

A meeting of the Design Review Board was held on July 14, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. in the City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Brian Franklin, board members Jane Frederick and Chuck Rushing, and Lauren Kelly, city staff. Bob Albright and Dan Ahern were absent.

In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d) as amended, all local media were duly notified of the time, date, place, and agenda of this meeting.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Franklin called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

### **MINUTES**

**Ms. Frederick made a motion, second by Mr. Rushing, to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2016 meeting. The motion to approve the minutes as submitted passed unanimously.**

### **DOLLAR GENERAL, 2811 BOUNDARY STREET**

**Identified as District 120, Tax Map 26A, Parcel 275 (16-07 DRB.2)**

Applicant: HB Engineering, Inc.

*The applicant is requesting approval for a new Dollar General store.*

Ms. Kelly said all of the board's and staff's comments made at the preliminary review about the site and in general had been addressed. **Liza Hill** had made some semantic comments on landscaping that are in the staff report.

Ms. Kelly said staff had a couple of remaining comments about the building. The transom detail could be replicated more consistently in the adjacent bays where there are only windows. The cement panels to the left of the entry doors could be converted to glass, or the lower panels could remain and the middle ones could be glazed. Ms. Frederick added that the transom detail could be over those panels.

Further details that the staff report had said were required were part of the submission (wall sections, parapets, etc.) that was obtained today, Ms. Kelly said, as was a materials report. Staff recommends final approval of the project with the modification of the shopfront, Ms. Kelly said.

Ms. Frederick said the column detail looks a lot better. On the right elevation, though, there is "the idea of the windows going down," but the board had wanted "the parapet to go down to the gutter that's right past . . . the second windows," as well. "From an engineering standpoint, this is a uniform roof," **Tony Cates**, the project's developer, said, so a parapet wall "changes the whole gutter system." Ms. Frederick asked if he could "move that unit down to the end of the building, so that we don't see it." Mr. Cates said there is only one penetration in the roof. He asked why Ms. Frederick wanted

this done. She replied “to give it uniformity” and to hide the unit because it’s the side that everyone driving past will see. Mr. Cates said they could leave a 6”–8” gap, “and handle those gutters the same way.” He asked if it was OK to not have a “full, solid parapet,” and Ms. Frederick said yes. If it “goes down to where that gutter is, just past that last fake window,” she’d be fine with that solution.

On the landscaping plan, Chairman Franklin said he had a few comments: there are no delineation labels between the mulch and lawn areas. He agrees with Ms. Hill’s comments about non-native plants. Also, Latin and common names are missing in the submission, Chairman Franklin said, and plant heights are given but gallon sizes are not. With a project of this scale, Chairman Franklin said, labels would have been helpful.

Chairman Franklin asked the distance from the sidewalk that the handicapped ramp would extend. He indicated on the drawing his alternative idea: to “carry the walkway down the side of the building” and do a curved section on the “backside . . . to create a ramp that, as you go down, has a little change in elevation. This would “pull the plant material right there off the building (by) 3’.” Mr. Cates said they could do that. The one on the right, which has a single step, “would be . . . in front of the door,” and the handicapped ramp would be on the other side. Chairman Franklin said it could be more even with the edge of the building and “eliminate a handrail.”

Chairman Franklin said the planting palette seems “North Carolina-ish.” Mr. Cates said it is palette that Dollar General uses generally in South and North Carolina. Chairman Franklin said there are other plants that could be used to make the landscaping scheme less monotonous. He recommended that the applicant look at Ms. Hill’s recommendations as well as at the stock at local nurseries.

**Ms. Frederick made a motion for final approval with consideration of staff’s and the DRB’s suggestions about landscaping, the transom, and the addition of the parapet on the side. Chairman Franklin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman Franklin made a comment after the motion about possibly moving the handicapped ramp to the eastern corner of the building. That would allow the sidewalk in front of the building to gradually slope down and may eliminate the need for the handrails. The applicant said they would look at this solution.

**HARRIS TEETER AT LADY’S ISLAND, 163 SEA ISLAND PARKWAY**

**Identified as District R123, Tax Map 15, Parcel 587 and District R200, Tax Map 15, Parcel 592 and 169 Sea Island Parkway, R200, Tax Map 15, Parcel 606 (16-01 DRB.5) **

Applicant: Ryan C. Lyle, Andrews Engineering, Inc. 

