure that is on the 1912 Sanborn map, but it has gone through multiple iterations and was “not surveyed in the 1997 survey”; therefore, it is “considered a noncontributing structure.”

In July, the HRB gave conceptual approval for the new construction with a

recommendation for the ZBOA to approve the variance for subdivision of the lot, Ms. Kelly said. When the project went to the ZBOA in July, it was tabled for 90 days, and the board requested that the project come back to the HRB, for the board to look at how the existing structure would be renovated and how parking would be handled. The ZBOA also wanted the HRB to review the site plan for the new house, including a tree survey.

The city arborist went to look at the trees, Ms. Kelly said. Near the corner of the existing structure, there is a very large live oak to be preserved. Two laurel oaks in the footprint of the proposed structure are to be removed. A sycamore close to Duke Street should be retained, if possible, while a pecan tree in the building footprint should be removed.

Ms. Kelly said the applicant has provided the HRB with the information that was requested by the ZBOA: "a design for how a new porch would be relocated on the original existing structure," which has an altered porch, which she said is "more of a stoop." The proposal is "to move that to Church Street," she said, so if the subdivision is permitted, and the new house is built, that porch "wouldn't be looking into the rear of the (new) house and into a parking space." With this change, the existing house, which has a Church Street address, would "actually be fronting Church Street," Ms. Kelly said. Also, the applicant is bringing the proposal for the new construction to the HRB.

The existing structure is likely located where it is because there used to be a pond in the area, Ms. Kelly said, which caused the buildings at this corner to be set back; she indicated this at 706 Charles Street, which is a contributing historic structure. "The two northern quadrants of this corner" are Beaufort Housing Authority buildings built in the 1907s or 1980s that "are not consistent with the building pattern in the Northwest Quadrant area."

Staff supports this project, Ms. Kelly said, and feels it "sets a good precedent for this corner, if and when these noncontributing structures redevelop. It creates an infill opportunity and allows "the restoration of a building that is in significant need of repair," she said.

Mr. Peitz asked if the ZBOA is likely to approve this project if the HRB approves it. **Libby Anderson** told him that the HRB's approval would be a factor in the six criteria that the ZBOA considers in its decision about granting a variance. "But they do want your input," she said.

Tom Michaels said the ZBOA "did not request us to come back to you for the project. They wanted to see the project to make the determination, so you have no input on their decision." He feels the HRB "(has) more to say on this project" than the ZBOA does because "they wanted to see . . . all this stuff (that) is your purview."

Chairman Newman said he had a small project before the ZBOA at its last meeting, so he

“saw the pros and cons” presented and the deliberations of the ZBOA.

Ms. Lutz said HBF had expressed at the previous HRB meeting that they are not in favor of subdivision of this lot. “This is false to call” what is planned for the “existing historic house” a restoration, she said, “when it will be altered significantly.” Also, “flipping” the house’s orientation means it will not be as it was originally, nor as it is now, Ms. Lutz said. Therefore, HBF would not like to see that done.

About the new construction, Ms. Lutz said the proposed “house is too big for that subdivided lot.” There will be two lots of less than 2,500 square feet, and the minimum lot size is 4,000 square feet, which is a significant decrease. “There will be nothing left but setback,” she said. Mr. Peitz asked Ms. Lutz if she had opposed this project at the ZBOA meeting. Ms. Lutz said yes.

Ms. Laurie said she doesn't understand why this application is back at the HRB “if it’s a ZBOA issue.” She noted that staff “hasn’t addressed parking” yet, and she knows there is little parking on Duke Street for its residents now, so it will “get to a point where it’s a tremendous problem.” Plans to continue renovating “the other side of Bladen, going to Ribaut Road” will add to the problem of people endangered when drivers “zoom through there,” Ms. Laurie feels. This project represents a problem with the “overall goal to infill the Northwest Quadrant,” she said, and its effects on “the people who are there now.” There is already “no parking on Church Street . . . at all.” She has no opposition to owning property and wanting to develop it, Ms. Laurie said, but she has “concerns about how (development) would play out” when it’s done.

Ms. Kelly said the site plan had not been developed fully, so it was difficult to see where the on-site parking would be; since then, Mr. Michaels has “detailed” the site plan to show the parking for two cars at each house. Mr. Symes asked the width of parking spaces. Chairman Newman said most parking spaces are 10’, but “you could get away with 9’.”

The live oak is 4.5’ to 5’ in diameter, Mr. Symes said, so if the two lots are split, measuring from the proposed lot line, it’s only 6.5’ to the exposed roots of the tree. To the trunk of the live oak is 10’ from that proposed property line. He feels putting in two parking spaces with space between them is “unrealistic.” Another concern, Mr. Symes said, is if the porch is moved, there will need to be footings to support the deck, which would be in the tree’s root pattern. It’s 2’ to 3’ from the first footing to the trunk of the tree. He asked if the applicant knew if that would have an impact on the health of the live oak, which is supposed to be preserved.

Mr. Peitz asked “the lot coverage of the building versus the lot.” Ms. Kelly said she thinks it’s less than 50%. The footprint of the proposed cottage is about 980 square feet, and the parking, “if it’s not paved,” is considered pervious “and would not count toward that number.” She thinks “it’s around 40%.”

Mr. Peitz asked if there were other small houses in this neighborhood. Ms. Kelly said they had done a comparison, and there are “a number of lots of similar size (that) have houses on them.” Mr. Symes asked if those houses are single-story or 1.5-story. Ms. Kelly said they are, but one house is a 2-story. Ms. Laurie said the lots that Ms. Kelly had cited are larger than this subdivided lot is proposed to be. Ms. Kelly said they’re similar in terms of square footage. There are larger lots, and some on which both buildings face the side streets on a subdivided lot. “That’s a building pattern that’s been established,” she said. “It’s just a question of whether or not it should continue.” There was a discussion of which of the houses on these lots under discussion were older and which were newer.

Chairman Newman said there are a lot of examples of very small lots in the Historic District, and in the original review, the board had discussed this. He feels the problem is with what is proposed for the existing house, which he said, “is not a restoration.” It’s a redevelopment of the existing house. **Jay Weidner** had given a clear outline of what this house might have been in the past, Chairman Newman said, “but it’s been compromised again and again,” so there's little fabric there to restore. He doesn’t have a problem with the subdivision of the lot, he said, but he does have a problem with the ZBOA’s concerns and agrees with the board’s comments. The applicant is “putting an awful lot of pressure” on the trees that are supposed to be saved, he said, and he feels that the new construction is “too big.”

Chairman Newman said the HRB’s comments at the last meeting had centered on making the new house smaller, but so far, the applicant has not done that successfully. The small lots in the area have houses on them that are “pretty small.” The proposed footprint is too large, he said, and the scale is wrong for the house that is next to it. The board had also commented about “turning the gable the other direction,” and making the dormers come out in the north and south; the overall roof profile is “quite a high plate.”

Mr. Peitz asked what happens if the HRB doesn’t approve the new structure, or if they ask Mr. Michaels to come back with something else. Chairman Newman said the ZBOA asked the HRB to determine if the new house is appropriate. He thinks the subdivision is okay, but not the new house. Mr. Symes agreed and said he had said in July that if the subdivision were approved, he felt the house should be a single story. He’s also concerned about the parking, moving the deck, and damage to the live oak.

Chairman Newman said he doesn’t feel the driveway is a big problem, but requiring a single-story house forces Mr. Michaels to “spread it out.” It doesn't solve the issue of the “tightness of the site for parking” and for “the tree cover on it.” Chairman Newman said he’s more concerned about the size of the overall footprint than about the height of the house. A small, 2-story house “would be a lot more user-friendly in terms of utilizing the subdivided site” and protecting the trees’ viability.

The property owner, **Labi Kryeziu**, read a letter stating that the goal of this project is “to bring value to the community.” He commended the City of Beaufort for the Duke Street streetscape. The subdivision request, restoration of the existing house, and building a new house are intended to further that beautification for years to come.

They measured the driveway, Mr. Kryeziu said, and with the subdivision, it would 11’, not 9’, from the existing porch to the property line. Mr. Symes asked about the distance from the property line to the tree trunk, and Mr. Kryeziu said that’s 9’.

Mr. Michaels said parking “is provided by Duke Street,” so they are not required to have on-site parking for the new house. Chairman Newman said though the parking is available on Duke Street now, the burden on the parking is going up, as Ms. Laurie had said.

When asked if he plans to live in either property, Mr. Kryeziu said he might eventually live in the existing house.

Mr. Dickerson said the Civic Master Plan’s intent was to have infill “across the entire downtown area.” Many lots in this area “are actually smaller” than what is being proposed with this subdivision, so he doesn’t oppose it. He understands the concern about the relative mass and scale of the new house to the existing house. This is a significant investment in the community, Mr. Dickerson said, “and that is important . . . to grow the community,” so he’d like to give the property owner the opportunity to infill this lot and “make it an addition to this community.”

