

BEAUFORT COUNTY
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB) MINUTES
February 4, 2021, Grace Coastal Church, 15 Williams Drive, Okatie, SC

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

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Nancy Moss, Beaufort County Community Development Department

Guests: Jason Broene, Court Atkins Architects

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Atkins called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m. He stated that the DRB was in search of a SC Registered Architect for the Board vacancy.
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 7, 2021 minutes. Mr. Brock motioned to approve the meeting minutes and Mr. Hill seconded to approve. Motion carried unanimously.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** There was no public comment.
5. **NEW BUSINESS:** None

6. OLD BUSINESS:

A. KIA of Hilton Head - Bluffton – Final:

Mr. Atkins asked Mr. Brower to preside over the project discussion; he and Mr. Brock recused themselves from the meeting. Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Brower asked for public comment, but no comments were made. Mr. Brower requested that the aerial view of this site be on screen for review. Jason Broene, the project Architect, made the presentation and stated that Scott Calhoun was in attendance and represented the Owner. Mr. Broene explained how the building design evolved and responded to the staff comments point-by-point.

He said that the conceptual building design looked like two different buildings because of the way the materials were used and for the final building design, they were looking to soften the CMU facade on the service side of the building. Mr. Broene stated said that the drop-offs previously had gable roofs and they did not tie well into the main portion of the building and the service side of the building had CMU top to bottom and now had a scored stucco facade, which is also on the showroom side of the building, to create a cohesive building. He said that they also studied the roof overhangs at the main entry and added some brackets at the drop-off areas and at the pedestrian entrances, removed the sloped roofs at the drop-offs and taking from the DRB comments from concept is how they developed the final building design. Mr. Broene stated that the differences between the drop-offs at the conceptual and final relates better now to the form of the building and bracketed sloped roofing was added to connect the entrances.

He said that the overhead doors had a powder coated steel charcoal color to match the storefront, but the owner was not opposed to having a translucent or transparent roll-up doors to remove the hard surface and allow more light into the building.

Mr. Broene explained that the awnings on east side of the building faced the power line easement, was not readily exposed to the public and was on the utilitarian side of the building. Mrs. Brach asked whether the east windows were see through. Mr. Broene said that they were placed high with panels below and would provide natural light into the shop. Mr. Brower commented that the awning brackets shown at conceptual were taken away and he asked if they were self-supporting. Mr. Broene confirmed that the awnings were self-supporting.

Mr. Broene referred to the revised roof plan and stated that the parapet on the west side was 25'-4" and extend up to 28' on the north side and the top of the roof was 20' so the parapet is 5'-4" on the west side and 8' on the north side. He stated that the tallest HVAC unit is 75" & about 10"-11" taller than the parapet, but the thought was to place it away from the parapet to allow the parapet to screen the unit. He said that a person would have to be 1000' past the power line in order to start to see the top of the roof equipment. Mr. Brower asked whether the rooftop equipment could be seen from Highway 278. Mr. Broene said that the highway was higher than the building and that some of the equipment would be seen but most vehicle traffic would focus on the highway. Mr. Brower commented that the parapets would screen the rooftop equipment from a pedestrian perspective level only. Mr. Broene said that the parapets help screen the rooftop equipment from Cecil Reynolds Drive, Highway 170, the 278 on-ramp to 278 but on west bound 278 some of the equipment would be exposed. Mr. Broene explained that the sloped roof on the east side of the building had a ridge height of 27' and the parapet height is at 30' and the rooftop units are smaller, about 59", so the equipment about is 20" higher than the parapet, but the units were pulled away from the building edge so they could not be seen. He said that from Cecil Reynolds Drive, a person would have to be 450 feet away from the building before the tops of the units could be seen. Mr. Starkey suggested that screens be added around the roof top units for complete screening from Highway 278. Mr. Broene said that would be an additional expense, but that it would be studied. He said the existing mature trees and vegetation would help screen the equipment.

Mr. Broene stated that the Tree Preservation areas were added to the Civil plans and that a split rail fence was added to the civil drawings. Mr. Broene addressed the better pedestrian connectivity issue between the north and south sides of the project. He said that the sidewalk was removed on the inventory overflow portion of the project and the goal was to keep the patrons from crossing onto this portion of the property. Mr. Starkey said that a sidewalk should be provided for the staff to safely cross to the southern portion of the project and that a sidewalk on the north side of the project should be added. Mr. Brock said that left corner of the south property had a 30" live oak and other mature trees that were slated to stay and additional understory trees and shrubs would be added. Mr. Brock suggested that a split rail fence be added across the front of the south property to make it look natural and not have any pedestrian access.