*The applicant is requesting approval for the building architecture and the designs for the C-store and liner buildings. *

Ms. Kelly said **Ron Kirkpatrick**, the project's architect, and **Ryan Lyle** had come to the board to review the Harris Teeter grocery store's architecture. The majority of staff's and the board's comments about the site have been addressed, she said. The board gave Harris Teeter final approval of the site with conditions approved by staff, and preliminary approval of the grocery's architecture, with comments about lighting and building articulation, the last time the applicants had been before it, in April 2016

**Harris Teeter grocery store:** Ms. Kelly said the biggest difference in the store's architecture is that the mezzanine has been removed from the corner, so there is no longer a second level there, and what was there is now on the first floor.

The columns and detail have stayed similar to the previous submission, she said. A window has been added to the front elevation to break up the façade, but staff feels like "it could be more articulated." Mr. Kirkpatrick said there are a few more windows on top now, too. Ms. Kelly said the applicants have added a corner detail to break this up, too. At a meeting with Harris Teeter representatives, staff had recommended removing a tower and focusing instead on the main portions of the building, which the applicants did.

Ms. Kelly said the left elevation has a long, unarticulated, blank façade; staff feels they could "add shutters" or do something else to break up that façade because it faces the road. Mr. Kirkpatrick said they had added a different material, which is brown, under the windows, but it's hard to see in the drawings. It's meant to appear as if windows had been there. Ms. Frederick asked if it's like the bricked-in windows on the Fordham Hardware building. Mr. Kirkpatrick said yes. That change has been made, he said, but it's not shown on the drawing.

Ms. Kelly said on the front elevation, Harris Teeter needs to submit building details for the parapet, colonnade, typical wall sections, etc. The bracketed eyebrow, she said, could be "a little bit more authentic," and she showed an example of brackets that are used as part of a cornice in a modern building. Mr. Kirkpatrick said the Harris Teeter store is a tall building, so moving the bracket down was meant to make it seem less tall. Mr. Kirkpatrick said if they want him to "beef it up a little bit," he could.

Ms. Kelly said on the main entry element, Mr. Kirkpatrick had broken the windows up into "well-proportioned segments," and that should "continue through" on the windows in the corner, too.

Ms. Frederick asked if the space is "double-height" in the area where the mezzanine used to be, or if there are offices there. Mr. Kirkpatrick said it's single-height, "but it'll be a large, open volume, just like the rest of the store." There's a 22' joist bearing at the front, which is an exposed structure, he said. This is typical of Harris Teeter buildings.

Staff recommends preliminary approval of the Harris Teeter store's architecture, Ms.

Kelly said, with the following conditions: details of wall sections, colonnades, and cornice bracket are refined, the amount of unarticulated facades is reduced, and any additional board and staff comments about the building's architecture are considered.

Mr. Rushing asked what the brown block was to the left of the main entry on the windows. Mr. Kirkpatrick said he thinks that's just a shadow.

Ms. Frederick said the brick on the right side of the front elevation is "taller on one side" than it is "on the other side of that." Mr. Kirkpatrick said they had used a different material, as they had discussed. He showed the materials board and described what would be used and where. Ms. Frederick asked if the colors in the original elevations were truer than in this version. Mr. Kirkpatrick said yes.

Ms. Frederick said the area "where the mezzanine used to be . . . made sense," but now it doesn't because "the roof is so high that it wouldn't keep rain off of you because it would blow in," and the windows are a different pattern than everything else. She feels that it "looks like you took the seating out, and this was what's left over." That corner is the only one that doesn't seem improved, Ms. Frederick said. Mr. Kirkpatrick suggested that "a second-story canopy" could be added to "keep the weather off people." They could keep the one they have, he said, and then could add another that is lower and more pedestrian-scale. The upper one could be more structural and "open-air," Mr. Kirkpatrick said. Ms. Kelly asked if there was a reason to differentiate this corner, now that the mezzanine is gone. Chairman Franklin said he likes that it's articulated differently, but there's "none of that treatment anywhere else." On the far left elevation, for example, there's no detailing, as they have there. Chairman Franklin feels the detail here is in consistent "in line, scale, shape, or form." There's a little logo on the wall that is otherwise "huge (and) blank."