Mr. Symes said the HRB approved the subdivision at the last meeting, and they are now considering whether the proposed structure is acceptable or needs to be redesigned, and whether moving the deck on the existing structure is okay. He’s hearing now that “it’s not acceptable, and needs to go back for some modifications.”

Chairman Newman said the ZBOA had sent this project back to the HRB for the board to say if what the applicants propose is a suitable architectural solution for this property; if the HRB believes it is, the ZBOA will consider the HRB’s recommendation for subdividing this property. There were “missing pieces” when the project was before the HRB in July that were also missing when the applicant went to the ZBOA. The application to the ZBOA was tabled because of the tree issues and public comments, Chairman Newman said, and they felt as if they didn’t have enough information. Now the HRB has seen the arborist’s report and is “looking at essentially the same house,” and they “can see more directly the impact on the trees.”

Mr. Michaels reiterated that the ZBOA “did not request (that we) come back to you to review this further,” but wanted the HRB “to present the information to them so they could make a decision,” which Mr. Michaels felt was “inappropriate because your board

has the purview for approval.”

Mr. Peitz said he could make a motion to table the application, rather than the board denying it, which would allow the applicants to “think about our comments,” because the HRB seems to have a sense that the subdivision might work, and “possibly rework” the plans and “come back to us.” **Mr. Peitz made a motion to postpone the application for up to 90 days. Mr. Dickerson seconded the motion for discussion.** Chairman Newman said subdivision is possible, but the architectural solution may not be “the best possible solution right now.” Chairman Newman thinks the subdivision could be better at 55-45, rather than 50-50. This would provide a better solution for the existing house and allow for a smaller footprint for the new house with the trees that are to be preserved. Mr. Symes added that on the existing house, a “specialist” should be engaged to assess “putting the footings in and . . . the driveway,” to avoid impact on the live oak and save it. If the specialist determines these are not concerns, then Mr. Symes said he’s “fine with it,” but the board needs that information.

Ms. Laurie said she thinks the HRB should “appreciate the process” of the ZBOA in making its determination, and with the motion to table, the applicants can come back to the HRB after the ZBOA “say(s) what they need to say,” now that Mr. Michaels has the information from the arborist, for example. Mr. Michaels said he’s concerned because “the ZBOA wanted to see what the building (will look) like, so if they approve the structure, that takes (the HRB) out of” the process.

Mr. Peitz said the HRB’s sense is that the new structure “is too big” for the potential subdivision. If the elevations change, the HRB would be open to that, and the applicant could then take the project to the ZBOA. Mr. Michaels said that’s what he and Mr. Kryeziu would like to do, because they feel that the HRB is “the appropriate board to proceed with first.” **The motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Michaels asked if the applicant could submit for demolition of the existing structure, since it is non-contributing. Ms. Kelly said anyone could apply for demolition of any building.

Ms. Lutz said it should be defined when public comment is appropriate and/or allowed during HRB meetings. Chairman Newman said it is his understanding that a public hearing is usually held at the beginning of the review process. In this case, this was not an application for a demolition, and there was not a public hearing scheduled. Ms. Lutz said other people at the meeting might have wanted to speak about this project, but Chairman Newman saying this was not a public hearing “may have signaled to them that they could not.”

Chairman Newman asked Ms. Kelly what the “official requirement” is concerning public comment. Ms. Kelly said technically, if there is an official public hearing, letting the public speak is required. The procedure for HRB and Design Review Board meetings has

been to give people who are interested in projects “an opportunity to speak,” and although that may not be “a requirement,” it is “a policy that has been adopted.” She said it’s up to the chairman. Mr. Symes asked if the public could comment the next time this project comes to the HRB. Chairman Newman said he has “no objection” to that. Ms. Kelly said it “seems that would be appropriate.”

918 Craven Street, Identified as R120, Tax Map 4, Parcel 850

New construction

Applicant: Structured Parking Solutions for Beaufort Inn, LLC (HR16-27)

The applicant is requesting approval to construct a 496-space, 186,000 square-foot (40,000 square feet/floor) parking garage.

Chairman Newman said the procedure for this would be for Ms. Kelly to make her presentation, then “allow for some public comment,” followed by the board’s comments.

Ms. Kelly said this is an “interesting” project relative to 707 Charles Street, because it’s “a much bigger project on a much bigger lot, all within the Historic District,” which speaks to the district’s “diversity.” It’s a “challenging” project for the HRB to review because it’s “the biggest project that’s ever come (to) the Historic District,” in terms of height, mass, and scale, she said, so it may “take a little while to come to the best possible solution.”

It’s also significant because “it has a defined use associated with it,” which is unusual in the Historic District, Ms. Kelly said; use is not typically “take(n) into consideration” when evaluating design for structures there. It’s use – structured parking – “has long been identified as a need of the city and of this core commercial district,” she said. A big challenge to the HRB will be “to evaluate how much integration” the design and use of the building “should have in evaluating how it fits into the context of the Historic District.”

Ms. Kelly said there has been a lengthy review of “previous plans and studies,” and she described “how we evaluate *all* projects” in the Historic District: First, planning staff looks at the site/the existing context. On this site, there is a historically significant structure on the property that is listed as “contributing” on the 1997 Beaufort County Historic Sites Survey. The other site that this project would have an impact on is a noncontributing structure. Both would require a public hearing for demolition.

Staff evaluates the site, Ms. Kelly said, to see how it has been used historically, by looking at the Sanborn maps and photos. This site has been used and “documented since 1889.” This site’s uses have ranged from commercial, “and even industrial” – as the location of a ginnery and a livery – “into the residential fabric of the city,” she said. Staff “also evaluated the surrounding context” of the buildings surrounding this site and their historical significance. Those that are historically significant date from the early-

1800s.

Ms. Kelly said staff looked at all of the plans, studies, and applicable guidelines for this area, mainly the Preservation Manual and the Preservation Manual Supplement, also known as the Milner guidelines. They also looked at planning studies for the core commercial area of downtown, beginning in the 1970s. In doing so, she said, it became clear that parking has been seen as a problem since then, or was seen as a problem that would occur as further commercial development happened.

After the staff report was prepared and published, Ms. Kelly said, a respected professional told her that “it’s pretty irresponsible to look at this building irrespective of the use, since parking has been such an issue” over time.

Ms. Kelly said these studies indicated that discussion began in the mid-1990s about a parking structure there, and appropriate sizes and locations were considered; this was one site among three or four others in this general area that was evaluated for its potential as a parking structure, she said. Also, some of the parking studies commissioned by the city, Main Street Beaufort, and others looked at mitigation techniques (e.g., liner buildings) for buildings like parking structures. A liner building is not a requirement of the city’s ordinance in this area, Ms. Kelly said, though in other zoning districts, a parking deck is required to have retail on the ground floor. Liner buildings have been mentioned “so many times in all these plans and studies” because of “a real desire to try to bridge the gap between what a parking structure is . . . and how it relates and fits into the context of a National Historic Landmark District” (NHLD). Because parking structures are formulaic and “based on modules,” she said, there’s little room for variations that could make parking structures “compatible with (the) building footprints that you see on the north side of this map,” for example. Ms. Kelly said the Preservation Manual and Supplement mentions “other mitigation techniques,” for buildings of this mass and scale.

The HRB’s task is to protect the “important resource” of the Historic District, Ms. Kelly said, and “to make sure that new buildings that are approved are consistent with the predominant characteristics of the neighborhood.” If this building is evaluated “just as a building, irrespective of use,” with this footprint, it’s difficult to consider it “consistent with the prevailing fabric of the neighborhood,” she said. “So the real question is, how much can the use impact the design of the building in order to have exemptions” from a hotel building, or a different type of mixed-use building, for example, which might have “a lot more flexibility in how its articulated.” Ms. Kelly said it’s up to the HRB “to determine the threshold and the marriage between the use and the structure and how it fits into the context.”

Ms. Kelly said city staff is prepared to support the HRB in making its decision about “the best possible solution,” as it considers “the need, and everything, comprehensively.”

Mr. Peitz said an important question for the board seems to be, "When does the larger community need outweigh the adverse impacts on a specific site?" Mr. Symes said it should be noted that the City of Beaufort is not building this parking garage, and while "it may solve some of the city's (parking) problem, it is a private garage" being used to solve Dick Stewart's "problem."

Ms. Kelly said staff had asked statewide and national preservation organizations for their input on "just the building." The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) had responded that, "it's difficult for a building (of) this size to fit into the context of the neighborhood," she said. "Context is a series of buildings; it's the existing fabric. Context is also the functionality of a place, and how it works, and what the needs of that community are," she said, so meshing these together is "the challenge of this project."

