

PLEASE NOTE: These are draft meeting minutes. The meeting minutes have not been reviewed or approved by members of the Northern Corridor Review.

NORTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY
CORRIDOR REVIEW BOARD MINUTES
May 25, 2010, Beaufort Industrial Village #2

Members Present:

Brian Coffman
Bradley Bowden
Kevin Farruggio
Mark Dixon
William Harris
William Sammons
Michael Brock

Staff Present: Judy Nash Timmer, Development Review Planner
Linda Maietta, Planning Assistant

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at approximately 4:30 p.m. by Mr. Brian Coffman, Chairman.
- II. **General Public Comment:** There were no public comments.
- III. **Review of Minutes:** Minutes from the December 8, 2009, and May 11, 2010, were reviewed. Mr. William Harris made a motion, and Mr. William Sammons seconded the motion, to accept the December 8, 2009, and May 11, 2010, minutes as written. The motion was carried unanimously (FOR: Coffman, Bowden, Farruggio, Dixon, Harris, Sammons, Brock).
- IV. **Old Business:** There was no old business to discuss.
- V. **New Business:** Howard and Eddie's Plaza (Conceptual)

Mr. Harris recused himself from this portion of the meeting.

Chairman Coffman asked for staff comments from Ms. Timmer. She read the staff report to the Board (copy attached).

Chairman Coffman invited the applicant to the podium for his presentation. The group representing this project was Cooter Ramsey, Project Architect, Allison Ramsey Architects; Ryan Lyle, Project Engineer, Andrews & Burgess Engineering; and Chris Darnell, Landscape Architect, JK Tiller Associates.

Mr. Ramsey handed out pictures of the proposed Howard and Eddie's to the Board. Mr. Ramsey provided the basic concept for the project:

- The site is located in a very rural area.
- The program is atypical in that how do you bring a gas station and a little fish market to a rural area and have it make sense.
- Being in an agricultural area, looked at packing sheds and agricultural-type of buildings as good prototypes and inspirational images for building out in rural areas. That is what inspired this project.
- When the project is done, it should capture the essence of the rural community and respond to that; want this to feel like an agricultural building that happens to have gas as well.
- Proposing some concepts that may be foreign to the Board. Definitely foreign to our current ordinance that does not address how to do rural architecture in rural areas and would like the Board to consider what is being proposed here.
- Basic concept is from the street intersection, we'd like for you to look across a big field and see a building sitting in an open area.
- Don't want to take the site and do a lot of man-made landscaping and a lot of artificial buffering and screening and things that really don't fit well with how you would typically see an agricultural building in a field.
- Our concept is certainly to be a little more in keeping with a true rural community
- Don't want a lot of heavy asphalt; don't want a lot of concrete – worked hard to minimize those characteristics and respond to the site a little differently.
- Proposal includes possibly doing a mural on the side of the wall rather than articulating it with windows and shutters. Feel it is more in keeping with a structure that would have been built out there and fit into that setting.
- Cupola across the top – concerns that might be some fire issues because of the fact that gas pumps will be covered with a roof that is attached to the building so this was an effort to be able to allow smoke to make it up and out and get away from the building and not get trapped under that roof line.
- Ms. Timmer correctly points out that it would look a lot better if it were longer; may study that.
- Simple structure, small structure. Got a lot of roof but its intentional, it's intentionally long and linear, kind of hovering, and that responds to the old agricultural buildings you'd see. Basically, it's an old barn out there.
- Materials – want to use some steel, metal roofs, concrete that has stucco over it, paint the sides.
- Fish market in back is a very small, more of a small-scale restaurant-type of structure.
- Fish market – concrete block with some stucco, sliding barn doors made out of wood that open up when you're using it.
- Opportunity between the fish market and the gas station to create a little bit of an outdoor space
- Overall scale is simple: basic gables, big overhangs, expressive details.

Chairman Coffman called for comments from the Board. Mr. Sammons and Mr. Farruggio liked the concept. Ms. Timmer clarified for the Board that a restaurant is not compatible with this zoning. A shop is but not a restaurant; probably won't be outdoor eating space. Mr. Dixon asked for further explanation of the landscaping, including the buffer.

Mr. Ramsey offered the following:

- From the intersection, would like to have a lawn area that this building sits in.
- Does not want it to be hidden behind an artificial screening. He doesn't see it in keeping with the basic idea; when you see an old agricultural building, you tend to see it sitting in the middle of the field; it's not buffered around trees and hidden.
- As you move south, Mr. Ramsey sees a lot more vegetation coming back in to the picture but would also like that element of surprise as you're coming north on 17 - that all of a sudden it does kind of open up and here's this sprawling building sitting out in more of a field.
- The comments about keeping some of those trees may be valid, particularly in the island. Mr. Ramsey would like to keep as many trees as possible. Mr. Ramsey would like to play up the natural openness.

Ms. Timmer cautioned the Board that the concept being discussed is in essence agricultural areas that are in open places but we do have the ordinance. The ordinance talks about having buffers and that's the concept that was designed for all of our corridors. We do have minimal requirements that have to be applied to this project.

Mr. Brock stated that he agreed with the staff comment on lengthening that roof over the top. There may be an opportunity for some planters and seating under the roof just so people can stop. Mr. Brock also had questions on site plan, was there a screened dumpster area on the plan? Where would the HVAC system be located? Are the two buildings connected by a sidewalk?

