



**BEAUFORT COUNTY**  
**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB) MINUTES**  
September 7, 2023, Grace Coastal Church, 15 Williams Drive, Okatie, SC

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**Members Present:** James Atkins, J. Michael Brock, Brad Hill, and Roger Jadown

**Members Absent:** Peter Brower and Donald L. Starkey

**Staff Present:** Nancy Moss, Beaufort County Community Development Department

**Guests:**

Walmart Building – Exterior Painting Updates: Jennifer Paquin, PB2 Architecture & Engineering via telephone conference.

Patel’s Bluffton Bottle Shop: Ronak Patel, A & A Maruti & John B. Crouch, Oceana Design LLC

No members from the public were in attendance.

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 June 6, 2023, meeting 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:**

**A. Wal-Mart Building Exterior Painting Updates, 4 Bluffton Road - Bluffton – Final:**

Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Atkins asked for public comment, but no comments were made. Ms. Paquin, the project Architect, attended the meeting via telephone conference and stated that she had nothing else to add to the staff report.

Mr. Jadown stated that the blue accent color looked stark compared to the other proposed facade colors.

Mr. Brock said that the blue accent color was way off and did not meet one of the standard colors in the allowed color palette. He stated that the facade areas with the blue color applied were not part of an architectural element and looked to be the background color for the signage. Mr. Brock stated that the paint manufacturer and product number needed to be added to the plans for the Board to determine how the proposed colors correlated with the standard color guidelines in the Code.

Mr. Hill agreed with Mr. Brock’s comments and stated that he too thought that the blue accent color was part of the signage background color.

Mr. Atkins provided some background information and explained that the current natural color scheme was approved because it allowed the large Walmart building to blend in well with the preserved buffers along Highways 278 and 46. He stated he had concerns about the new color scheme versus the natural color scheme and asked what the genesis of the facade color updates was. Ms. Paquin stated that this color scheme was the new corporate color scheme and that eventually all the Walmart stores would adopt this updated color scheme on their buildings. She asked the Board to take into consideration that there were thick buffers along Highways 278 & 46 and that the building was well screened and far from the highways so it could not be seen until the customers entered the development. Mr. Atkins stated that the existing color scheme was successful and blends in well with the natural buffers. He said that the blue accent color was stark, did not relate to the architectural elements and was part of the signage background. Ms. Paquin asked the Board if they would consider the blue color if it were removed everywhere except for the main front parapet. Mr. Atkins said the blue color was stark and that if the blue color matched what was applied on the front left corner of the building, it would not meet the color requirements in the Code.

Mr. Brock made a motion to table this project to allow the applicant to make changes based upon the Design Review Board's comments made at the meeting.

Mr. Hill seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **6. OLD BUSINESS:**

### **A. Patel's Bottle Shop, 74 Bluffton Road - Bluffton – Conceptual (2):**

Ms. Moss gave the project background. Mr. Atkins asked for public comment, but no comments were made. Mr. Crouch, the project Architect, and Mr. Patel, the project Developer, made the presentation. Mr. Crouch submitted copies of additional rendered views to the Board and stated that the roof overhangs were increased to 3' and metal awnings were added over the principal windows. He said that the corner pyramid roof elements helped to break-up the massing of the building and that the tallest facade was in the back next to Goodwill. Mr. Crouch said that the roof color was changed from silver to patina and that Italian Cypress trees were added at the foundation and the buffer plantings were increased. He referred to the aerial view of the commercial subdivision and stated that there were multiple buildings in the development and that the building was not out of proportion and was part of a series of commercial buildings. Mr. Patel stated that he was concerned and proactive about the environment and that his non-profit organization would be committed to planting 100 trees per year.

Mr. Hill said that he had no issues with the architecture and liked the changes with the roofline and colors. He stated that he did have issues with the landscape plan. He said that they should hire a professional and that the muhly grass was not a good choice as a foundation plant and that the Italian Cypress would not do well long term in this part of the country.

Mr. Brock agreed with Mr. Hill's comments and stated that dogwoods generally do not survive very long in a developed area but do well in the woods. He said that the red maples proposed in the tree islands were deciduous and not evergreen overstory trees as required by Code and that

evergreen shrubbery must be added to the Highway 46 buffer to screen the parking area from the highway. He stated that the muhly grass and dwarf palmettos were not good foundation plant choices. Mr. Brock said that he appreciated the effort in the architectural design from the first review to the current version.

Mr. Jadown stated that he liked the architecture revisions but there seemed to be a discrepancy between the colors shown on the 3D renderings and the color board. He said he would like to see the actual color samples at the next meeting. Mr. Jadown said that the clerestory windows on the north elevation appeared awkwardly placed in the way the wall facade was broken up, but overall, there was a big improvement in the building design.

Mr. Atkins said that the square footage of the building was fine but the DRB comments from the previous meeting were regarding the mass of the building. He said that the colors would probably work well but asked that the actual color samples be brought to the next meeting for confirmation. Mr. Atkins questioned how the elevations corresponded to the roof plan. Mr. Crouch provided an explanation and stated that the building was anchored at the four corners with pyramid roofs and that on the north elevation the eaves were dropped four feet. Mr. Atkins suggested that the east elevation needed to be adjusted to create a hierarchy similar to what was done on the west elevation. He said that the scale on the front corner pieces facing highway 46 needed to be brought down. Mr. Atkins stated that brackets should be added to the metal awnings over the bay windows to incorporate more Lowcountry elements into the design. He said that the design was heading in the right direction but had reservations about the massing of the building facing Highway 46 with the 20' eave heights.

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

- Revise the landscape plan to re-work the foundation buffer plantings by removing the muhly grass, dwarf palmettos and Italian Cypress. Replace the dogwoods in the buffers with a hardier understory tree and replace the red maple trees in the tree islands with an evergreen overstory tree. Provide confirmation that the plantings in the buffers meet the required opacity.
- Look at the low slope roof details and add brackets.
- Study the option to reduce the eave heights on the corner elements on the elevation facing highway 46, similar to what was done on the west elevation.
- Bring actual color samples to the next meeting.

Mr. Brock seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

7. **OTHER BUSINESS:** Mr. Atkins stated that the next scheduled meeting would be held at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 5, 2023, at Grace Coastal Church, 15 Williams Drive, Okatie, SC 29909.

This is Brad Hill's last meeting with the Board. The Board Members thanked him for his service and for staying on past the expiration of his term until his replacement was found.

8. **ADJOURNMENT:** Mr. Brock made a motion to close the meeting and Mr. Hill seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.