Chairman Newman responded to Mr. Symes' statement by saying that while "a single entity," rather than the City of Beaufort, is proposing this project, Mr. Stewart did not "create the need" for parking, nor did he "identify it out of thin air: it's a community problem, issue, need." He feels *who* is developing the parking structure should have no bearing on "what we're evaluating here," because it's a proposed solution to "an identifiable issue."

Greg Darden, Structured Parking Solutions (SPS), said his company has been in Beaufort for three years and has hosted many meetings about parking. This parking structure project is "the culmination" of the information they have collected and the "due diligence" they have done. His company has a lot of experience working with "cities that have a historic thread and need parking," Mr. Darden said. They are "cognizant and respectful of all comments" and will "try to address them."

When his company comes to a town, they "try to identify certain drivers," one of which is "proximity of parking to the need," Mr. Darden said, because if it's "too far from the intended use," it will be empty. Parking costs "are incredibly expensive," and the cost of "every parking space is subsidized," even when there's no charge to the parkers.

Another thing SPS does when evaluating "the most successful place for parking" is, in historic districts, to "strive for a site that mitigates the risk of the parking facility itself. In other words, is it meaningful to tear down two or three historic structures for the sake of parking?" Mr. Darden said. "This particular site lends itself to that effect. It's mitigating the removal of historic structures by providing an infrastructure item."

Next, Mr. Darden said, "We try to educate and explain parking concepts." Given the "small, historic nature" of downtown Beaufort, "you want to try to address as much parking as you can one time." This is especially true here, he said, because "the next option for meaningful parking for downtown is going to mean you're tearing down structures" because "parking's very geometric," as Ms. Kelly had pointed out.

For these reasons, Mr. Darden said, “we were instantly drawn to this site.” This structure’s footprint is driven “by very specific drivers,” he said, such as “national codes that drive the slope and pitch of the ramp,” the size of each parking space, the dimensions of the drive aisles, etc. Unlike an occupied-use dwelling, parking is “incredibly geometric,” he said, and “has some very difficult handcuffs on it.”

Mr. Darden said he would not be discussing liner buildings. There are “very unique things . . . about this site. (It) lends itself very well to parking, but not . . . to other uses, inclusive of parking.”

SPS is working on a parking structure in Charleston’s historic district, Mr. Darden said, which he suggested as a “case study . . . you might want to look at.” Charleston’s Board of Architectural Review decided, “at the end of the day . . . that the good was greater than the necessary concerns,” and approved the project. He said this situation “is not unique” to Beaufort.

Mr. Darden added that the developer is “permitted by use” to make the garage even larger than they are planning to make it.

Mike Richards, SPS, said “structured parking is expensive,” so they try to design the garage “as efficiently as possible,” which means minimizing “the square footage per parking space” in it. Parking on a ramp is the most economical design for a garage, he said, and they propose a 216’ ramp at around a 5% slope. “The next driver is . . . in-bay parking,” not “just a drive aisle,” as “there’s no parking off of that,” Mr. Richards said.

This site is “only 326’ wide,” Mr. Richards said; he described the allowable setbacks, and said because of a new survey done after their plans were submitted, there is now a consistent 8’ setback on Craven Street “all the way down. There’s no slope to that.” They have intentionally “moved (the) ramp to the inside,” so “all of our fronts that face the street are level platforms.”

Mr. Richards said they are proposing use of a precast structural wall system “for our bearing on the perimeter walls.” The wall panels are offset “8-inches back and forth to create some movement in that wall plane, all the way down on all the streetfronts.” They have also “tried to do panelization, where you have an exposed building front that’s kind of in the same scale” as “buildings up and down the street,” he said, with “a green wall in between those to break that up.” Mr. Richards said, “The two entrances that are our primary vertical circulation towers are backed in from Craven (Street),” which “brings that height back in to the middle of the blocks.” Mr. Richards said they’d “changed the character of the entrances a little bit” to draw attention to them as the place for cars to enter.

Chairman Newman said the fact that the parking garage is level on the perimeter floors “would be helpful” for the experience of the structure’s users and for “somebody

passing by,” so “there’s not (a) diagonal series of cars passing by windows.”

Mr. Stewart said, “We understand (the) issues” addressed in the staff report, from which he said “a couple pieces . . . were missing.” One was that the city’s most recent parking task force identified three places downtown “that might provide parking.” He owns two of those places: one is the site on which they are proposing this parking structure, and the other he offered to sell the city “and they have not pursued that.” The third is at 500 Carteret Street, which the city purchased.

“The 500 spaces is an eventual need,” Mr. Stewart said, quoting the staff report; “the eventuality is determined upon people being willing to invest in the city as well as to address the shortfalls that may currently be there.”

Mr. Stewart said his company has “a long history of working with this.” He read a letter from March 2008 to **Scott Dadson**, who was the city manager at the time, to “explain some of the history.” [A copy of this letter is attached to these minutes.] Mr. Stewart said he never received any response to this letter, but “we did learn . . . that the general perception in the community” was that “there was no need for the city to do anything” because Mr. Stewart “was supposed to build the public parking.” This parking garage is a private development, he said, but he currently owns “parking that we make available to the public when we can.”

Mr. Stewart said he has “invest(ed) in downtown for 18 years.” When he saw in the *Beaufort-Gazette* that there was “a proposal for a hotel to go on this property,” he called the property owners, told them it “looked like the best place for (a) parking structure in town,” and then purchased the property. Mr. Stewart’s company redeveloped a vacant building into Tabby Place, an event center that he said “has been well received.” He said groups around the state “tell us” they have met elsewhere in the state and “want to come to Beaufort,” specifically to its downtown area, and “we now have that place for them, but we don’t have sufficient hotel rooms” for these visitors or parking. “We’ve been waiting for someone else to solve (the) parking problem for close to two decades,” Mr. Stewart said. They have “reached out to” **Bill Prokop**, the current city manager, “about partnering on this” parking structure, and Mr. Prokop has been responsive. SPS is meeting with him the following week, and whether something is determined in that meeting about the city’s involvement or not, “we’re moving forward with a plan,” Mr. Stewart said.

The retail study done as part of the Civic Master Plan “said the buildings on Bay Street are not generating sufficient income to maintain those historic buildings,” Mr. Stewart said. He owns “a couple of those,” and said “it’s very difficult to justify the cost of maintaining” them rather than “investing in any number of other opportunities.” He redeveloped second floor space into condos on Bay Street, but couldn’t sell them until he provided parking for the residents. “These are all issues that are” interrelated, he said.

Mr. Stewart told the HRB it should review this project “like a building,” and “tell us how to moderate mass and scale, but also tell us where in Beaufort (you are) going to put parking if you don’t do it here” on this site.

Mr. Peitz said the Civic Master Plan says, “This site can accommodate 280 vehicles,” so he asked why Mr. Stewart was proposing 496 spaces. Mr. Stewart said the Civic Master Plan is “wrong.” It’s “obvious it can accommodate 500; you see the plans,” he said.

Chairman Newman said he was invited to meet “a few months ago . . . with these folks” about a parking garage at this location. Since he was in the ninth grade, he said, the city has been studying parking, and he’s now 59. He’s aware of “the passion about preservation” in Beaufort, but he feels “preservation is not just about (a) collection of buildings” here. It is “us, today, living here in this community.” People who live and work downtown are “part of the history of this place,” and addressing its problems is important, too, “not simply preserving the older buildings,” he said.

Chairman Newman said, strategically, this site is not “covered with historic structures.” Mr. Stewart is willing to take on this project, and while a parking garage will benefit Mr. Stewart, “it will benefit all of us,” too. For example, Chairman Newman said, he works downtown, and his employees have to park “five blocks away, out in the neighborhood somewhere,” in spaces that “will probably be metered eventually.”

Downtown Beaufort is bounded by the edge of the river, Waterfront Park, and Bay Street, Chairman Newman said, and this is the Lowcountry, so “going up” is the only option for parking. The existing site “is just an open sea of surface parking,” which has “nothing inherently attractive about” it, so this site and other parking opportunities in the downtown area are “pretty limited” and “not enhancing the historical character of downtown,” he said.

The HRB has reviewed many downtown projects “that were essentially given a pass on parking because they’re downtown,” Chairman Newman said, which has zoning that says, “You don’t have to provide any parking.” A great residential infill project that Mr. Biery had presented, for example, will not be viable until parking is available for the residents of that building.

Chairman Newman said parking is a “critical problem.” Charleston and Savannah have 20 and 11 parking garages, respectively. They are historical cities that “got over this a long time ago,” he said. Those cities are at a different scale than Beaufort, he said, but also have water boundaries and a limited area in which they can build, so they, too, have to “go up.”

Chairman Newman said he supports this project. The studies he’s seen over the years “were done without any ownership, with free rein to remove more buildings and build

buildings with liners around them and that sort of thing. That's not the context that we have before us, right now, today," which is what Chairman Newman said the board's evaluation of this project should be made on. For him, "this problem has boiled down to an architectural problem," he said, not a "problem specifically of preservation," so it needs "the most pleasing and successful architectural solution."