Ms. Frederick asked if the other bays had fake windows. Mr. Kirkpatrick said that's the intention. Chairman Franklin said there's nothing special about the right façade except in the area where the Starbucks is. Mr. Kirkpatrick said he felt like that is what the board "tasked (them) with when we originally met," which was "activating that front left corner because it's the most visible location from the corner of Sams Point (Road) and Sea Island Parkway." They changed the interior floor plan from what a Harris Teeter has, typically, Mr. Kirkpatrick said, and "activated that corner" with a wine bar there, "hot bars (in) close proximity," and seating inside and out. The "corner has been dedicated to that view." The mezzanine "went away because this store has to make money," he said, and the construction costs have skyrocketed from a few years ago when the pro formas were done. Harris Teeter wants to "put the money where the focal point is."

Chairman Franklin said good architecture doesn't have to be expensive and provided an example. This corner is important, he said, but so is the rest of the architecture on the building. The rear elevation is the service area, which he understands, but apart from a few small windows, the right elevation wall is about "100' of blank wall," he said. Mr.

Kirkpatrick said in 99% of grocery stores, the cases are on the perimeter, and those “entities are 8’ high.” He has put windows on that side that are higher than 8’ to let natural light in and put out a “glow from the building as you’re coming down Sams Point Road at night.” That “perimeter space is just a huge, huge, marketable space for a grocery store,” Mr. Kirkpatrick said. Chairman Franklin said he agrees, “but this . . . is a suburban model”; they have all seen urban Harris Teeter buildings that “are making it work in an urban environment, with this much parking,” he said, and he thinks there are ways that can be done here without changing “the interior functionality of the building.” The “exterior façade can be more than just a blank wall,” and the right and left elevations are both on roads, so Chairman Franklin would “like to see something done with” them. What the master plan wants for this area is what the board looks at, he said, and Harris Teeter is “starting to do that with the front elevation,” apart from a few details. This is an opportunity to create a visually stunning building at a highly visible intersection, Chairman Franklin concluded.

Ms. Frederick asked if the covered walk between the pharmacy and the main entrance could continue down. Mr. Kirkpatrick said, “That tower feature doesn’t protrude out as far as the canopy and everything does. The pharmacy drive-thru and the front vestibule kind of create a natural termination point for that.” Ms. Frederick said even functionally, they could use more coverage, like there is at the new Publix building, for example; this would help break up that façade, too.

**The liner buildings:** Ms. Kelly said the front elevation is facing the parking lot, and the rear elevation is facing Sea Island Parkway. The city’s philosophy is that buildings should do the opposite: The front elevation is the elevation that should face the road.

The liner building elevations are successful, Ms. Kelly said. They might add awnings, more brick detailing, and other elements to the Sea Island Parkway elevation, plus a weightier cornice. The buildings’ tenants will drive the details, too, when they’re there, she said. Mr. Kirkpatrick said there will be signs then, too.

Ms. Kelly offered recommendations to simplify the articulation of the façade (e.g., choosing no more than three materials “and doing them well”). On this building, the “cream, tannish color” seems unnecessary, she said; the window pattern that is established could be continued and that material eliminated. The corner areas with the wood paneling should be equal in size to one another and should be as tall as – or taller than – the center portion of the building. She thinks the wood paneling is an interesting addition. Ms. Frederick asked if it’s real wood. Mr. Kirkpatrick said it’s “faux.”

Mr. Rushing said he disagrees with staff about the asymmetry of the building, which he likes as-is; he agrees that it “would seem less busy if there were fewer materials.” Ms. Frederick said that she agreed with Ms. Kelly.

Chairman Franklin asked about the locations of the liner buildings on the site plan. To

access them, a main travel lane must be crossed. This location is reminiscent of the shops (e.g., PetSmart and Papa John's) in the Cross Creek shopping center, whereas he had thought the intention with these liner buildings would be to make them like those in Beaufort Town Center, which have their own parking areas (e.g., Wayback Burger) or have shared parking (e.g., Moe's, Jimmy John's etc.) and front Boundary Street. He encouraged the applicants to "provide . . . maybe head-in parking on the back side of that building," which would allow people to "pull in, get out, and go to that store," while "that travel lane (should be moved) more internal – to the side, if possible."

As it's been presented, it is more of a suburban shopping center model, Chairman Franklin said. People must walk across a traffic lane to get to a store, and that's what they step into when they come out of the store. Mr. Kirkpatrick said they have angled parking adjacent to one liner building, and the other has parking where pedestrians don't have to cross the traffic lane. Chairman Franklin said it's "still tight," so asked if the applicants could "work it another way."

