SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL
MAY 22, 2025 — 5:00 PM
MUNICIPAL COURTROOM
2222 HIGHMARKET STREET
GEORGETOWN, SOUTH CAROLINA
AND LIVESTREAM:
https://www.facebook.com/cityofgtown/

Notice of this meeting has been made in accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws as amended.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC DEVICES**
3. **ENGINEERING**
   - **A. WK Dickson presentation on stormwater pump station study**
4. **PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**
   - **A. Community Appearance Board presentation**
5. **ADMINISTRATION**
   - **A. Present and discuss employee handbook revisions**
6. **ADJOURNMENT**
   - **A. Motion to Adjourn the Special Meeting of City Council.**

120 North Fraser Street • Georgetown, SC 29440 • (843) 545-4000

ACTION ITEM

Council Meeting Date:	May 22, 2025
Department:	Engineering
Issue Under Consideration:	WK Dickson presentation on stormwater pump station study
Amount Requested:	
In Current Budget?:	
If not, please explain:	
Financial Impact:	
Points to Consider:	
Options:	
Staff Recommendation:	

Reviews:

Stephanie Buccione	Approver	Created/Initiated

Attachments:
None

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ACTION ITEM

Council Meeting Date:	May 22, 2025
Department:	Planning & Community Development
Issue Under Consideration:	Community Appearance Board presentation
Amount Requested:	
In Current Budget?:	
If not, please explain:	
Financial Impact:	
Points to Consider:	
Options:	
Staff Recommendation:	

Reviews:

Clarissa Tindall	Approver	Created/Initiated
Ryan Call	Approver	Approved
Scott Whittier	Approver	Approved
Stephanie Buccione	Approver	Final Approval

Attachments:

1. Community Appearance Board

Community Appearance Board

1311 Community Appearance Board Review (CAB)

"The CAB shall have jurisdiction over the exterior improvements of changes to multi-family and non-residential developments within the jurisdictional boundaries of the UCOD"…

Requests of Council

- Guidance on forward movement regarding Design Guidelines

Staff Suggestion

•As the CAB's guidelines are within the Zoning Ordinance, a Zoning Ordinance update would encompass guideline updates

•As part of the rewrite/update process, we should model the CAB guidelines after the structure and format of the ARB's standards.

•Consider collaborating with Lowcountry architects and designers to ensure the guidelines are both practical and true to the character of Lowcountry Architecture.

•Re-evaluate CAB's powers regarding variances to the Area, Yard and Height Requirements

Basic Concerns

1. May not be business friendly
2. Powers of BZA have been granted to CAB
    1. Redefines setbacks, allowable densities, and height allowances
3. Contradictory standards regarding jurisdiction and powers
4. Subjective standards, allowing for rulings to be questioned
    1. Need for more clear and organized standards
5. Building Code must rule

1. May not be business friendly

May need to re-evaluate how properties and businesses are affected due to Design Guidelines

Affected Properties

The UCOD standards that follow shall be applicable to any parcel, structure, building, or use within the UCOD boundaries when:

1. Substantially renovated in an amount of or exceeding 50% of the then tax assessed value; or
2. Newly constructed, commercial, industrial, multi-family residential, or office developments; or
3. When any business has been closed for over 180 days or when a change of use is proposed, or
4. New or redeveloped parking lots, accessory structures, removal of trees and/or natural vegetation that are located partially or completely within the boundaries established for the UCOD; or
5. When any dwelling is being converted to a non-residential use; or
6. When any addition expanding the footprint of an existing building is proposed.

2. Powers of BZA have been granted to CAB

Redefines Zoning Allowances

- Requests for a variation from Article VIII: Area, Yard and Height requirements should go to the Board of Zoning Appeals
- Reduced setbacks within the UCOD:

1310.1 Build-to Line: For new construction, in lieu of a front setback line, a building shall be built to a fifteen (15) feet build-to line. Buildings may be built five (5) feet beyond or five (5) feet behind the build-to line. A build-to line is a line inside and across the front of a lot, generally parallel to the lot's Front Property Line. A pedestrian access to the building should be provided from the main thoroughfare.

1310.2 Side Setbacks: Minimum ten (10) feet. For the preservation of light and air between buildings, the Community Appearance Board may increase the minimum side setback(s) for buildings in excess of forty-five (45) feet in height after considering the overall height of the building, overall design, context of the building, surrounding properties, nearby residences, environmental features, and other factors.