Mr. Peitz asked for specific examples of Chairman Newman's opinion on this project, as the HRB's architect. Chairman Newman said he had commented at a meeting about this parking structure that it is "critical to articulate the scale of this, to modulate the building so that it was not a continuum of a single expression. I felt it was important to create a sense of . . . window-opening scale," given where the building is located. He had also suggested looking for opportunities to "green" the surface of the building with "lattice panels or wire frame systems to . . . grow 'green' on the face of buildings."

Chairman Newman and others in his office did a site walk, he said, and looked at where the applicants would have to prune trees and where there were open exposures. He feels the rendering the applicants provided "does a good job of showing how they want to treat the building," Chairman Newman said, "but it's not a good rendering of . . . how this building would actually be experienced."

Chairman Newman feels the idea in the staff report of building a model is "outdated," because everything can now be drawn in 3-D and buildings put "in a real context." Bits and pieces of this building will be seen from any given point of view, he said, and he recommended that for future reviews of the project, the applicant bring in "perspectives" of the building "from a real place." Chairman Newman said this building "looks particularly big" when it's "evaluated as if we were flying over it," when actually, they will be experiencing it from the streets around it, "from different approaches."

Mr. Peitz said the HRB might give conceptual approval to this parking structure, but it would have to go through "many, many refinements" before final approval. As an urban planner who has worked in Charleston, he knows there's a clear need for parking in Beaufort. He is thinking about the letter from the SHPO officer who said this structure "is too big," as does the staff report, Mr. Peitz said, which is based on "all of the prevailing documents of the city," such as the Civic Master Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and the Historic Preservation Manual. Though he said Mr. Stewart had "pointed out (that) these may be dated (or) may not be relevant to what you're trying to do today," they are the documents the HRB uses to consider all projects, including all of those on that day's agenda.

Mr. Peitz said he's aware after 2½ years on the HRB that the infill buildings have exacerbated the problem of parking downtown. One approval left a net deficit of 45 parking spaces. They add to the parking deficit with everything they do in the core commercial area, he said, but he wonders if the impact of this structure will be superseded by that need for parking downtown. The properties adjacent to this one are

one or two stories, and some of them are residential, Mr. Peitz said. Those properties on Charles, Craven, and West Streets “would have to tolerate the adverse impact against them in order for the community to move forward in a larger community perspective, he said.

Chairman Newman said he had read the staff report, and there have been a lot of different ideas for parking, such as “shuttling people in” and “building multiple parking garages.” But “at the end of the day . . . solutions are contextual,” he said. This building “is within their zoning rights,” so “they do not have to ask for a variance to do anything that they’re asking to do here.”

When he reads a letter about this project that is written from someone outside of Beaufort, Chairman Newman feels “their perspective is purely based on these reports and . . . historic situations.” Savannah and Charleston have “already faced all that,” he said. He has looked at other towns with similar population sizes that have built parking garages, so while “it’s nice for people outside (of Beaufort) to write an opinion...they’re not here, on the ground, experiencing those problems.”

Mr. Peitz said the HRB members can “look at things beyond just the written documents.” The letter from the SHPO is “just one piece of many” that they can consider.

Ms. Laurie asked that the HRB decide how the citizens who had something to share would do so. Mr. Dickerson said county council has a 3-minute limit on comments, and because of the number of people present who want to speak, he suggested the board could limit comments “to a finite time.” Mr. Peitz said he “would like to bend the rules in that direction, too.”

Ms. Kelly said the only types of projects that come before the HRB “that require public hearings are demolitions.” There are two buildings on this site, so if the project moves forward, that public hearing requirement would be triggered. Ms. Lutz said she feels “that city policy needs to be changed.”

Peggy Simmer, 915 Port Republic Street, lives “next to Tabby Place, basically.” She said Mr. Richards had said the prefab parts of the parking structure would only be on the street side, so she asked what she would be looking at from her home. Mr. Stewart said, “We will be covering that in the landscape plan,” when it’s submitted. Mr. Richards said, “Only a small portion of the garage is facing toward your house”: the stair tower, and columns and spandrels, which they could look at to “dress that up.” The rest of it – beyond Ms. Simmer’s house, next to Tabby Place – “becomes a solid wall . . . because of the fire rating requirements,” he said.

Mr. Darden said that the architectural components of the parking structure are not set in stone; they are “making diligent notes,” and “may not have the answer” for her at

this time. Mr. Peitz asked if she's supportive of the parking garage, and Ms. Simmer said, "Mostly, yes."

Mr. Sutton said he lives on Craven Street, about a block from the proposed parking garage. As a citizen, he understands the need for it. The documents that staff and the HRB use (e.g., the Preservation Manual and Supplement) "do not even address a parking garage." He has looked for a National Landmark District "that was jeopardized by a parking garage being built" there, and he was unable to find one. Mr. Sutton feels the SHPO would be unlikely to ever approve of a parking garage, so the HRB should not use that office's opinion to determine whether one is built or not. He implored the board "to look at this architecturally." It's unknown whether the City of Beaufort will get funding from a penny sales tax for a parking garage, he said, so they should take advantage of this opportunity with a private developer whose businesses' guests and employees will park there. Though this will be a private parking garage, Mr. Sutton said, not a public one, he supports it.

Fred Washington, Jr. said he believes there's a need for a parking garage, but one of his concerns is that "there doesn't seem to be the connection between the private sector and the city." He doesn't see "a holistic approach being taken to this." If the penny sales tax passes, "you're talking public input . . . and public support," he said. "A more holistic approach would be" to use these spaces: across the street from his church, at the former Western Auto lot, and something "elevated" adjacent to the library, Mr. Washington said. For a long-term solution, they need to look at the growth that will take place, and the approach shouldn't be piecemeal. "It's private, but it is public," he said, "and I'm a part of the public." Beaufort attracts people because of its past, so its past, present, *and* future should all be taken into account for this project. He understands business, infill, and the tax base, he said, but he also understands those who live here, those who visit, and what people are attracted to. "We are unique," Mr. Washington said, "and one of the unique things about us is our willingness to work together to come up with a solution."

Rev. Kenneth Hodges, pastor at the Tabernacle Baptist Church, said he has "concerns about this approach." While he supports "approaching the parking needs in Beaufort," he agrees with Mr. Washington that the solution is not being looked at holistically. Rev. Hodges said he was "taken aback" by Chairman Newman stating his support for the project before any public input had been heard. Beaufort is different than Charleston and Savannah because of the size of its NHLHD, he said, which covers "almost the entire City of Beaufort." The HRB members were appointed "to make certain that we maintain that status." The NHLHD status has been threatened numerous times, he said, and if it happens, it will have an impact on the City of Beaufort. Rev. Hodges said the shift in perspective in the historic district has resulted in a feeling that "our status is secure," but they don't want to do anything that will jeopardize that.

Rev. Hodges described the Tabernacle Baptist Church's "four contributing resources" in

the NHLD, including the church's sanctuary, which has been there 153 years. This parking garage is "huge" from the perspective of his church, and a model he built "buckled . . . and fell down." The only monument in the country to honor Robert Smalls, Rev. Hodges said, and the places where Mr. Smalls and his family are buried is "right there on that block," so people from around the world come there "daily to view it." A renowned sculptor is proposing a monument to Harriet Tubman, too, and he's concerned that they will do something to "jeopardize our historic status in this area." The city also runs the risk of "destroying the goose that lays the golden egg," because people come to Beaufort because of "its historic significance."

Rev. Hodges said he would "work with anyone" to see that a structure that goes on that block is one that will benefit the community, as well as Mr. Stewart. He said he understands that there will be an upcoming meeting with the city "to determine if this is a public-private partnership or just a private venture," and to move on this project before that meeting does the public "an injustice."

Andy Roberts said he is "vehemently opposed to this" parking structure "going in there." He asked what Beaufort is trying to become, and while he commended Mr. Stewart and SPS, he said the building "is too big," at approximately the same height as the telephone poles.

Kim Poovey said she's sure Mr. Stewart will "do amazing things with this" parking structure. She asked him if it would provide parking "for city employees, as well." Mr. Stewart said the properties he owns "have always made excess spaces available to the public . . . on a monthly basis." While he would "continue to do that" in this parking structure, "we don't want anybody to think that this removes the pressure from the city to address the need for public infrastructure" for parking.

Ms. Poovey said the Milner report in the early 1970s predicted this problem with parking due to infill, as well as the need to maintain historic assets. She agrees with Mr. Washington and Rev. Hodges that this project needs to be done as a community. She's concerned that the SHPO is opposed to this building, and she stressed the need to compromise. This building is "massive," Ms. Poovey said, joking that there will be nowhere in the city or Lady's Island that it won't be visible. The historic nature and fabric of Beaufort "is more important than anything else in the state," she feels, and the fact that Robert Smalls is buried across the street from this structure is very important to her personally.