Mr. Lyle responded to the site plan issues:

- Although it is not shown they intend to incorporate a screened dumpster area
- One of the challenges of this project is meeting the open space requirements and the hardscape doesn't fit within that (85% of the entire site needs to be green or landscaped). Mr. Lyle stated that is why they didn't show any patio seating area in between the two buildings. They need to minimize the pervious and impervious surfaces.
- The HVAC system has not been put into the plan at this time.
- They did have sidewalks connecting the face of the parking stalls and the two building but they had to scale back on the hardscape plan.
- One possible way to accomplish what the Board requires and what the applicant would like to see is buffer modulation. Ms. Timmer mentioned that the minimum on that 35' has to be approved by DRT so if there is a change in the plan, another conceptual round with this Board would be required. Mr. Lyle stated that the plans are showing a 28' modulated review at DRT.

Mr. Bowden asked if the applicant had considered flipping the plan and putting the gas in the back, with the fish store in front. He asked the reasoning as to how it ended up this way. Mr. Ramsey replied that they did actually think about putting it the other way but there were a couple of things that ultimately didn't work out about having it in that direction. More area is covered when it's flipped so the open space ratio got a little bit higher when the pumps were in back. Safety issues also had to be addressed to make people feel comfortable enough to pull off and actually park there. Mr. Bowden stated that more buffering will be required because to hide the cars up front getting gas.

Chairman Coffman offered the following feedback:

- Maybe some low shrubbery, some kind of hedge row on the street side might be something assist with masking those cars to some degree.
- It is a nice looking structure: I like the deep overhangs and the overall mass scale of it is good.
- I do like your concept of having it be a stand alone building out in the field, even though buffers are required. You may be able to accomplish both of the things that you're trying to do.
- I do agree with everyone on the cupola, it is a good feature but it is too short. Maybe look at a couple smaller ones or one long one.
- My only other comments were on the building itself – street side elevation where you were talking about doing the mural - biggest blank wall you have facing the street – something to consider there whether its windows or something to break that up a little bit.
- The rear elevation, you've got the door back there, potentially doing some windows or something back there because that will be the first thing you see coming from the south unless its heavily screened which it sounds like it might be.
- The only other architectural comment is that the extension of the last bay of the canopy, maybe 20' to cover a whole car, seems way too long in my opinion.

The Board reviewed the answers to the questionnaire submitted by the applicant, addressing the standards and objectives of ordinance:

1, How is the proposed project compatible with surrounding uses in terms of size and scale?

Mr. Sammons: absolutely have.

Mr. Brock: This project is unique in the fact that it is so far out. Yes, it's on a major corridor and it's within Beaufort County but it is way out there and I'm afraid we're missing the whole point of this concept. I like the idea of having a mural on the side of the building because that is what was done 50 years ago. If we put windows on that wall, you're going to take away from the opportunity of getting back to that rurality that is out there. It's a rural area. One of the things that I'm concerned about is once this is built and if we're directing them to put in windows and put in a heavy buffer, people are going to pass by there and say that looks so out of place - it just doesn't match, it's not compatible with the surroundings. I think that's where we're leading them -making it not

compatible with what is out there. I think we need to be very careful on how we're guiding them.

Coffman: That looks like an agricultural shed that looks like its been out there. Fits with character of that region.

2, How does the project adhere to the traditional architectural styles and materials of the low country and, more specifically, the county?

Board felt the applicant met the standards.

3, How do the proposed architecture, project layout, access, landscaping, signage and overall design contribute to a harmonious and diverse character that has a strong sense of unity?

Board felt the applicant met the standards.

4, How is monotony avoided?

Board felt the applicant met the standards.

5, How does the proposed streetscape protect or enhance the portal or distinct county area in which it is located? How does it contribute to the county's sense of place and uniqueness?

Board felt the applicant met the standards.

6, How does the combination of architecture, signs, and landscaping create a sense of place for developments having more than one building? Or contribute to an overall sense of unity if the development is a single building.

Board felt the applicant met the standards.

7, How does the proposed streetscape and building design reduce the apparent building mass to match the nearby residential areas?

Board felt this corresponds with question 1.

A question was raised about the landscape requirements along this street. Ms. Timmer provided the information: for every 100', have a minimum of 30 shrubs, 7 under story and 4 over story trees and that's the minimum. The way the ordinance is written is that parking has to be screened. It could mean layers and not just the minimum, more could be required. The hardest part that touches their project is the opacity rule – the 75% opacity. The buffer is supposed to provide 75% opacity. But that doesn't mean you can't open the proper vistas. Even if there are trees through there, opening up that 3' high to 8' high window from the ground is really important because that's what you're going to see when you're driving down the road in the average car. The ordinance does not have any built-in leeway. Ms. Timmer suggested the applicant provide pictures showing what exists (for landscape views) on the site will be very beneficial to the Board and help the Board to determine what needs to be done. Ms. Timmer also cautioned that Board that this probably will not be the only business in that area. There's the Big Estates CP that does allow different types of businesses in it along the highway.

Mr. Brock made a motion, and Mr. Dixon seconded the motion, for conceptual approval based on the Board's comments. The motion was carried (Coffman, Sammons, Dixon, Brock, Bowden, Farruggio).

VI. **Other Business:** Narrative Questions

Chairman Coffman directed the review of the narrative questions. The following comments/changes were discussed:

- #1 is essentially the same as #7 – delete #7.
- #4 should be reworded to read, how does the proposed project provide interest and diversity while avoiding monotony.
- #5 should be reworded to read, how does the proposed project enhance the . . .
- #6 should be reworded to read, how does the proposed project create a . . .
- New #7, try to include historic or cultural impact the project has on . . .

Mr. Harris asked if there is room for a question, do you feel like there is anything that the ordinance is requiring you to do that you think is detrimental to your overall concept? Ms. Timmer said I think the question has a place but I don't know if the NCRB meeting is the place. If we did have applicants answer this question it could help us identify areas where the ordinance needs to be changed. The question could be included on the questionnaire with a note included that this is for our benefit, to gather information.

Meeting adjourned at approximate 5:50 p.m.