

Culminating Activity: Mock Board of Architectural Review Meeting

Introduction

As a class, you will be participating in a mock (pretend) Board of Architectural Review (BAR) meeting. The purpose of this culminating activity is to show you how Charleston's built environment is monitored through Board of Architectural Review meetings. You will learn how organizations like Charleston Heritage Preservation Trust act as the preservation "watchdogs" for the city's historic properties.

You will be placed into one of the following groups:

1. Board of Architectural Review
2. Charleston Heritage Preservation Trust
3. Homeowner
4. Developer
5. Interested Citizens

The members of each group will represent the roles they have been assigned at the mock BAR meeting. Each group will be given a packet that includes instructions and all the information that will be needed to participate in meeting.

One of the exciting aspects of this activity is that you get to participate in a review process that actually takes place in Charleston every month. Homeowners and developers around the city are constantly bringing requests before the BAR to get approved. The Charleston Heritage Preservation Trust is an example of a local preservation advocate that sends representatives to BAR meetings to promote appropriate preservation practices and encourage homeowners and developers to refrain from demolishing or negatively altering significant historic buildings.

Often times, groups of interested citizens will come to BAR meetings in order to support or oppose a particular decision that is up for approval. While citizens have no official authority to approve a proposal, they do have the opportunity to voice their comments at a designated

point during the meeting. The process of preserving Charleston's historic properties affects everyone and allowing citizens to voice their thoughts in a public forum lets people know their opinions matter.

BAR meetings are where battles over the alteration of historic properties and the design of modern buildings are fought between preservationists, city officials, homeowners, business owners, developers, architects and concerned citizens.

It is up to you and your fellow group members to learn as much as you can about your assigned role. This will make the mock BAR meeting more spontaneous and informative.

As you work together as a team, take the assignment seriously, but don't forget to have fun!