1310.3 Rear Setback: When a property within the UCOD shares a rear property line with a residential use or residential zone district, the rear setback shall be a minimum of fifteen (15) feet.

- Increase in maximum building height within the UCOD:

[5] For properties that do not share a property line with a residential use or residential zone district, the height maximum may be extended beyond four stories but not more than eight (8) stories (or ninety (90) feet) whichever is less when a permitted use can provide its own fire protection by installing a fire suppression sprinkler system and meets all applicable requirements including but not limited to parking, landscaping, storm water, setback and building code requirements.. See Section 1310.8.

- Increased densities within the UCOD:

Residential Density- mixed uses encouraged.	When a primary building incorporates non-residential and residential uses on the same site, there shall be no density maximum.

3. Contradictory standards regarding jurisdiction and powers

Contradictions regarding jurisdiction

- Article XIII includes provisions that detail CAB's ability to grant potential variances or impose alternative requirements than those found within the Area, Yard, and Height standards outlined in Article VIII, as discussed on the last slide.

- However, Article XIII identifies that the jurisdiction of CAB is within design review, and any additional powers listed within Article XVII CAB

1311. Community Appearance Board Review (CAB)

The CAB shall have jurisdiction over the exterior improvements or changes to multi-family and non-residential developments within the jurisdictional boundaries of the UCOD. For parcels that are located in the Historic District and in the UCOD, the following shall be determinative as to jurisdiction:

Proposed projects that are on Contributing and non-contributing properties that are strictly a single family use shall be presented to the ARB including demolitions of a single-family use.

All other proposed projects for two-family, multi-family, mixed-use or non-residential uses shall be presented to the CAB. When a project proposes to convert a single-family use to another use, the ARB shall have jurisdiction over a demolition request and the CAB shall have jurisdiction over the proposed new construction.

The CAB shall provide a Preliminary review at the next available regularly scheduled meeting after a complete application is submitted. Preliminary review shall address height, scale and mass of a proposed project. Proposed projects shall be reviewed for compliance with the intent and standards of this ordinance and Article X Sign Regulations. The CAB may approve, approve with conditions, or deny a project proposal. Only those projects in compliance with this ordinance may be approved or approved with conditions. However, the CAB may hear variances, appeals, or any other matter authorized pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance Article XVII: Community Appearance Board. Variances and appeals may be reviewed concurrently at the Preliminary Review meeting of the CAB. After Preliminary review and approval is granted, the applicant shall submit an application for Final Approval addressing any comments provided at the Preliminary review as well as details of materials, color scheme, fenestrations, landscaping, signage, and lighting.

No building permit or Zoning approval may be issued except in compliance with the CAB Final approval.

Contradictions regarding jurisdiction etc.

- Article XVII only allows for CAB to grant variances in regard to MCOD requirements, not UCOD Area, Yard and Height Requirements

- Neither Article XIII Section 1311 nor Article XVII Section 1707 grant CAB the authority to make zoning decisions regarding Area, Yard and Height Requirements – only design review decisions

ARTICLE XVII: COMMUNITY APPEARANCE BOARD

1707 Powers and Duties of the Community Appearance Board

The Community Appearance Board shall have the following powers and duties:

1707.1 To hear and decide appeals where it is alleged there is an error in any order, requirement, decision, or determination by the Zoning Administrator in the enforcement of Article XIII: Design Overlay District for the Main Corridors ordinance found within the Zoning Ordinance.

1707.2 To hear and decide appeals for variances from the design requirements of Article XIII of the Zoning Ordinance when strict interpretation of these requirements would result in unnecessary hardship. A variance may be granted in an individual case of unnecessary hardship if the board makes and explains in writing the following findings:

1. There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular building or structure;
2. These conditions do not generally apply to other buildings or structures in the vicinity;
3. Because of these conditions, the application of the ordinance to the particular building or structure would effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property;
4. The authorization of a variance will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent property or to the public good, and the character of the district will not be harmed by granting of the variance.

1707.3 All final decisions and orders of the board must be in writing and permanently filed in the office of the Building and Planning Department as public record. All findings of fact and conclusions of law must be separately stated in final decisions or orders of the board, which must be delivered, to parties of interest by certified mail.

