

BEAUFORT COUNTY
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB) MINUTES
March 7, 2019, Grace Coastal Church, 15 Williams Drive, Okatie, SC

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

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Nancy Moss, Beaufort County Community Development Department

Guests: Kevin Grenier, KRA Architecture; Brian Witmer, Witmer, Jones, Keefer, Ltd.; Barry Johnson, Johnson & Davis, PA; Tom Gardo, HHN Consultant; Jeremy Barlet, Developer; Bruce Brotherton, WB Services; Jason Broene, Court Atkins Architects; Jim Rowan, Fraser Construction VP; Thomas Michaels, SM7 Designs; Taylor Reeves, Ward Edwards Engineering; and, Gwyneth J. Saunders, Bluffton Sun.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Atkins called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.
2. **MINUTES:** Chairman Atkins asked if there were comments on the January 3, 2019 minutes. No comments were made. Mr. Atkins motioned to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Bridgwater seconded to approve. Motion carried.
3. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** There was no public comment.
4. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Hilton Head National Luxury RV Park – Bluffton - Final:

Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Atkins asked for public comment, but no comments were made. Kevin Grenier, the project Architect, and Brian Witmer, the project Landscape Architect, introduced themselves to the Board. Mr. Witmer responded to the Staff Comments point-by-point. He said that Thomas & Hutton would add the Tree Removal Plan note requested by SRT. Mr. Witmer stated that tree islands at the secondary entrance would not save as many trees as one single driveway would, so their preference was not to add a tree island. Mr. Witmer said that the landscape and site lighting plans for the civic dock space and for the pocket park at the main entry were being worked on and should be completed soon. He said that that the landscape plans at the parking areas would be revised at add High Rise Oaks in the tree islands. Mr. Witmer stated that the service yard location for the Main Amenity building would be added to the plans and that the rectangular objects east of the Main Amenity building were corn hole games and would be labeled at final. He said that the entry gate details were being worked on but said there would be brick columns on each side of the gates. Mr. Witmer concluded the presentation and stated that the RV pads would be concrete or tabby pavers, the swimming pool deck would be decorative tabby pavers and that the interior walks would have granite fines.

Mr. Brock asked that they bring the details back to the Board for the incomplete landscaping plans. Mr. Witmer said they would do so.

Mr. Brower said that the architecture looked great and was nicely detailed.

Mr. Starkey echoed Mr. Brower's architecture comments, but said that there were too many unanswered site plan questions. Mr. Starkey stated that the final pieces must be presented to the Board before issuing final approval.

Mr. Scott said that the columns on the Main Amenity Building front porch were oversized; there were too few and they were too big. Mr. Grenier agreed with Mr. Scott's critique. Mr. Scott added that the gables on the Main Amenity sides were not well articulated and to either bump it out or bring it in. He stated that the red roof color needed to be toned down two shades.

Ms. Bridgwater wanted clarification on sheet L501 because it was unclear which plant species were being proposed. Mr. Witmer indicated that a plant template was listed on the plans to allow discretion to make field decisions at the time of planting based upon the sun/shade conditions.

Mr. Hill cautioned the applicants in using *Magnolia grandiflora* between the RV sites because they grow large and that it is a messy tree. Mr. Witmer said that the tree is native, but they would most likely cluster these trees in remote locations where screening is needed.

Mr. Atkins agreed with Mr. Scott's comments about the oversized porch columns at the Main Amenity Building. He said to make them delicate and that the beam would look more in scale. Mr. Atkins stated that the window and corner trim needed to be better developed on the Pool Amenity Building cupola. He also said that the large panels on the sides of the Outpost Greeting Building needed to be broken up a bit.

Mr. Hill made a motion to table this project until the incomplete site and landscape plans were submitted for review. Mr. Starkey seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

B. Okatie Center – Choice Hotel – Conceptual:

Mr. Brock recused himself from the meeting. Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Atkins asked for public comment, but no comments were made. Jeremy Barlet, the project Developer and Bruce Brotherton, the project Architect, introduced themselves to the Board. Mr. Brotherton said that based upon the staff comments and by observing the architecture in the Lowcountry area, they made adjustments to the original design. He stated that they wanted DRB input to determine if the design was headed in the right direction. He said that they minimized the appearance of PTAC grilles by matching them with the EIFS facade color. Mr. Brotherton said that they changed the Porte cochere roof to a gable roof, that shutters were added across the front, that hardie plank horizontal siding was incorporated in the front and that a raised area with windows was added to the back of the building to help break up the facade.

Mr. Hill said that the changes made to the architecture improved the look of the building. He encouraged them to use taller plants between the windows to help break up the facade.

Ms. Bridgwater agreed with Mr. Hill's comments.

Mr. Scott said that he also liked the changes made but that the design was still missing Lowcountry elements. He stated that the porte cochere needed more detailing and that the brick

bases seemed too tall. Mr. Scott suggested that it would help to push the water table up to the second floor. Mr. Scott said that due to the high visibility onto Highway 278, the back of the building needed to look like the front of the building.

Mr. Starkey agreed with Mr. Scott's comments. He said that the back facade should have offsets with brick to add shade and shadow and to perhaps add shutters so the back of building would better address Highway 278.

Mr. Brower said that this building looked very much like the new hotels in Charleston which were very stark and that they should not attempt to break up the facade with color and material changes, but rather use offsets to create shade and shadow.

