A meeting of the Design Review Board was held on **November 12, 2015 at 2:00 p.m.** in the City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Brian Franklin and board members Bob Albright, Jane Frederick, Dan Ahern and Chuck Rushing, and city staff, Lauren Kelly.

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

MINUTES
Mr. Rushing made a motion, second by Mr. Albright, to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2015 meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Meridian Assisted Living
93 Sea Island Parkway, Identified as District R123, Tax Map 15, Parcel 915 (15-04 DRB.3)
Applicant: MCL Partners
The applicant is requesting approval for an 88-bed assisted living facility.

Ms. Kelly said this is a 51,000 square foot assisted living facility on Lady's Island. This is its third time before the Board. In March, the project received conceptual approval. In June, the applicants were given additional comments, but no motion was made. They would like final approval at this meeting.

Site
Ms. Kelly said there are no zoning issues, and it meets all applicable guidelines. In regard to pedestrian circulation, previously, comments were made about connectivity. The updated site plan shows a more direct sidewalk path from the main Meridian Assisted Living entrance to the Hamilton Village Shoppes. Staff recommends a different route (described in the staff report), but Ms. Kelly said this plan generally meets the need for connectivity. There's been nothing resolved in regard to connecting two adjacent properties to the east and west.

Ms. Kelly said trash and recycling receptacles are shown; screening needs to be provided, and a profile must show that it isn't visible. These receptacles, mechanical equipment, and propane tanks must be shown on the plan, and the details of their screening should be provided. The applicants need to show plans for a bike rack and lighting for final approval, which may be able to be done on the staff level.

Ms. Kelly said **Liza Hill** had provided a landscaping detail. There are "a couple fundamental things" needed: no arborist's report has been received on the grand trees that will be affected by the development, as well as the landscaping plan overlaid on the

new grading and on the tree survey, which Ms. Hill needs to understand which trees are being taken out and which are staying, and to determine mitigation.

Mr. Albright said, in regard to the trees, the report indicates that staff has requested that a 29" tree be mitigated by eight 3.5" caliper overstory trees. He has developed with a lot of Live Oak trees, and he has seen how closely they are planted. When they age a few years, "you can have overkill," he said; the applicants could create a "forest" by taking out one tree. Ms. Kelly said that's a good point, but since they now have the new landscaping plan and a tree survey, the mitigation is different.

Ensuring that the civil drawing accurately represents the tree protection zones was "a theme throughout," Ms. Kelly said. Also, the silt fencing isn't shown "on the sheet" and needs to be added.

Building

Its size, mass and scale and the use of fewer materials are appreciated by staff. Based on previous Board comments, Ms. Kelly offered new comments:

- Front entry portico – The ordinance recommends square or vertically proportioned bays, and one of them "seems off," though the rest of them are fine.
- Steeper roof – A simpler hipped roof with a 6:12 pitch would tie that element together better.
- Mechanical equipment – She had discussed the need to show them in the elevations.
- Cupolas – Ms. Frederick had commented, and as was discussed at the last meeting, they don't seem to provide light into the structure, "so they don't seem to add a lot to the project," Ms. Kelly said. She suggested they consider either not having them, or tying them in better with the details.
- Proportions and ceiling height of the Alzheimer's wing – It's already a wide rectangular proportion, Ms. Kelly said; staff recommends raising it back up or using the jogs in the building footprint to break up the large roof and deemphasize its horizontality.

Staff recommends final approval with discussion by the Board about

- pedestrian connectivity to adjacent parcels
- adding site plan details, including bike rack, trash locations and screening
- modification of the entry portico
- modification of, or elimination of, the cupola
- addressing the proportions and massing of the Alzheimer's wing

Prior to issuing a building permit, staff can approve changes made in the above matters based on board comments, including an updated landscaping plan based on Ms. Hill's comments, a mechanical equipment profile on the elevations, a lighting plan with

details, and a color and material board.

Ms. Frederick asked where “Window 10” is; it’s on the window schedule, but she didn’t see in the plan. She thinks one cottage window doesn't seem appropriate when the rest are double-hung. **Vince Myers**, DIGroupArchitecture, said, “So noted.” Ms. Frederick said she agrees with Ms. Kelly about the cupolas and the entry. She would like to see actual samples of materials. Mr. Myers said they have “no problem with complying with any of this.”