Ms. Poovey asked if the structure could be designed to look like Mr. Stewart's buildings that are behind the Hilton Hotel, so as not to "dwarf one of the most significant treasures in Beaufort." If Mr. Stewart is allowed to build this large of a parking structure, she feels, others will want to, too. Ms. Poovey asked if they could "find a way to bring" Mr. Stewart's "ability and foresight" together with "what's in the guidelines" that will "preserve our historic nature" and is acceptable to the community.

Douglas Storrs, who lives on New Street, agreed with Chairman Newman that this is an architectural issue, not a use issue. He knows parking “is a huge issue in Beaufort,” but he feels they need to be “careful to not have the demand for (this) use dictate or override the responsibility the HRB has about design.” From an architectural standpoint, he said, “the massing is out of scale,” and on the street level, there is much that could be done to “improve it in the public realm.” Mr. Storrs said this is critical, because “when the car wins out over the pedestrian,” they miss out on the benefits of “the continued economic expansion of the downtown.” He feels this proposed design looks like “an attempt to make” the parking structure “look like townhouses,” which he called “false architecture” that has “failed miserably.” At this stage, Mr. Storrs said he feels the applicants have “not done a good job solving” the design problems, but he believes they can all be corrected.

Esther Harnett owns the lot directly across from this proposed structure on Charles Street. She is “totally in favor of this being built,” so the city “can be economically viable.”

Liz Namerow asked Mr. Stewart if this parking garage would “service the Beaufort Inn guests and employees. Mr. Stewart replied that “it will serve our investments downtown as well as the customers who shop there. But we’re not here to replace the civic obligation to provide infrastructure,” which is not “our responsibility or yours.” Ms. Namerow said this structure “weighs in at about a third” of the size of the “long-term parking lot” at the Savannah airport, which seems unnecessarily large for Beaufort. Aesthetically, a lot could be done to the building (e.g., plantation shutters, pillars, etc.), Ms. Namerow said, so it doesn’t look like a parking garage that could be “anywhere.”

Grant Williams, who lives on The Point, said he disagrees with Chairman Newman’s comment that parking “is not this developer’s problem.” As Mr. Stewart’s “private company is developing (and) expanding, they are creating their own parking problem for their own employees, guests, and everybody else. This is their problem, not ours.”

Erica Dickerson said she and Mr. Dickerson have always been in favor of a parking structure downtown. They “invest heavily in downtown,” and until recently, they “owned a house across the street” from where this structure would be. “We pay a lot of taxes downtown, and we don’t want to see this city crippled by being frozen in a time warp,” she said.

Mary Lou Brewton said she has lived in Beaufort since 1949. She loves the concept of downtown parking, and said she has never had any trouble parking there. She also feels this structure is “too large.”

Cooter Ramsey, Allison Ramsey Architects, thinks “the site is fantastic,” and the mass, scale, and height are “fine.” However, he said, “We’ve got to do something to address”

the street level, because the building addresses three streets, but there are “no activities wrapping around there.”

Ms. Lutz said HBF’s position has been communicated to Structured Parking Solutions and Mr. Stewart. The organization is not opposed to a garage downtown, and “this seems like a wonderful way to develop this parcel,” she said. However, interaction with pedestrian walkways is important, and this design doesn't appear to be conducive to that. HBF is primarily interested in the height, mass, and scale of a parking garage, Ms. Lutz said, and they would like to see the mass of this building reduced. The whole city is affected by a building of this size, she said, but it’s “most important to respect the property owners across the street at Tabernacle Baptist Church.” It’s “an important historic block,” Ms. Lutz said, and “they have been stewards of the historic buildings on that block,” so “their opinions and involvement in this discussion need to be heeded.”

Jill Hartell, Scott Street, wondered if “we’re going to have to continue to build parking structures and more rooms downtown,” because people like “the historic feel” of Beaufort, and such a parking structure downtown affects that. She suggested a parking structure on Boundary Street with shuttles to take people into downtown. The city’s narrow streets and a structure this large will “affect traffic,” backing it up onto Carteret Street, Ms. Hartell said. The community should be kept walkable and bike-able, she feels, so they need to think about “a plan for the future.”

Bob Semmler thanked Mr. Stewart for bringing forth a solution to “something that’s been discussed since 1972.” He also thanked Chairman Newman for saying he’s in favor of this parking structure, even without his having heard public comment, and Rev. Hodges for what he had said. He concluded that he is in favor of the parking garage.

Zadie Reeves said one of the members of her church, **Kenneth Brown**, had written a letter because he was unable to attend the HRB meeting, and she read it. Mr. Brown wrote that he is a native of Beaufort and has lived here more than 57 years. He has travelled widely and moved back here because of the city’s beauty, its historic buildings – especially the churches – the trees, and the antebellum homes. The historic character of the city would be destroyed by this the parking garage, Mr. Brown fears, and that’s what separates Beaufort from other communities. He suggested that the shuttle parking that supports large downtown events works well. A parking garage a block from the waterfront “will bring massive traffic congestion in such a small downtown area.” While it has been stated that most people will not walk a long way from a parking garage, Mr. Brown wrote, “Beaufort does a great job transporting people to and from” events. The Liberty Street parking garage in Savannah is a distance from River Street, but “most people prefer it to” the garage “closest to River Street.” The proposed parking garage will also have a huge impact on the historic Tabernacle Baptist Church, Mr. Brown said, so he asked that another location be considered for it.

Kate Schaefer, Coastal Conservation League, said, “Protected rural places are great

complements to thriving urban areas.” She said liner buildings as a mitigation technique for the mass and scale of this building “would break up the monolithic structure,” which, though it might change the number of parking spaces in this building, would also allow the “structure to reflect the neighboring districts, and certainly what’s across the street at the Tabernacle fourplex” and in other renovated historic structures downtown. Liner buildings “contribute to downtown infill,” which enhances walkability and the Historic District’s vibrancy, and they could be mixed-use, live-work buildings, Ms. Schaefer said. The 2008 Historic Preservation Plan and the 2009 Comp Plan state as goals increasing “livability and walkability downtown.” A blank façade does not afford the same walkability and “eyes on the street” as could be had with the foot traffic that would come with offices in live-work units.

Ms. Schaefer said “496 spaces in one location,” rather than “spread throughout the extended Historic District,” could congest downtown and reduce the walkability of the historic area. She agreed with Mr. Stewart that parking is subsidized infrastructure, and while it’s not free, pedestrians often are the ones subsidizing it. Large-scale parking lots “push everything further apart,” Ms. Schaefer said, and can increase the likelihood of people driving, which detracts from the walkability of downtown. Not only developers and public entities can be subsidized parking; the Historic District and walkability can subsidize it, too, she said, and “we can’t afford to lose” them.

Jon Verity said for 43 years it has been assumed that a parking garage would be built and owned by the city, not by a private citizen. The City of Beaufort has had numerous committees look at parking, and the most recent parking task force recommended this site as “probably the most likely” for a parking garage, he said. Of the old Western Auto site, this site, and 500 Carteret Street, this site was considered the only viable one, Mr. Verity said, as the Western Auto lot is considered too small, and 500 Carteret is “too far away” from Bay Street. The city only owns the 500 Carteret Street site, while Mr. Stewart owns the other two.

Mr. Verity said he wanted the public in attendance to know that “the city (has) been working on” its parking issues “forever” and is “focused on the concerns that many of you have expressed.” While “there is room for more collaboration . . . and more discussion on design,” he said, “the city hasn’t been sitting and waiting . . . on a private developer to come along and build this.”

Mr. Darden said he thought all of the comments “were excellent,” though he took “a little bit exception” to the notion that this has been a “haphazard or . . . piecemeal process.” He said SPS has invested “hundreds of thousands of dollars” in this project and has been in Beaufort for three years doing due diligence, with “no guarantee (that) anything happens.”

A member of the public had defined preservation as “aiding, preserving, and protecting the district,” Mr. Darden said; at HBF’s annual meeting last year, a speaker had

addressed preservation from the perspective of it being “the community’s responsibility to protect that district holistically,” including ensuring that “the economic integrity around” the city’s “structures allows them to be maintained.” A study has shown that if infrastructure, including parking, is not addressed, historic structures “could fall apart at some point in time,” he said. “We’ve done some very elaborate studies here” about “parking counts,” Mr. Darden said, and Beaufort “essentially has 400 parking spaces that it physically controls,” though it may lease some spaces from private owners.

A study utilizing the city’s “muni code” in order to show how many parking spaces each building “and its use” has to have determined that the city needs 650 parking spaces downtown to support the businesses that are there now, Mr. Darden said. So the city currently “is under-parked” by 200 spaces, he said, and the future use of the Marina parking lot – as either a municipal park or as a place to add parking spaces – has been discussed. Another SPS study showed that private citizens downtown have more than 800 parking spaces that they are “providing indirectly” to the city, so their property, which could be “put to higher and better use” earning its owners’ money, is being “squander(ed) . . . for your own parking needs,” Mr. Darden said.