Mr. Atkins stated that the overall composition of the project did not have a Lowcountry vernacular. He said that due to the vertical nature of the building, the design does not lend well to Lowcountry features. He suggested that they raise the brick water table, add trim around the windows and to add corner boards. He said that the rear of the building faces a very busy intersection and that the back and left sides of the building were very important sides. Mr. Atkins said that the facade material selection was good, but that the overall detailing, massing and composition needed to be improved.

Mr. Brower made a motion to Deny this project and to come back with a fresh take on the Architecture. Mr. Scott seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Beaufort County Emergency Medical Services – Shanklin Road – Final:

Mr. Brock returned to the meeting. Mr. Atkins recused himself from the meeting. Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Brock asked for public comment, but no comments were made. Jason Broene, the project Architect, made the presentation for the project. Mr. Broene stated that they were very conscious of the budget, so the landscaping very minimal.

Mr. Brower said that it was a good looking project and that all of the architectural items were addressed.

Mr. Starkey agreed with Mr. Brower and said it was a very nice project, but the 20' buffer needed to be added.

Mr. Scott, Ms. Bridgwater and Mr. Hill said it was a nice job.

Mr. Brock said that the overhead power line would restrict the overstory trees so a modulation would be needed. He said that 3 gallon containers for the Muhly grass should be specified.

Mr. Brower made a motion to approve this project with the following conditions:

- Create the 20' buffer along Shanklin Road to meet 5.8.50 of the CDC. The overhead power line constricts the site so the overstory tree requirement will not apply provided the shrub quantities are increased to offset the overstory trees 2:1 to provide a continuous buffer at maturity.
- Revise the Plant Schedule so 3 gallon containers are specified for the Muhly grass

Mr. Starkey seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Mr. Brock stated that “the building facade improvements and lighting must be built/installed according to the plans reviewed and approved by the DRB. The material and color board reviewed and approved by the DRB must be adhered to during construction. Any changes to the approved plans or submittals must be requested for and submitted to the DRB for formal approval.”

B. Okatie Center Home 2 Suites – Conceptual (2):

Mr. Atkins returned to the meeting. Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Atkins asked for public comment, but no comments were made. Thomas Michaels, the project Architect, made the presentation for the project. He stated that significant changes were made from the original conceptual sketch.

Mr. Brock had no questions.

Mr. Brower said that the original sketch was exciting. He said that he understood that there are budget constraints but that the design was very stark and void of detail.

Mr. Starkey agreed with Mr. Brower’s comments. He said that the flat front did not look Lowcountry. Mr. Michaels said that the tower elements and the brick areas were bumped out to create shade and shadow but that it did not show well in elevation.

Mr. Scott said that he really liked the original sketch. He said that the tower elements looked nice in elevation, but the rest of the design lacked the nice detailing shown in the original sketch. Mr. Michaels said that the revised design carried over the tower elements and light beacon from the original sketch but that a brick centerpiece and shake siding were substituted for budgetary purposes. Mr. Scott suggested that the cornice be accentuated and that more offsets be added to create shade and shadow.

Ms. Bridgwater had no comments.

Mr. Atkins concurred with the previous architectural comments from the Board. He said that the use of the facade materials helped bring the building to scale, that the brick base shows a strong foundation and that the tower elements and trellis work well. Mr. Atkins said to break up the monotony of the windows, to vary the siding details and to add shutters on the windows. Mr. Michaels said that the windows were fixed so he didn’t think that shutters should be added.

Mr. Starkey said to add elements to break up the facade so the building is more in keeping with the Lowcountry vernacular. He also said that vertical landscape plantings at the base of the building and pervious pavers around the pool should be incorporated into the landscape and site design.

Mr. Scott made a motion to Table this project and Mr. Brock seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. John Harris Body Shop – Okatie - Informal Architecture Discussion:

Mr. Atkins and Mr. Brock recused themselves from the meeting. Mr. Brower assumed the Chair for this discussion and asked the Board for comments. Jason Broene, the project Architect, was available to take questions from the Board.

Mr. Starkey said that the building really looked good for a body shop. He stated that these businesses have venting issues and that some type of parapet should be added to screen the exhaust stacks from Highway 278. He stated that the back of the building lacked articulation and that vertical elements should be added.

Mr. Broene said that the building elevations under review were from the Summerville, South Carolina prototype and that the design was most appropriate for the Lowcountry area. He said that the building had a sloped awning, was clad in brick and that it was a challenging site. Mr. Broene said that the site had a nice established buffer which would be preserved and enhanced.

Mr. Broene asked the Board's opinion on the use of an insulated metal panel with a stucco finish for portions of the building facade. He said that the panels come in varying widths such as 24", 36" and 42". Mr. Brower, Mr. Starkey and Mr. Scott all liked the panels.

Mr. Brower suggested architectural louvered panels to screen around the rooftop exhaust stacks. Mr. Scott suggested a green roof to screen the exhaust stacks.

Mr. Hill suggested that a photograph be taken from Highway 278 onto the site and superimpose the building on it so the Board would have better idea of how the building will look from the highway. He also said that several large water oaks near Cecil Reynolds Drive are proposed for removal on the site plan but should be saved. Taylor Reeves the project Engineer with Ward Edwards, said that they are working with an Arborist and will add tree wells to save the trees.

B. Mr. Atkins and Mr. Brock returned to the meeting. Mr. Atkins said the next scheduled meeting was at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 4, 2019 at the Grace Coastal Church, 15 Williams Drive, Okatie, SC 29909.

6. ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Brower made a motion to close the meeting and Ms. Bridgwater seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.