1707.4 In exercising the above powers, the Community Appearance Board may, in conformity with the provisions of this Ordinance, reverse or affirm, wholly or in part, or may modify the order, requirements, decision, or determination and to that end shall have all powers of the Zoning Administrator from whom the appeal is taken and may issue or direct the issuance of a permit. The Board, in execution of the duties for which appointed, may subpoena witnesses and in case of contempt may certify such fact to the Circuit Court having jurisdiction.

4. Subjective Standards

Examples of subjective standards and language

Building features and appearance. The shape, configuration, design, color, and types of material of proposed buildings, and/or alterations and additions to existing buildings, must establish an identifiable character for the development and not detract from neighboring properties. To this end, all elevations of a building must be in harmony one with another in terms of scale, proportion, detail, material, color, and design quality, and all buildings and accessory structures within a proposed development, including gasoline canopies, must be designed to create a harmonious whole. The use of loud, garish colors must be avoided except when the use of colors so characterized is essential for creating a successful design which complies with all other standards.

Shutters, when incorporated into the design of a building, should be functional and made of complementary materials and of a complementary design to the overall building.

The color palette should be complementary. Colors should be limited to no more than three except in extraordinary circumstances where the architectural design of the building is enhanced by additional colors.

4.5 Need clear, organized, and more detailed standards

Architectural Review Board Guidelines Table of Contents

CHAPTER 2: STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES—MATERIALS....26
1.0 Overview....26
2.0 Brickwork and Masonry....27
3.0 Concrete and Stucco....29
4.0 Siding....31

CHAPTER 3: STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES—DETAILS....35
5.0 Architectural Features....35
6.0 Awnings....37
7.0 Chimneys....39
8.0 Doors and Entrances....41
9.0 Foundations....45
10.0 Gutters and Downspouts....47
11.0 Lighting....49
12.0 Mechanical Systems....51
13.0 Paint and Paint Colors....53
14.0 Porches, Columns, and Railings....57
15.0 Roofs....63
16.0 Staircases and Steps....66
17.0 Windows and Shutters....68

CHAPTER 4: STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES—SETTING....75
18.0 Driveways and Parking Areas....75
19.0 Fences, Gates, and Walls....79
20.0 Garages, Sheds, Outbuildings & Ancillary Outdoor Structures....83
21.0 Grade Changes and Landscaping....88
22.0 Walkways....90

CHAPTER 5: STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES—NEW CONSTRUCTION....92
23.0 Additions....92
24.0 Decks....95
25.0 Elevating Dwellings....97
26.0 Primary Dwellings....102
27.0 Ramps, Lifts, and Elevators....108

CHAPTER 6: STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES—DETAILS....110
28.0 Architectural Features....110
29.0 Awnings....112
30.0 Balconies....114
31.0 Cast Iron and Metal Façades....116
32.0 Cornices....118
33.0 Doors and Entrances....120
34.0 Lighting....122
35.0 Mechanical Systems....124
36.0 Paint and Paint Colors....126
37.0 Roofs....128
38.0 Storefronts....130
39.0 Windows and Shutters....133

CHAPTER 7: STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES—NEW CONSTRUCTION....136
40.0 Accessibility....136
41.0 Additions....139
42.0 Primary Buildings....141

CHAPTER 8: STANDARDS FOR INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS....147
43.0 Institutional Buildings....147

CHAPTER 9: STANDARDS FOR SOUTH SIDE OF FRONT STREET AND WATERFRONT....150
44.0 South Side of Front Street and Waterfront....150

CHAPTER 10: RELOCATION....158
45.0 Relocation....158

CHAPTER 11: DEMOLITION....160
46.0 Demolition....160

Community Appearance Board Architectural Design Standards

1314 Architectural Design Standards

All proposed structures will contribute to the image of the City of Georgetown as a unique place of visual character, integrity and quality. Creativity in design is encouraged as a complement to the historic character of the City of Georgetown. Use of contemporary materials or original design elements may not be the basis of denying an application. Structures shall meet all applicable Building Code requirements in addition to the following:

a) Building features and appearance. The shape, configuration, design, color, and types of material of proposed buildings, and/or alterations and additions to existing buildings, must establish an identifiable character for the development and not detract from neighboring properties. To this end, all elevations of a building must be in harmony one with another in terms of scale, proportion, detail, material, color, and design quality, and all buildings and accessory structures within a proposed development, including gasoline canopies, must be designed to create a harmonious whole. The use of loud, garish colors must be avoided except when the use of colors so characterized is essential for creating a successful design which complies with all other standards.