Mr. Darden considers himself “a historic preservationist,” and he lives in a small historic town in Alabama, but he feels that as a community, “there’s a greater good to preservation, other than just . . . toiling over” the building of “a structure that’s actually there to help protect your own historic areas.”

Mr. Darden said, “Only a municipality can experience a subsidy.” Cities “do subsidize parking systems” in “a perfect world,” he said, because only cities “can realize the taxes . . . that are driven by people being able to get there and park and shop.” This parking garage will cost \$160 per space, per month, not counting the cost of the land the structure is on, he said. Liner buildings and “occupied uses on the ground floor” will drive the cost of the garage up, Mr. Darden said, because “if you do anything inside a garage, other than park cars, the cost . . . goes up” because of the need for additional fireproofing and additional sprinkler and mechanical systems, so “that \$160 per space goes north,” and the occupied use “also gets more expensive because it’s being built inside a different kind of construction product.”

SPS develops parking garages with occupied uses around the country, Mr. Darden said, and went on to detail the costs involved in them: per square foot, and relative to what he guessed the price range was for commercial space in downtown Beaufort. While “it’s real easy to armchair quarterback and say, ‘It’s got to have occupied use on the ground floor,’” he said, “Who’s going to pay for it?” and, “more importantly, who’s going to be responsible for that space across from the church being empty for gosh knows how long?” Mr. Darden said it was not “his place to say” what the answers were to these questions, but he was “giving you the math” and “the information, so as a group of citizens, you can make these determinations.”

Though the Civic Master Plan shows a master plan for a parking garage with liner buildings, Mr. Darden called the master plan “impossible,” because “it was drawn by people who do not know parking. It physically does not fit.” If they were to add liner buildings to the *outside* of the parking garage, it has to have a firewall of solid concrete, which “means no architecture.” Mr. Darden asked, “Are you as a community willing to build a concrete tomb . . . and wait on the retail market, or on someone to build beautiful townhomes 10 years in the future?”

Mr. Darden called the public comment about traffic and using shuttles to alleviate parking problems, a “great comment,” then asked, “Who’s paying for it? Is the community willing for your taxes to go up to pay for a shuttle?” He asked rhetorically if the members of the public present would park three to five blocks away from downtown, even if it were free, and take a shuttle “to eat and shop.” The answer is “No,” Mr. Darden said, because “in the parking world, people are cheap first, lazy second.” He explained the expression and said the community needs “to think before you start spending money on shuttles. It’s not going to work.”

Of traffic concerns, Mr. Darden said, “this particular site is perfect.” Because it is at Charles Street, “it can bifurcate the traffic coming in from Carteret” Street. It will not create more traffic, he believes, because “the traffic is” on Bay Street, where “people are driving up and down . . . waiting on that cheap parking to open up at the front door” of the business they want to go to. “If there’s reasonably priced parking” close, those people will go there.

Mr. Darden said, “We’re asking for a conceptual series of evaluations of this project.” They are very interested in the comments, “especially the architectural ones.” It’s “very easy to throw architecture at a garage,” he said. Rather than requiring liner buildings or retail on the parking garage’s ground floor “to create architectural styles, it’s more efficient to throw architecture at it than . . . to throw a use at it.”

Concerning mass and scale, Mr. Darden said the proposed “building collectively is a fraction of the size of your collective buildings on Bay Street. The only difference . . . is that those are individual storefronts.” He said architecture can be adjusted. Their renderings were “purposely” shot at a long angle “because we didn’t want to hide anything.” This is the “overall look of this structure,” not what will be seen when walking by the building “and looking up,” which he said “will be the exact same thing you see when you walk down Bay Street”: a view at “close proximity of a large building.”

Chairman Newman thanked the public for its comments. He said he had made a statement at the beginning of this part of the HRB meeting saying he was supportive of the project, while he understands others’ perspectives. He is also a citizen of this community, he said, and “stating my own opinion, I think, is an acceptable endeavor.” The idea of community planning that Mr. Washington mentioned, Chairman Newman said, “is absolutely true,” and “there are books full of community planning” that has

already been done, but that doesn't matter "until someone is willing to execute it."

Chairman Newman feels multiple different, smaller parking structures are not likely to occur in Beaufort because those are not cost-effective, according to past studies. They're addressing this parking structure because "it's a real proposal in a good location," he said, and whatever is built here will "have some drawbacks and . . . some impact," he said. This parking structure plan will have the biggest effect on the Tabernacle Baptist Church, Chairman Newman feels.

A developer who had looked at a project in the Marina parking lot "that probably would have involved parking there" or "parking at a place like this" parking structure, saw the project "shut down" by people who objected to development there and "said, "We're going to expand the park downtown'," which Chairman Newman called "a lovely idea," but doing so while wiping out parking at the marina would be an indefensible, "complete nonstarter," he said.

Mr. Peitz asked Mr. Stewart or Ms. Kelly to elaborate on ongoing discussions with the city manager. The City of Beaufort has previously not done him "the courtesy of a return phone call," Mr. Stewart said, after his 2008 letter to Mr. Dadson, but Mr. Prokop has done so, and will be meeting with them. Mr. Stewart said as a business person in this community, he has "been open to working with civic engagement for well over a decade now," and Mr. Prokop is "someone working in City Hall who is willing to work with us."

Mr. Peitz asked if the garage would be open to the public and how "the logistics of that" would work. Mr. Stewart asked Mr. Peitz how that would "affect the architecture, if you don't mind." Mr. Peitz said it didn't, but among the "many topics" that had been discussed at the meeting was "the community need versus the adverse impact" of the parking garage.

Mr. Stewart said he is "frustrated" because "parking downtown has been a mess." He "had to buy this property so that my businesses could be assured" they would be able to "serve my customers," including his "small business tenants" and their customers. Because no one has done anything about parking until now, Mr. Stewart said people say to him, "'I'm delighted you're solving the parking problem for the city, Dick,'" but, he stated emphatically, "I'm not!" just as he's not doing other work that the city "is supposed to do."

The city "has accepted that it will need 500 spaces downtown," Mr. Stewart said. If he were to "build liner buildings" on a parking structure with just "a few spaces," he believes, "I could get *that* project approved, but then where are the people going to park?" He said people become pedestrians after "they park their cars and get out of them," when they "have a place to go." This is "what is needed if downtown is going to be healthy," he said.

Mr. Stewart recalled a visiting architect with the Milner group saying, “When Beaufort was built, there weren’t cars, so we didn’t plan for cars,” but, he said, now “most of the people who come into Beaufort come by car.”

Mr. Stewart said he had put a sidewalk in front of Beaufort Town Center, which he owns, when he built it, because “the planning department told” him “that would be the future sidewalk,” but nine years later, “it’s not connected,” and there are no plans to connect it, so he feels the façade is “wasted,” and “we have done something that makes no sense.”

Mr. Stewart feels “we have to provide parking and do what Milner said we should do . . . You have to find a way to accommodate people in cars” and “find a way to compromise” so people come here, “get out of their cars . . . and experience what” brought them to Beaufort.

Mr. Peitz asked Mr. Stewart’s timetable for construction, and Mr. Stewart said he’s not prepared to say, but it would not be more than a year after approval.

Mr. Symes said he doesn’t believe the city, the community, or the Historic District “can survive without more parking.” Though “we need parking garages,” he said, the purview of the HRB is to look at what the building looks like that has “cars inside of it.” The difficulty with that lies in blending “the past with the present and the future,” Mr. Symes said, and making “this building fit into the Historic District,” which he believes can be done.

Mr. Symes said he understands that “it’s all about money,” and that the cost and effort to build a garage are “a big deal.” It’s important to build this parking structure, he feels, but it’s “a little bit too massive” as planned. Mr. Symes said he “could work with” three stories. Also, he thinks the façade is “too symmetrical” right now. “Greening” it would be good. He doesn’t “know what the outside” of the structure should look like, but he feels the building “needs character” in order to look as if it fits in the Historic District. Mr. Symes believes the “facades over the entrances now are not appropriate,” because they’re “a little bit too much,” and need “to blend with the rest of it.”

Mr. Symes said at an HBF meeting, **Rob Montgomery** had said one way “to help the line of (this) huge building” is to take out six parking spaces and “bring it back in a little bit,” so there is “some character and movement to the wall.” More depth “will help it look less like one huge building,” Mr. Symes said, and will “add some character to it.” The south side of the building has no façade on it now, though there may be plans to do something, he said. It should have a facade, he feels, “though that will add expense.” While Mr. Symes understands the public’s concerns “about a massive building in the Historic District,” he believes “it’s vital to have a building like this to get people to come here, spend their money, and make this town survive.”