Mr. Broene said that the site lighting plan had some tree/light pole conflicts and that the poles would be sifted or moved within the tree islands and that the monument sign was being designed. Mr. Brock said that lighting pole locations will be coordinated with the updated landscape plan and that the tree mitigation will be worked through at SRT. The tree removals have been updated, overstory trees have been added per staff comments and a hedge has been added in front of the dumpster enclosure. Mrs. Brach asked whether the dumpster location could be removed. Mr. Broene said that the current location is on the service-side of the building and had the best accessibility for the garbage trucks.

Mr. Brock said that there were significant live oaks, red oaks and pines in the northwest corner which would help screen the top of the roof plus additional trees will be planted in the buffer to provide screenage for the rooftop. Mr. Brock said that the monument sign would be placed 10' from the R.O.W. off Cecil Reynolds Drive.

Mr. Hill had concerns over the 39" willow oak scheduled to remain in the NW tree island and asked if major grading work would be done at the base of the tree. Mr. Brock said that the civil engineer determined that the tree could be saved and that pervious paving would be on each side of it. Mr. Hill asked if it was located in the wetland area. Mr. Brock said that it was. Mr. Hill said that a tree well or retaining wall would help the 39" willow oak survive. Mr. Brower indicated that because the willow oak would be at a lower in grade that it may not do well. Mr. Hill said that the tree would be very challenged because it was in the wetland area and would have root disturbance.

Mrs. Brach asked if canopy trees were proposed on the south side of the project. Mr. Brock said that one canopy tree was proposed in a tree island and that the front buffer would be supplemented with understory trees and native shrubs.

Mr. Starkey asked about the overhead garage doors. He said that originally, they were proposed to be white and now they are charcoal gray and he had mixed feelings about the color. Mr. Brower said that the doors would be translucent or transparent. Mr. Starkey said that the solid door on the back was fine but not on the Highway 278 side of the building.

Mr. Hill wanted to discuss the metal awnings on the east side of the building and asked the other Board members about their opinion about the brackets. Mr. Brower preferred the brackets and said that the current shutters looked ineffective. Mr. Hill said that he too preferred wider shutters with brackets.

Mr. Brower said that the final building was better looking than at concept. His concern was that the corporate identity was an important factor in the design, and more of the corporate identity has been kept than he had imagined would be and stated that there was a conflict between what the community identity is per the architectural guidelines in terms of color and Lowcountry elements. He said that the design seems like the corporate identity was winning far more than the community identity. The community identity does not exist nearly as much with this final design as any of the other car dealerships along 278 (i.e. Mercedes, Honda, Nissan, Toyota) all of them had more Lowcountry texture compared to the images shown on the renderings and he was disappointed that the building design did not address more of what the architectural guidelines call for. Mr. Broene stated that based upon the conceptual review comments, the corporate side of the building was favored over the service side of the building and he pointed out where Lowcountry design features were introduced on the final. Mr. Brower said that he appreciated what Mr. Broene said but his feelings remained the same.

Mrs. Brach said that the east side shutters would look better if they were lowered and Mr. Brower agreed.

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

- Address staff comments and submit drawings for staff review and add a translucent or transparent roll-up door on the 278 side of the building.

- Lower the awnings over the east windows and substitute wider awnings with brackets featured.
- Get an Arborist Report which details on how best to protect the 39” willow oak tree throughout construction. Tree wells or retaining wells may be required around this tree.

Mr. Starkey requested a discussion about the motion and added two more conditions:

- Screening of the rooftop equipment from highway 278 overpass must be reviewed; study the visibility of the rooftop equipment from the Highway 278 overpass
- Put a split rail fence across the front of the south staging lot.

Mr. Hill seconded the motion.

Mrs. Brach, Mr. Hill and Mr. Starkey approved the Motion.

Mr. Brower did not approve the Motion.

Motion carried.

Mr. Atkins and Mr. Brock returned to the meeting.

Mr. Atkins read the standard final condition for the KIA of Hilton Head project and stated, “the structure, landscaping, lighting and other design elements 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 before changes are made”.

7. **OTHER BUSINESS:** Mr. Atkins stated that the next scheduled meeting – 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 4, 2021 at Grace Coastal Church, 15 Williams Drive, Okatie, SC 29909
8. **ADJOURNMENT:** Mr. Brock made a motion to close the meeting and Mr. Atkins seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.