b) The use of proper site design, architectural features, and/or landscaping to reduce the appearance of excessive height or mass of proposed structures should be utilized to make the development compatible with adjacent and nearby developments. Long, monotonous facade designs including, but not limited to those characterized by unrelieved repetition of shape or form or by unbroken extension of line shall be avoided. Ornamentation should complement the overall design and avoid visual clutter.

c) On-site electric, telephone, and other utility lines shall be underground.

d) Special features and accessory structures including storage areas, exposed machinery installations, service areas, truck loading areas, utility building and structures and similar accessory areas shall be subject to such design standards, setbacks, screen plantings, or other screening methods as shall reasonably be required by the CAB to prevent their being incongruous with the existing or contemplated environment and the surrounding properties.

e) The use of a parapet may be utilized and may extend beyond the maximum height limit but may not be extended beyond the height of any elevator shaft subject to approval of the CAB.

f) Appropriate exterior materials include finished wood, brick, shake shingles, hard plank, stone, stucco and split face block. The use of corrugated metal, unfinished wood, T1-11, and vinyl siding are not allowed exterior materials in the UCOD.

g) Shingles, metal standing seam, tile, terracotta, slate or other durable, long-lasting roofing materials are allowed.

h) Shutters, when incorporated into the design of a building, should be functional and made of complementary materials and of a complementary design to the overall building.

i) Fences and walls may be approved subject to the approval of the CAB. Fences and walls should not block views of natural areas from public rights-of-way and should incorporate transparent elements within the design. No fence or wall may exceed six (6) feet in height. Materials should be durable and be harmonious with the overall materials and design scheme of the principal building. Chain link, barbed wire, and other inappropriate fence materials shall not be approved.

j) The color palette should be complementary. Colors should be limited to no more than three except in extraordinary circumstances where the architectural design of the building is enhanced by additional colors.

ARB Guidelines Regarding Windows and Shutters

RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES
17.0 DETAILS –WINDOWS AND SHUTTERS

BACKGROUND

Many of Georgetown's historic dwellings retain their original wood sash or steel casement windows. Windows are prominent features on houses and help to define their architectural style and age. The oldest dwellings from the 18th century often retain their original nine-over-six or six-over-six wood sash design. In the 19th century wood sash windows had larger panes leading to the use of four-over-four, two-over-two, and one-over-one wood sash designs. The addition of stained glass windows was also common in the Victorian era. In the early 20th century a wide variety of wood window sash designs were used for Bungalow/Craftsman and Colonial Revival style homes. Tudor and Spanish Revival style homes from the period utilized both wood sash and steel casement windows.

Most of Georgetown's 18th and 19th century dwellings were built with window shutters to protect the windows from the elements. The 18th century dwellings often had solid double panel shutters while louvered shutters were more widely used for 19th and 20th century dwellings. They were attached to the window frames by metal hinges and pintles and were held open using metal fasteners known as "shutter dogs" or "holdbacks." The use of window shutters continued into the 20th century but gradually decreased with the introduction of air conditioning. Cheesecloth was used for many years to cover windows and keep out insects but the use of metal screen panels became popular for dwellings after the Civil War. Wood and metal screens were applied to many of the dwellings in the historic district in the late 19th and 20th centuries. The installation of storm windows in the past century provided additional protection from the elements in addition to shutters and also provided energy savings. The earliest storm windows had wood frames but aluminum frames became popular after World War II.

POLICY AND JUSTIFICATION

Windows on historic dwellings should be maintained or repaired to match the original design. Approval to remove original wood sash or steel casement windows will only be granted if the windows can be demonstrated to be beyond repair. If windows are deteriorated beyond repair, the installation of new wood or steel windows to match the original designs is preferred. Alternative materials may be considered. Original window openings on primary facades or readily visible side elevations should not be covered or concealed. Original window openings should not be enclosed for the addition of smaller windows. New window openings should not be added on the fronts of dwellings but may be added at the rear or side elevations if not readily visible.