Mr. Peitz said Mr. Symes is the HBF representative on the HRB, so he feels Mr. Symes' support for this project "is significant." Mr. Peitz has authored many plans that have never been implemented. This is the first step to getting this board's approval, he said, and if it moves forward, he would like to see the applicant and the city work with the adjacent property owners and the public to get "greater approval" from them. Something needs to be done "to kickstart something that has been talked about for so long," he said.

Ms. Laurie feels the HRB needs to look at how this project "will affect other people." It's not that parking isn't needed, Ms. Laurie said, but she is concerned about the number of people who have shown up to this meeting with concerns. "As a citizen," she feels "there's something broken in the process." While the HRB is "charged with doing the architectural piece of it," Ms. Laurie feels something "needs to be fixed" about "the way things are being done in the city" when there is the level of "outpouring of concerns" they have seen at this meeting, with "no way for it to be channeled." She said, "Something is broken," and the City of Beaufort needs to "do something different" to meld those who, in Gullah, have "binyah" (been here) and those who "comeyah" (come here).

Mr. Dickerson said he and Ms. Dickerson had moved to Beaufort from Frederick, Maryland, which was a town smaller than Beaufort that had "a very rich history that was falling down around its shoulders." The city decided to put up a parking structure. They didn't have the economic wealth, the population density, etc., to justify putting it up, he said, but when they built it, it had an "immediate and strong" effect on the community. Businesses grew, "the community had a bigger tax base" as those businesses grew, and "more people moved downtown" and invested in the community, Mr. Dickerson said. Today – 15 years later – while the town's size hasn't changed dramatically, its economy has changed so much: from "struggling to stay alive" to being "a very, very vibrant community with all kinds of things going on," a strong tax base, and a strong economy. It's important to consider facts when looking at any investments in the community, Mr. Dickerson feels. This is not the first large parking garage built in a small city, and around the country, everywhere parking garages go in, they "improve the community."

Mr. Dickerson said, "Investment in a community comes in multiple ways" (e.g., sales tax or property tax). Private investment dollars "create jobs" and grow the tax base and the economy. He said Mr. Stewart is making "a massive investment in Beaufort," and that investment will make it a better place to live, plus he wants a return on that investment, because "that's the American way," Mr. Dickerson said. He feels Mr. Stewart's investment in this garage is more than "a money grab," and the extent of it indicates the level of Mr. Stewart's "interest in making Beaufort (have) a stronger economy" and be better place to live.

"Structured parking is, in fact, infrastructure," Mr. Dickerson said, and it is part of a larger picture of what's needed in Beaufort. He said 1% to 2% growth in Beaufort in the

last decade is well-documented, while growth is over 1000% in Bluffton, year-over-year. He would like to see the economy grow faster than inflation in Beaufort. He thinks the public comments “are great,” as is the interest in a parking garage that “looks appropriate for our community,” but the public must “embrace an opportunity to move this . . . forward,” as it’s “been in front of us for decades,” rather than holding it back because “it’s not ‘this’ or ‘that,’” he said.

Ms. Laurie asked Ms. Kelly what staff’s recommendation is. Ms. Kelly said staff “did not provide a recommendation for this project.” Ms. Kelly asked what the applicant’s expectations were for this meeting. Mr. Stewart gave examples of what he can’t and won’t do from some of the public’s suggestions of what could be done in lieu of this proposed parking structure. He and the SPS representatives would like “some input” from the HRB, Mr. Stewart said, “so we don’t keep guessing.” He said it was a “mistake” to “assume that this process is going to go on forever,” and that he can “keep coming back” to the HRB, “and spending money and applying.” He described a poor experience in the past with the HRB. “Any direction you might give us that would not waste your time with us guessing what might be suitable would be appropriate,” Mr. Stewart said. He gave examples of the type of advice he would find “helpful.”

Mr. Stewart said it’s expensive to pull buildings back to provide a green space, but “those are issues we can work with.” He’d like “to keep trees,” put in benches and fountains, and “share the history” of the area with “a series of plaques” to commemorate the Robert Smalls grave, the Tabernacle Baptist Church, and the other historic buildings there. People walk on both sides of that street, Mr. Stewart said, and “they will be engaged” and able to see the signs comfortably, not looking up at the parapet of the parking garage through the trees. These “are trade-offs we’ve made already,” he said. He considers his “having to guess what is acceptable” to be a “winnowing-down” process that ends “up with something designed by a committee,” so any guidance from the HRB would be helpful, but if that guidance “gets to be expensive enough, we reserve the right to withdraw from our proposal.” Mr. Stewart said he prefers the board’s guidance in the form of votes so he won’t “forget what we agreed to at the time we did it.”

Chairman Newman said he feels this project needs to be supported. He explained what he’d meant by saying that this needs to be addressed as an architectural problem: what could make this proposal for a full parking garage – “not a building with liner buildings added to it,” which “creates more need and eliminates some of the supply” – work? When he and those in his office were identifying the parking structure’s architectural issues, Chairman Newman said, they had wondered collectively if the building were “too regular” and symmetrical, and asked themselves how the parking structure would be constructed. He asked if there were “any opportunity to vary the panel system” to make it “less A-B-A-B-A-B.” He’s not sure of a solution, he said, but he wonders if there’s flexibility in the exterior panel system.

Chairman Newman said he doesn't "know the internal workings directly behind these facades," so he asked if the top of the green wall could be crenelated (Lauren: Is this what he meant?) "more by pulling those areas down." There is some notching in this elevation, but "you could pull that down and use something like a cable rail . . . as the continuance of a railing system, or even a wrought iron railing," which he had seen an example of in a parking garage, and which would "allow . . . more articulation of this line, where it wasn't continuously at that height," he said.

Chairman Newman said he wonders if awnings or "some kinds of projections" would give the face of the building more articulation and soften it. There is a lot of opportunity for green space, he said, and it wouldn't be "crammed in." The big live oaks are outside of the sidewalk, he said, so they won't "be mangled," which is "a green space that can stay intact." Then there's the sidewalk, then the "internal green space," Chairman Newman said. So it seems like a good opportunity for landscaping, and "a landscape plan would be pretty critical."

Most people in Chairman Newman's office felt like the "brick parts" of the building in this plan "felt more like the buildings in town," and so were "more successful" than the "white elements," he said. Chairman Newman said when the window strips on the brick elevations "are shown with the white portions between the windows . . . there might be some variability there," with brick between them, not the vertical strips, which "seem to emphasize the vertical height."

The elevation that faces the Scheper House is "critical," Chairman Newman said. This structure will have even more impact on Ms. Simmer than it will have on the Tabernacle Baptist Church, he feels. The landscape infill between the house and this structure is essential, and the Simmers should "participate in that as well."

The area that drew the most attention among those in Chairman Newman's office was the two entry elevations, which look "divorced" from the Craven Street "treatment," he said; they need to ensure that the design lets people know, "This is where cars go in." "This expression" runs too far from "your general idea of . . . housing this in a cloak of local scale (and) local material," he said, so these entries are not currently successfully "softening."

Chairman Newman said, "It's impossible" for the applicant "to do a project like this" and say honestly that the parking structure is "not big," "doesn't take up a lot of space," and "won't have any impact on anybody," but it would be "equally dishonest to put the problem off as if there (are) three or four places to solve this problem that are *realistically* viable." The structure "will have an impact on people," he said. Mr. Dickerson had stated the point well that "it doesn't matter" if it's built and owned by a public or private entity, he said, but it is "a big gesture for a private entity to take this up, and it will have a multiplying effect in terms of its benefits." Chairman Newman said, Mr. Stewart's hotel and "some of the businesses" he's "created will benefit, but we've

reviewed a lot of projects . . . that all would be viable, and probably would happen, if there was the opportunity.”

Having a livable, walkable community works if the areas that should be dense can be made dense, Chairman Newman said. “The downtown commercial core is supposed to be dense,” so “you can walk to restaurants,” for example. Still, he said he wouldn’t walk downtown to a new pizza restaurant because he lives a mile away; he would drive. “These parking spaces” in this structure will “open up some of the spaces that already exist,” he said. “They are a public-private partnership already.”

Chairman Newman said he finds this to be “the right project in the right place,” and he feels it supports the historic fabric, “to continue” it. “The architecture and landscaping” are what “will make this as successful as it can be,” he concluded.

Mr. Dickerson said on the Craven Street side of the parking garage, the Tabernacle Baptist Church has “an entire campus that they’ve built and maintain, so anything that goes in should reflect well on that.” The plan for the first floor has “more than the typical setback,” which “almost creates a linear park.” The Tabernacle Baptist Church, Historic Beaufort Foundation, and the community could collaborate to “add historical content to that walkway (and) create a broader campus of information about the community,” Mr. Dickerson said. He sees this as an opportunity to expand on the design and to have various groups and individuals “bring in” history to create a streetscape that “embrace(s) the community (and) creates a vital resource for downtown.”

