

BEAUFORT COUNTY
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB) MINUTES
February 6, 2020, Grace Coastal Church, 15 Williams Drive, Okatie, SC

Members Present: James Atkins, J. Michael Brock, Sallie Brach, Brad Hill and Donald L. Starkey

Members Absent: Peter Brower & H. Pearce Scott

Staff Present: Nancy Moss, Beaufort County Community Development Department

Guests: John Davis, Express Oil Vice-President; Annette Lippert, Court Atkins Architects; Taylor Reeves, Ward Edwards Engineering; Brianna Huffman, Court Atkins Architects; and, Ryan Lyle, Andrews Engineering

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Atkins called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.
2. **FOIA:** Chairman Atkins said that “public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act”.
3. **MINUTES:** Chairman Atkins asked if there were comments on the January 9, 2020 minutes. No comments were made. Mr. Starkey motioned to approve the minutes as written. Mrs. Brach seconded to approve. Motion carried.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** There was no public comment.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Express Oil Change & Tire Engineers – Bluffton – Conceptual:

Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Atkins asked for public comment, but no comments were made. John Davis, the head of project development for Oil Express in Birmingham, Alabama, made the presentation for the project. He said that significant modifications were made to the building prototype to conform with the Community Development Code, but that they would be open to more changes if requested by the Board. Mr. Davis stated that the service bays usually face the main street, but they rotated the building 90 degrees to comply with the Code.

Mr. Hill had no comments.

Mrs. Brach stated that the false windows looked odd, were not in scale with the building and did not have Lowcountry character. Mr. Davis said that he would work with the Architect to modify the window size and design.

Mr. Starkey echoed Mrs. Brach’s comments about the false windows. He said that the Highway 46 side of the building was critical. Mr. Davis said that the windows were added to break up the building facade and that the short end of the building along Highway 46 was 55’ long and was 30’ long facing Sam’s. Mr. Starkey suggested that the window size be reduced with Bahamian shutters or a bracketed awning applied to help break up the facade. He also said that the side view looked odd and that there was no break between the roof and the building. He

asked Mr. Davis if the exhaust fan could be painted to match the brick color. Mr. Davis said that the fan could be painted to blend in with the wall color.

Mr. Brock referred to the site plan and stated that due to the expanse of the walls and the height of the building, it seemed like there was too much brick. He asked that they introduce another facade material above the brick water table to give the building a Lowcountry appearance. Mr. Brock also said that at final, the landscape plan should show enhanced landscaping in the buffers, especially on the Highway 46 side of the site.

Mr. Atkins echoed the other DRB comments previously made. He said that the Highway 46 side of the building was the prominent side and that they needed to put an architectural massing element, such as a gabled end, to break up the scale. Mr. Atkins also said that the parapet detail was not typical for Lowcountry architecture and to re-look at the entrances to create a traditional gable and replicate the gable on the front with windows and shutters. He asked whether they could pull the building to create a foundation buffer on the side of the bays to help soften the building. Mr. Davis said they would explore this but the parking requirement was met and parking spaces would have to be removed if the building were pulled. Mr. Brock suggested that they pull the right parking area over toward the internal drive to create a foundation buffer at the entrances.

Mr. Brock made a motion to approve this conceptual DRB project with the following conditions:

- Add an architectural massing element, such as a gabled end, to break up the scale of the Highway 46 side of the building. Modify/reduce the false window size & design and incorporate Lowcountry detailing such as Bahamian shutters or a bracketed awnings to help break up the façade;
- The brick parapet detail with hardie plank infill is not typical for Lowcountry architecture. Re-study the entrances (Red Cedar Street & Wells Fargo building sides) to create a traditional roof gable and replicate the gable on the front (Hwy. 46) with windows and shutters;
- The building facade has too much brick; introduce another Lowcountry facade material above the brick water, such as lap or board & batten siding;
- The large wall mounted exhaust fan must be painted to match the facade color;
- Explore elongating the building to create a foundation buffer on the side of the bays to help soften the building;
- Pull the right parking area over toward the internal drive to create a foundation buffer at the entrances; and,
- At final, the landscape plan must show enhanced landscaping in the buffers, especially on the Highway 46 side of the building.

Mr. Starkey seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

B. CapRock Island Park Senior Living – Lady’s Island – Conceptual:

Mr. Atkins recused himself from the meeting and asked Mr. Starkey to preside over the CapRock project and for Mr. Brock to preside over the Goodwill project; Mr. Starkey and Mr. Brock agreed. Mr. Brock recused himself from the CapRock project. Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Starkey asked for public comment, but no comments were made. Annette Lippert, the project Architect, made the presentation for the project. She said that

because the building was large in scale, they made a significant effort to break up the building into smaller segments and to maintain the character of the site by preserving as many specimen live oak trees as possible. Ms. Lippert said that they revised the elevations slightly and removed the tabby stucco veneer, but that the building still maintained a strong Lowcountry vernacular.

Mr. Hill stated that he had no issues with the architecture and that it looked fine. He said that the civil engineer did a good job of avoiding many of the significant trees, but cautioned the civil engineer to avoid interaction of live oaks with the new fill, paving and utility work. He stated that professional guidance from an Arborist should be utilized for the necessary preconstruction soil treatments and safe practices throughout construction to ensure the survival of the significant trees. Taylor Reeves, the Civil Engineer, stated that they hope to match the existing grade to the best extent possible, that they would work with an Arborist and incorporate tree wells as necessary.