Window shutters have been traditional features on houses in Georgetown in both louvered and paneled wood designs and their continued use is encouraged. Historic wood shutters should be preserved and maintained. New shutters may be added if they are of wood, of traditional design and with dimensions which match the window opening. The installation of storm windows can help in lowering energy costs and are appropriate for Georgetown's historic dwellings.

Storm windows should be full-view design or have the central meeting rail at the same location as the historic window behind it. The installation of screen panels is also appropriate as long as they retain the open appearance and the visibility of the windows behind them. The installation of visible security bars on the exterior of windows is not appropriate on primary facades. Window bars may be added on the exterior of windows on rear or side elevations not readily visible.

STANDARDS

17.1 Repair a historic or non-historic window with in-kind materials.

17.2 Replace a non-historic window with in-kind materials or similar design.

17.3 Original windows should be preserved in their original location, size, and design and with their original materials and numbers of panes.

17.4 Windows should be repaired rather than replaced. Window replacement will only be approved if it can be demonstrated that the historic windows are beyond repair.

17.5 If replacement of original or historic windows is demonstrated to be necessary, the replacement windows should be in-kind.

17.6 Windows of alternative materials may be considered.

17.7 New window openings should not be added to primary façades or to readily visible side elevations.

17.8 Windows of steel or other metal designs should be preserved and maintained, or replaced with new metal windows which are similar in appearance and materials.

17.9 Replacement windows should not have snap-on, flush, or simulated divided muntins. Muntins sandwiched between layers of glass, snap-on muntins, and surface-applied muntins are not appropriate and shall not be approved.

17.10 Clear glass must be used in windows on the primary and readily visible side elevations. Do not use reflective, tinted, patterned, or sandblasted glass in windows. The addition of these glass materials may be used on rear elevations or those not readily visible.

17.11 If an interior dropped ceiling is lower than the top of the window, the ceiling must be stepped back from the window to not obscure the top of the window from outside view.

17.12 Repair historic wood shutters with in-kind materials.

17.13 Replace historic wood shutters with in-kind materials or similar design.

17.14 Add wood shutters based on traditional designs and that fit the window opening.

17.15 Add screen panels with wood or metal frames that are full-view design and allow the visibility of the historic window behind it.

17.16 Add storm windows of wood or metal frames which are full-view design or match the meeting rail of the window behind it. Storm windows should be of anodized or baked-enamel surfaces and not unfinished metal.

17.17 Add security bars on windows on rear or non-readily visible side elevations.

17.18 Shutters that are original to the dwelling should be preserved and maintained.

17.19 Shutters should not be added to contributing buildings unless historically appropriate to that style house in Georgetown or there is physical or photographic evidence that shutters were original to the dwelling. Adding shutters to non-contributing and new buildings will be considered.

17.20 New shutters shall be of louvered or paneled wood construction or another documented historical style appropriate for that style of the building in Georgetown. They must be either working shutters or shutters that appear to be working shutters with appropriate hardware. All shutters shall be appropriately sized to fit the window opening so that if working and closed, they would cover the window opening.

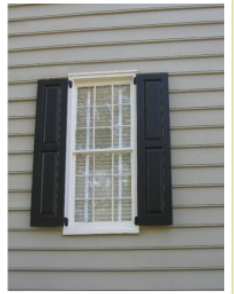
17.21 Shutters should not be added to banks of multiple windows. Bi-fold shutters are not appropriate.

17.22 The application of vinyl or metal shutters on primary elevations will not be approved. These types of shutters may be considered for rear and side elevations not readily visible.

17.23 Screen windows should be wood or baked-on enamel aluminum and fit within the window frames and not overlap the frames.

17.24 Security bars shall not be applied to any elevation of contributing buildings or to primary or other readily visible elevations of non-contributing or new houses. Security bars may be added on rear elevations or those not readily visible.

The earliest dwellings in the historic district have nine-over-nine or nine-over-six wood sash windows such as the ca. 1737 dwelling at 405 Front Street (left) and the ca. 1760 house at 513 Prince Street (right).