Mr. Symes said his biggest issue is breaking up the outside of the building “significantly,” so it doesn’t look “like one large building.” If this could be done, he’d be “more agreeable to letting it go to the full height you want,” he told Mr. Stewart. Mr. Symes feels it appears too massive now.

Mr. Peitz suggested staggering the setbacks, so it’s less linear and appears more like “an assemblage of buildings,” rather than one massive building. Mr. Stewart said they would need a bigger drive lane if they were to stagger it. If they can do that *outside* the envelope of the building, “with landscaping or awnings,” for example, they “won’t eat up all the open space . . . on both sides.”

Mr. Stewart described what would have been “in my best interest” to do with the space around the building, given what he had paid for this property, but he said, “we chose to put it back, because we are . . . the single biggest neighbor in terms of investment and ongoing activities.” He said, “We would like (the) experience coming down Craven Street to be . . . pedestrian-oriented.”

Mr. Richards said that in order to “stagger,” as Mr. Peitz had suggested, they would have to “push out,” not in. He said they could vary the appearance of “each panel” by varying materials and colors, using different panel assemblies, etc.

Mr. Darden said they had had a conversation with HBF about changing the texture between the panels and changing the brick on the panels, for example, to create a more desirable look. Mr. Stewart said the technique of construction is important, because the site will be “messy” while it’s being built. So people can get in and out more easily, this technique “can shorten” the time that the area is in disarray “by quite a bit,” he said.

Chairman Newman asked how the parking garage is assembled, which Mr. Richards and Mr. Darden explained. Concerning the question of whether another floor could be added later, Mr. Darden said the envelope is erected “very quickly,” (i.e., in 60 days) to minimize “the invasiveness to the community,” and the components weigh “upwards of 60 tons.” To add to the building vertically, he said, the crane that can pick up these heavy elements would have “to work outside the perimeter of the building then.” They can’t work around the built structures, he said. They have to be far enough away that the crane and its jib can be outside the footprint of other buildings. It can only be built “one time, the way you want it,” Mr. Darden said.

Ms. Kelly asked if the applicant could keep the plan they have, but bring the building in at certain places. They would “definitely lose six or seven spaces per floor,” she said, but they wouldn’t “intrude into that setback.” Mr. Richards said they could do that, but he told Ms. Kelly to “realize the economics of what you’re suggesting.” If the hard cost of each of the 496 parking spaces is \$15,000 each, he said, and those spaces were taken out of each floor and additional panels were created “to make that movement happen, all the sudden” the structure is “down to 432 spaces,” and there are more wall panels, Mr. Richards said, so “you have not lowered the cost of construction . . . you’ve added \$1,500 per space,” which “drives up . . . the rental rate” per month. Mr. Stewart said, “We won’t be bringing that back to you. If it’s a requirement, we’d like to know, so we can spend our time” on other things “and not waste yours. That’s not a financial option.”

Mr. Dickerson said if they left the Craven Street side the way it is – as opposed to a pushing the panels in or out – they could “turn that into a visual park.” That would eliminate the “issue of architecture,” doesn’t have a negative effect on the building’s cost, and improves the streetscape because it’s “educational (and) interesting.” Mr. Dickerson suggested that the space is “allocated,” so “just use it differently.” If pedestrians can look at “historical markers and points of interest, they’re never going to look up.”

Mr. Symes said what Mr. Dickerson is suggesting is important, but he disagreed that people will not look up, which is why the applicants should follow Chairman Newman’s advice about “varying that top . . . and (varying) how that brick goes on there,” as Mr. Darden had mentioned. This will “go a long way toward alleviating this issue,” he feels.

Mr. Peitz said a member of the public had made a comment that “a stamped pattern”

doesn't have to be "repeated." Mr. Darden said the "vertical striations are very monolithic (and) very flat." It's "relatively efficient" for them to "apply other horizontal members at different floor levels to create additional relief," and awnings, shutters, "or other elements" will also help with the monolithic quality of the walls. Mr. Darden asked the board to "let us work on this."

Mr. Richards said where there are "punched openings" in the panels, "we've extended the height to be up in between the T's stem," to avoid the panels being "squatty." Mr. Stewart said the panels can't be widened, but they "can be made taller."

At the top of this parking structure, Chairman Newman asked if they could lower the parapet without structural issues and "use a railing on the intermittent sections." Mr. Richards said there is a resistance standpoint "30 inches or below to the deck." Cable rails don't do a "good job with car impact." They use them "internally as pedestrian rails." Mr. Darden said car headlights are a more important reason not to do this than aesthetics are. Cable rails would mean headlights shine out into the neighborhood, and they want to avoid light trespass, so they "sort of need that solid wall," though they could vary the panel heights on it.

Chairman Newman said he prefers "the simpler architecture of the punched openings" to the "bays that have windows that have shutters on them." A garage in Charleston at the main visitors' center uses "shutter elements" principally. He suggested this as "a texture," rather than "trying to imitate a window with shutters." Mr. Peitz said the garage Chairman Newman is referring to is "in a residential neighborhood," and had used Bahama shutters; the design earned a national award. They didn't want that parking garage "to look like an apartment building," Mr. Peitz said, and it is "functional because it ventilates."

Chairman Newman said it's always difficult to synthesize the "textures, details, and elements that make a place the way it is," and "use that as a paintbrush for how you articulate a building like this, because it's not going to look like a series of houses" or businesses. He feels "we can be honest about that," and said he loves the idea of articulating "some kind of historic walk" along the streetscape. The landscape is another critical element of this project, Chairman Newman said, and he thinks "this is a pretty good take" that the applicants have submitted.

Mr. Darden said this package they had submitted "has a disconnect": The rendering shows "an outward projected corner with vegetation," which was their original concept, but Mr. Stewart had suggested narrowing the length of the mass. Mr. Darden showed the "inverted corners," which he said is the direction in which they're moving now. The "cost is a little different," Mr. Stewart said. "You spend more on walls here, but you lose the internal floor space" and "storage (space) in the corners." He thought this was "a good thing to do" so pedestrians could "see around" to the green areas coming up, but he could project those back out, and use the corners for storage. Chairman Newman

said he thinks Mr. Stewart's change "is absolutely a step in a positive direction," in "the way it addresses the corner" and because "it reduces the overall length."

Mr. Stewart said, "A lot of people (will be) coming up Charles" Street, and directional signs there and for the entryways are something they will be "spending time and attention" on.

Mr. Dickerson suggested the HRB determine "the things we agree upon" to give the applicants guidance: They agree that Beaufort needs a parking garage, but they *don't* agree that "we need to have it be well-balanced between aesthetics and economics," he said. Mr. Symes said he agrees with building the parking garage, but the HRB's charge is to look at the exterior of the building.

Mr. Dickerson said they agree that the setback on Craven Street should be maintained; they agree with preserving trees and vegetation there. The panel set-up needs "to be different," he said, "and they can discuss those more." They agree that they do not want blank walls. They agree that the path the developer is going down is "workable," Mr. Dickerson said. Mr. Peitz said there needs to be more detailing to create the appearance of an assemblage of buildings. They can do this "by varying things," or by introducing other elements.

Mr. Peitz said Chairman Newman's comments after the public comments "serve as a motion" for him, as do some of Mr. Symes' comments. Those comments and the minutes of the meeting would "give the applicant certainty."

Mr. Darden said they would like to get an understanding that the height, scale, and mass are "generally acceptable." Chairman Newman said it is his understanding that this structure is within the city's zoning and height regulations, and there are no ordinances that "this does not abide by, based on its . . . building configuration. Its site planning and size are within its zoning-allowable requirements."

Chairman Newman said a motion should address whether the HRB accepts "the configuration" of this building: the plan for *this* building on *this* location, and the board could make comments about "successful things" the applicants could do to move "from the study to a future step." The board's opinions of what they'd seen today would give the applicants guidance, he said. Holistically, Mr. Darden said, the board's comments "have been relatively consistent."

Mr. Stewart said he agreed. He'd appreciate a motion of the type Chairman Newman was proposing because "we will have to engage a landscape architect to look at what is happening on Craven Street, to know what we're working with there." Mr. Richards and his team can handle other matters, like changing brick colors and windows, Mr. Stewart said, but for things where they will need to bring professionals in, "any information that" the HRB "can give us about site location" would be helpful.

Mr. Symes asked if the board could give “conceptual approval based on the comments of the board.” Mr. Darden said the board’s comments and overall approach had been consistent.

In response to a question from Ms. Laurie, Chairman Newman said the staff report doesn’t specifically address the project’s conformity with the ordinances of the City of Beaufort because it focused on the studies of parking that have been done, and “that’s not our charge . . . A conceptual review of what is in front of us is what we would be giving conceptual approval to,” he said.

Mr. Symes made a motion to give conceptual approval to the parking structure project, with the project moving forward based on the comments of the HRB. Mr. Peitz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the board, **Chairman Newman made a motion, second by Mr. Peitz, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously**, and the meeting adjourned at 2:22 p.m.