

BEAUFORT COUNTY
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB) MINUTES
June 1, 2017, Grace Coastal Church, 15 Williams Drive, Okatie, SC

Members Present: James Atkins, J. Michael Brock, Peter Brower, Brad Hill, H. Pearce Scott and Donald L. Starkey

Members Absent: Bill Allison

Staff Present: Nancy Moss, Planner

Guests: Carl Dietz, LS3P Architects; Nicholas Katsibas, LS3P Architects; Suzette Greiner SGG Parish Manager; Greg Baisch, Ward Edwards Engineering; Willy Powell, Ward Edwards Engineering; Conor Blaney, Ward Edwards Engineering; Carl Close, CLP Close Counseling

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Atkins called the meeting to order at 2:35 pm.
2. **MINUTES:** Chairman Atkins asked if there were comments on the May 4, 2017 minutes. No comments were made. Mr. Brower motioned to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Starkey seconded to approve. Motion carried.
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no public comment.
4. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. St. Gregory the Great – Parish Life Center – Bluffton – Conceptual

Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Atkins asked if there were any public comments about this project and no comments were made. Greg Baisch gave the presentation for the site improvements portion of the project. He said that they submitted an appeal with the ZBOA for the additional parking and that it would be heard on June 22nd. He said that the proposed parking is needed because St. Gregory the Great would utilize the Church and the accessory building at the same time. He added that the multi-purpose field and drop off area would be needed in the event the parking variance was not approved.

Nicholas Katsibas gave the presentation to describe the building architecture. He said that LS3P were the architects for the school next door and that he wanted to address the 35' height limit. He described how they determined the average roof height by taking the average height of the sloping roof adjacent to grade and he thought the method to determine the building height was up to interpretation. He hoped that there could be options to allow the 48' roof height or consideration from the DRB because it is a gymnasium.

Mr. Hill asked for clarification about the averaging for the building height. Mr. Katsibas stated what the average roof heights on all four each elevation were and repeated how the average roof height was determined.

Mr. Starkey asked whether the colors would match the other structures on the campus. Mr. Katsibas said that the stucco colors would match the existing school and church. He said that they had an alternate color listed. Mr. Starkey asked what the height of the new structure was in relation to the existing structures. Mr. Katsibas said that the average height of the school was 30'

and the church was 35’.

Mr. Scott said that the architecture looked massive in relation to the other structures on campus. He encouraged Mr. Katsibas to revise the elevations so the building had a more vertical feel to match the rest of the campus. He said that some of the detailing was gotten scaled back and cited the walkway as an example.

Mr. Brower asked Mrs. Moss if the County agreed with the Architect’s interpretation of determining the average building height versus peak height in the C3 zoning. Ms. Moss said that the County staff did not agree and wanted the building height reduced. Mr. Katsibas said that the gymnasium had the highest roof at 48’. Mr. Brower agreed with Mr. Scott and commented that the building seems out of scale with the rest of the buildings on the campus. He said that he liked the building architecture and the materials proposed.

Mr. Brock asked what the required gymnasium ceiling height would be and how this structure compared in height with the local County and School gymnasium roof heights. Mr. Katsibas said that the clear ceiling height was designed at 24’ and that they wanted to match the roof pitch on the existing church and school structures to provide a uniform look. He said that the front facade roof slope matched the slope on the adjacent structures.

Mr. Atkins echoed that the building height is a challenge. He said that the adjacent school has parapets filled with detailing and character, particularly in the front, but this building lacked the detailing. He said that these details could be worked through and refined for the final submission. Mr. Atkins said he liked the bracketed awnings and the scaled windows and added that as the project moves forward, adjust the height and address the scale issues. Mr. Katsibas said that the building was designed for a gymnasium with a ceiling height of 24 feet and that it would have a very low pitch roof if the maximum building height was limited to 35’.

Mr. Brower made a motion to table this application until the height discrepancy and the site plan/parking issues were resolved. Mr. Hill seconded the motion. Upon further discussion of the motion, Mr. Starkey said that he would like to see elevation drawings of the other buildings on the campus to compare the buildings, in the same scale, to the one proposed. Mr. Brower amended his motion to also include Mr. Starkey’s comments.

Motion carried.

B. Tanger Outlets #2 – Outparcel Development - Bluffton – Conceptual

Mr. Brock recused himself from the meeting. Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Atkins asked if there were any public comments about this project and no comments were made. Greg Baisch made the presentation for the site plan portion of the project and introduced the members of his team. He said that the purpose of the project was to update the appearance of the outlet center; resolve the vehicular/pedestrian conflicts, particularly at the main entry at Highway 278 between Nike and Old Navy; to create better traffic flow with a boulevard to calm and direct traffic from Highway 278 toward the future Bluffton Parkway traffic signalization; and, the creation of three outparcels. Mr. Baisch said that one of the Outparcels was an expansion to the Gap Building with a service yard behind it. He said they could offset the rear parking and provide the 8’ foundation buffer; architecturally adjust the plans for the other two outparcels to provide the 8’ foundation buffer and are exploring various options to change the dumpster pad locations at Outparcels A & B. Mr. Baisch said they would also consider the staff comments to relocate the Kiosk and substitute shade trees for the palm trees proposed at the tree islands.