Technical Information
NPS Preservation Brief #09
The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows
Www.nps.gov.history/hps/tps/briefs/brief09.htm

Technical Information
NPS Preservation Brief #13
The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows
www.nps.gov.history/hps/tps/briefs/brief09.htm

CAB Guidelines Regarding Windows and Shutters

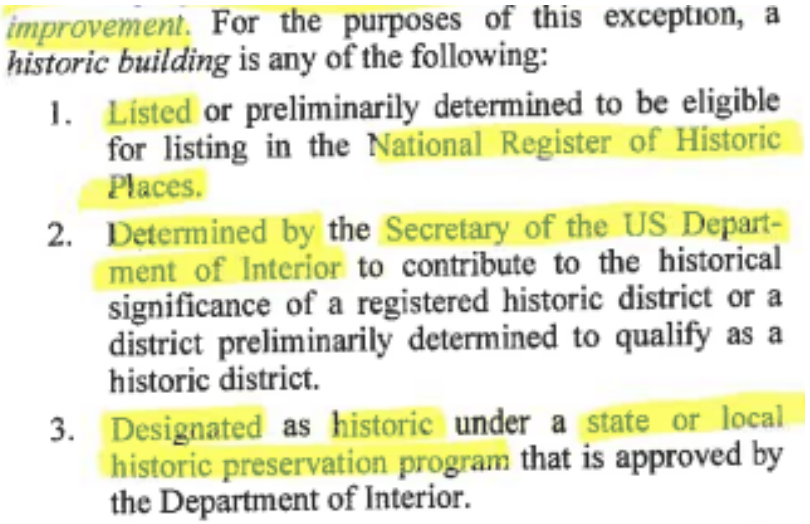
a) Building features and appearance. The shape, configuration, design, color, and types of material of proposed buildings, and/or alterations and additions to existing buildings, must establish an identifiable character for the development and not detract from neighboring properties. To this end, all elevations of a building must be in harmony one with another in terms of scale, proportion, detail, material, color, and design quality, and all buildings and accessory structures within a proposed development, including gasoline canopies, must be designed to create a harmonious whole. The use of loud, garish colors must be avoided except when the use of colors so characterized is essential for creating a successful design which complies with all other standards.

h) Shutters, when incorporated into the design of a building, should be functional and made of complementary materials and of a complementary design to the overall building.

5. Building Code must rule

Historic Exceptions do not apply to this overlay – building code must rule

- ARB Architectural Guidelines override building code in certain cases as there is a Historic exception per State Building Code



improvement. For the purposes of this exception, a *historic building* is any of the following:

1. Listed or preliminarily determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
2. Determined by the Secretary of the US Department of Interior to contribute to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined to qualify as a historic district.
3. Designated as historic under a state or local historic preservation program that is approved by the Department of Interior.

- South Carolina State Building Code provides no such exceptions for design overlay districts, therefore building code MUST rule for items such as windows, handrails, flood, porch/deck guards

Requests of Council

- Guidance on forward movement regarding Design Guidelines
  - Need for more clear and detailed guidelines
  - Should CAB have the powers of BZA?
    - If so, should the requirements of applicants to the board be amended?
  - Should CAB have the powers of the Zoning Administrator?
    - If so, should the requirements of applicants to the board be amended?

1700 Creation of the Community Appearance Board

There is hereby created a Community Appearance Board to be composed of seven (7) members appointed by the City Council. The Board is created as authorized by South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 6-29-870.

It is the declared policy of the City Council that it will consider and approve only those persons who have demonstrated their civic interest, general knowledge of the community, independent judgment, competence and knowledge of architecture, landscape, and design and ability to prepare for and attend meetings. Preference shall be given to professionals from the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, building construction, and engineering living within the City of Georgetown; in the cases where members cannot be found within the city, members shall be residents of Georgetown County.

120 North Fraser Street • Georgetown, SC 29440 • (843) 545-4000

ACTION ITEM

Council Meeting Date:	May 22, 2025
Department:	Administration
Issue Under Consideration:	Present and discuss employee handbook revisions
Amount Requested:	
In Current Budget?:	
If not, please explain:	
Financial Impact:	
Points to Consider:	
Options:	
Staff Recommendation:	

Reviews:

Stephanie Buccione	Creator	Created
Scott Whittier	Approver	
Scott Whittier	Approver	
Stephanie Buccione	Approver	

Attachments:
None