Mrs. Brach referred to drawing sheet A3.1 and asked why there was now a single door versus the double doors shown on the initial elevations and said that the single door looked out of place below the triple windows on the 2nd & 3rd floors. Ms. Lippert explained that they expanded the electrical room and eliminated the double doors, but would explore this to determine whether there was sufficient room to incorporate the double door unit. Mrs. Brach said that there was only one dumpster on site and asked whether that would handle the amount of trash that would be generated for this project. Ms. Lippert said that the dumpster was located near the service entry and that it was fairly large. She said that it would be screened from view and they wanted to keep it positioned as far away from the park-like area as possible. She said they would study whether one dumpster would be large enough for the project.

Mr. Starkey suggested that they combine the generator and trash area and screen it with a large wall. Ms. Reeves stated that they would explore this but there needed to be sufficient room to maneuver the garbage trucks.

Mr. Hill said that they should flip the parking and generator & dumpster areas.

Ms. Brach asked for clarification about the pedestrian building access points. Ms. Lippert stated that there were multiple pedestrian access doors at both the Independent & Assisted Living portions of the building and that a walkway system was being proposed to each doorway around the building and around the circular park-like area.

Mr. Starkey said that the live oaks within the tear drop-shaped driveway were too close to the driveway edge and asked that the drive be moved to provide more room for the oaks. Mr. Starkey referred to the site plan and asked what was being proposed within the southern narrow strip of the site. Ms. Lippert said that it was not proposed for development and that it would be vegetated. Mr. Starkey said that it and the buffer on the east side of the building should be beefed up with plant material. Ms. Reeves said that there was a 10' foundation buffer and a 10' buffer strip east of the reinforced turf fire lane, so there would be 20' of buffer area on the east side of the building.

Ms. Lippert presented a revised architectural site plan and physical color samples for the building to get the Board's initial reaction to the proposed color scheme all of which were received favorably by the Board.

Mr. Hill made a motion to approve this conceptual DRB project with the following conditions:

- Seek the guidance of a Certified Arborist for the necessary preconstruction soil treatments and safe practices that will be employed throughout construction to ensure the survival of the significant trees;
- Explore re-incorporating the double door unit on the east elevation of the east wing connector segment shown on Sheet A3.1;
- Study whether one dumpster would be large enough to service the needs of this facility;
- Flip the service parking bays and the generator & dumpster areas; combine the generator and trash area and screen it with a large wall;
- The tear drop-shaped driveway edge is too close to the specimen oaks; move the driveway edge away from the base of the specimen oaks to provide more room to ensure their survival; and,
- At final, the landscape plan must show the south and east buffers beefed up with plant material.

Mrs. Brach seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

C. Goodwill – Bluffton – Conceptual:

Mr. Brock returned to preside over the meeting. Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Brock asked for public comment, but no comments were made. Brianna Huffman, the project Architect, made the presentation for the project. She distributed updated renderings and presented physical paint and shingle color samples to the Board for review. She said that they would study the rear roof articulation and wanted to keep this building as low profile as possible next to the natural buffer but incorporated Lowcountry elements to conform to the Code.

The board offered positive feedback about the revised color scheme shown on the new rendering.

Mr. Hill agreed that the rear roof lacked articulation. He also said that the dumpster at the equipment service area needed to be located. Ms. Huffman said that they were going to move the dumpster location.

Mrs. Brach said that the size of the false windows seemed out of scale with the building. Mr. Starkey suggested that they add real window units to provide light; particularly in the breakroom. Ms. Huffman provided clarification and said that the transoms were actual window units all around the building and that the false windows were below to provide interior retail area. Mr. Starkey said that the window units were not shown on the floor plan.

Mr. Brock said that he liked the siding versus the block at the other Bluffton Goodwill store and that he appreciated the effort to soften the building. He said that the roofline on the north looked massive and that it needed more articulation. He stated that they needed to find another dumpster location. Mr. Lyle said that they were exploring the option of having a compactor on the service side of the building. Mr. Brock asked if an adjustment could be made to move the stormwater chamber out of the tree island. Mr. Lyle said that adjustment could be made.

Mrs. Brach requested that the back employee walkway location be shown and asked where the pervious pavement was being proposed. Mr. Lyle stated that almost all of the parking stalls would be pervious which pleased the Board.

Mr. Hill made a motion to approve this conceptual DRB project with the following conditions:

- Provide more articulation on the north roof;
- Relocate the dumpster out of the tree island;
- Make an adjustment to the site plan to move the stormwater chamber out of the tree island; and,
- Show the walkway location on the site plan for the rear employee entrance.

Mrs. Brach seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Mr. Atkins returned to the meeting.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Okatie Center – Choice Hotel - Building Rotation:

The Board was informed that the SRT approved the applicant's request to rotate the building 90 degrees subsequent to the DRB approval in December 2019. After much discussion, the DRB unanimously agreed that the revised landscape and lighting plans could be submitted electronically to be reviewed and approved by Mrs. Brach and Mr. Hill without a formal DRB meeting.

7. OTHER BUSINESS: Mr. Atkins said that the next scheduled meeting was at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 5, 2020 at the Grace Coastal Church, 15 Williams Drive, Okatie, SC 29909.

8. ADJOURNMENT: Mrs. Brach made a motion to close the meeting and Mr. Starkey seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.