Carl Close said that they are trying to blend in architecturally with the existing center. He said they wanted to continue with the architecture at the Chipotle building at Tanger #1, could adjust the size of the buildings to meet the setback requirements and wanted to improve the vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow.

Michael Brock addressed the Landscape Plan issues. He said they were looking at other locations to relocate the Kiosk to and would introduce overstory trees in the tree islands. He said that Tanger had problems at the Nike building with overstory tree roots from the tree islands moving and destroying the concrete sidewalks. He said that palm trees had less invasive roots, were a good solution in tree islands adjacent to the buildings and would provide some shade without causing sidewalk damage.

Mr. Hill asked Mr. Brock if they had considered using root barriers. Mr. Brock said they would look into this option but the barriers would likely delay the problems from occurring for 6 or 7 years. Mr. Hill asked if overstory trees with less invasive roots coupled with a root barrier system could be introduced. Mr. Brock said they would explore this option. Mr. Hill asked that the number of proposed overstory trees should be increased to better match the 40-50 overstory trees proposed to be removed.

Mr. Starkey said that he had concerns at the main thoroughfare regarding traffic control issues. He asked if there were any stop signs proposed or anything to slow traffic. Willy Powell said that they worked with Colin Kinton and there were four formal pedestrian crossings proposed from the lower portion of the center to the new outparcels. He said they prefer to use raised table-top pedestrian crossings to calm the traffic. Mr. Starkey said that he prefers not to have pedestrian crossings in the middle of boulevards to minimize accidents and liked the table crossings attached to corners. Mr. Powell said that he would study this with the County Traffic Engineer. Mr. Starkey asked if there would be a stop sign at the main entrance for a pedestrian crossing. Mr. Powell said that Colin Kinton would be concerned about a stop sign near the entrance and traffic backing onto Highway 278. Mr. Close said that they would study using a tabletop crossing to slow, but not stop, vehicular traffic and allow safe pedestrian movement.

Mr. Scott said that he liked how they attempted to blend the architecture in but thought they were looking at the wrong thing using the Chipotle building because the other center has a different character. He said they were losing an opportunity to make the buildings look more special; especially with the outparcel locations so visible from Highway 278. He encouraged the applicant to look at the actual shopping center as an architectural guide because there is good detail on the buildings. Mr. Close said the architectural drawings were conceptual ideas and they would submit a formal DRB review submittal for each building so they could stand on their own merits.

Mr. Brower said that he agreed with Mr. Hill and that the overstory tree count should be increased and installed with barriers adjacent to the walks so as not to damage the walkways.

Mr. Atkins said the building expansion should blend in seamlessly with the existing structure. He said he liked the boulevards with table-top pedestrian crossings. He stated that he would like a safer pedestrian connection between Nike and Old Navy. He said the dumpster location did not bother him as traffic turns left at this area and he would not want it closer to the highway; wherever it ended up make sure there is tall screening, it's out of the way and fits seamlessly. Mr. Atkins said that the overstory trees are important and to find creative ways to plant back the trees removed for the new outparcels. He said the existing lagoon entry feature sets up a nice foreground to the center but will be lost once the buildings and parking areas are installed so landscaping will be paramount for the center to look good at maturity.

Mr. Hill made a motion to approve the conceptual design layout with the conditions that the applicant addresses staff and DRB comments. Mr. Starkey seconded the motion. Mr. Atkins recapped the conditions:

- Address staff comments:
 - Provide 8' foundation buffers at both parcels and at the building expansion
 - Incorporate sidewalks adjacent to Outparcel B
 - Relocate the Kiosk out of the tree island
- Ensure that the overall architecture is creative, particularly at the outparcels, and take the opportunity of the high visibility on Highway 278
- Study the Pedestrian intersections and how the sidewalks engage between the existing center and the new boulevards & outparcels and between Nike & Old Navy
- Place the dumpsters in an out of the way area and have full screening
- Provide an adequate number of proposed overstory trees to mitigate the tree removals.

Motion carried.

5. OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business.

6. OTHER BUSINESS: Mr. Atkins said the next scheduled meeting is on Thursday, July 6, 2017 at 2:30 pm at Grace Coastal Church.

Mr. Brower asked what the County's position was with POD units and the length they could remain on site. Ms. Moss said she will look into this and provide an answer.

7. ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Brock made a motion to close the meeting and Mr. Brower seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.