Staff recommends conceptual approval of the liner buildings with consideration of staff and board comments, Ms. Kelly said.

**The convenience store:** The gas pumps are behind the store, which meets city guidelines, Ms. Kelly said, but the front elevation of the building faces the pumps and the rear elevation faces Sea Island Parkway, so, like the liner buildings, these buildings' orientation "needs more scrutiny," she said. The front elevation, with the exception of the tower, which she recommends removing, is "a very classic kind of building." Mr. Kirkpatrick said they aren't allowed to put the pumps on Sea Island Parkway, and "the entry's got to face the pumps." Ms. Kelly said staff understands that, as well as "the implications of having a gas station ordinance that is like that, but . . . we just need a little bit more articulation and regularity to this rear elevation." She said she knows that will have implications on the "internal structure" of the store.

Ms. Kelly indicated the corner, where there is an entrance and an office, on which she feels the applicants should focus, with windows, for example. On this rest of it, she said, "where there's spandrel glass, there's nothing that can really happen there." Mr. Kirkpatrick said, "We could do graphics or something on it instead of spandrel." Ms. Kelly noted that "graphics come into the sign ordinance."

The tower and bay windows can also be simplified, Ms. Kelly said. Ms. Frederick said the windows "would look better flush," without the added display; Ms. Kelly suggested making the window flush by pulling the façade out, leaving residual space inside that can be used for display areas. The CVS in Charleston does this, she said, as does the Gap.

Ms. Kelly said the city's ordinance requires 50% minimum fenestration coverage; the intent is to have clear glazing. She suggested "focusing on the area that can be done well." Ms. Kelly asked about "these larger brick modules" on the building. Mr.

Kirkpatrick said those can be different sizes, and they were trying to “create that signage” to “give . . . a little different background” to Harris Teeter’s apples, fish, and loaves symbol. It’s the same color as the other brick but a different material. Ms. Kelly commented that they could do “a darker water table but have it the same size.”

Ms. Frederick asked if they could run the scuppers and gutters on one of the sides that is not the Sea Island Parkway elevation, which would “make it seem more (like) a front” of a building. Mr. Kirkpatrick said they could look at that. Ms. Kelly that would help, and also “doing something with the parapet similar to the way that you have the one facing the pumps.” She also suggested considering a wider trim piece for the cornice with the soldier course below.

Ms. Frederick suggested they match the thickness of the awnings on the front and rear of the building, and have it go down over the windows in the office. Mr. Kirkpatrick said he’d been thinking of extending it down so it would “look more similar to what’s on the front.” Ms. Kelly said that for final approval, the applicants will need to submit materials, colors, and the pump canopy design.

Ms. Kelly said the c-store doesn’t meet the ordinance for fenestration coverage on the Sea Island Parkway elevation, so for that one, she would not tend to recommend approval. This should be resolved and resubmitted with consideration of board and staff comments.

**Chairman Franklin made a motion for preliminary approval of the liner buildings with consideration of comments to simplify materials. Ms. Frederick seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Chairman Franklin made a motion for preliminary approval of the main building, with the applicant returning to the DRB to review changes made in response to comments about window treatments, fenestration at the top, and other details noted by staff and that had been discussed at this meeting.** Ms. Frederick said the applicants should also look at “breaking up the massing a little more” and at the detailing “of the eating corner.” Mr. Rushing commented that on the right side of the front elevation, “that traffic lane that comes off of Sea Island Parkway (goes) dead-on, straight into the (liner) building,” which is “very critical.” While he likes the asymmetry, that will be the visual focus of everyone turning off of Sams Point Road, so he looks forward to seeing Mr. Kirkpatrick’s ideas for that. **Mr. Rushing seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Chairman Franklin made a motion for preliminary approval of the application for the c-store with comments about scuppers on the Sea Island Parkway elevation, removal of the stone towers on the corner, making the rear elevation facing Sea Island Parkway more pedestrian and more of an entry than a back of the building, addressing window detail issues, and simplification of the materials. Ms. Frederick seconded the**

**motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Jon Verity** asked about a timeframe for completion of the store. When construction starts, it takes about 12 months to complete, Mr. Kirkpatrick said, so it should open in early 2018.

Chairman Franklin said if Harris Teeter needs a special meeting with the DRB, the board is amenable to that. The next scheduled meeting is August 11.

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:54 p.m.