Mr. Rushing said he wanted review of the connectivity. **Jeff Ackerman** is the engineer. Ms. Kelly said they show the dumpster and have a sidewalk that came down and over. There was no link before between the shops and the main entrance.

Mr. Ahern asked about drainage. Mr. Ackerman said there were condos that were to be built, and the drainage piping and earthwork were installed already in anticipation of that, but then they weren’t, so that is already in place.

Chairman Franklin said there seems to be “a disconnect” between where north is indicated on the landscape plan and on the elevations. That needs to be rectified on the landscape plan or the architectural drawings. He asked which is the correct floor plan: the one in the small set or the one on the screen. Ms. Kelly said it should be the one in the architectural set; she’s not sure they have been synced yet.

In regard to landscaping, Chairman Franklin said, a 2.5 caliper-inch tree should be around 12’ tall, not 8’ tall, so they should increase the caliper inches to get it up to the 10’ spec.

There’s a lot of 3-gallon plant material along the base of the building, Chairman Franklin said. He asked how much space there was from the bottom of the windows to the ground level. Mr. Myers said 3’. Chairman Franklin said a lot of the plants they had listed get to be 5–8’ tall in 5 years, so they’ll cover the windows after a few years unless they are severely pruned.

There’s also a lot of viburnum in the parking lot. Chairman Franklin suggested adding in other plants for variation, to prevent a blight from running. He complimented the tree variety: Shumard oaks, bald cypress, and elms.

The areas that are turf and those that are mulch are not delineated clearly, Chairman Franklin said. There are no grass line edges. He asked, is there a bed around the Savannah hollies, or are they in the grass? If the north arrow is correct on the landscaping plan, there are two plants beside each other that have different sun requirements, Chairman Franklin said. There’s hydrangea on the southern face that will not get enough shade from the 8–10’ tall bald cypress. On the south side of the landscape plan, along the parking lot, there’s a small area where they could work in

screening at various points he indicated.

Chairman Franklin said staff recommends final approval, but he knows they are missing a lot of "piecemeal elements." Mr. Ahern said he's fine with conditional approval.

Carl Epps lives in the condos at Hamilton Village, and said their residents have been working with the developer. Their primary issue early on was connectivity from their property to the Meridian Assisted Living property, in regard to security problems in the past, which lead them to be a gated community. It's been agreed that neither party wants ingress and egress to the other's property. Otherwise, they look forward to being good neighbors, he said.

Chairman Franklin made a motion to recommend final approval based on staff recommendations, with the addition of the updated landscape plan, bike racks, and a lighting plan, and the existing conditions on p. 4 of the proposal. Ms. Frederick said the motion should **include the changes to the cupolas and the entrance, eliminating the cottage style window, and adding fence detail around the swimming pool; they also need the materials board. Ms. Frederick seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

Home2 By Hilton, Parris Island Gateway and County Shed Road, Identified as District R120, Tax Map 26, Parcel 160 15-12 DRB.1)
Applicant: Thomas Michaels, Architect, HD Companies
The applicant is requesting approval for a new 107-room hotel.

Ms. Kelly said this is a 107-room, 62,000 square foot hotel on 2 acres at Parris Island Gateway and County Shed Road. It's the same property that Parker's had looked into, but it is on the south corner.

The Civic Master Plan describes this as a "prominent external edge for infill development" in the Burton industrial area, so this project is definitely compatible, Ms. Kelly said. The Civic Master Plan also shows a new road – not a driveway – through this site, connecting County Shed Road with Trask Parkway, suggesting buildings on this property address the Spanish Moss Trail, Trask Parkway, County Shed Road and Parris Island Gateway in some way.

In general, Ms. Kelly said, this project is keeping within the intent of the Civic Master Plan for this area. It will activate this intersection and provide a node for future commercial activity.

Site:
The proposed curb cuts will require DOT approval and a traffic impact analysis, Ms. Kelly said. This project offers less intensity than Parker's, so hopefully, it will be less challenging for the hotel to deal with DOT than it was for Parker's.

Ms. Kelly said the portion of the road in the access easement should be built out, instead of being stubbed out as it comes into the property. It could be a full street section, with a sidewalk, planting strip, parking, lighting, etc. Staff recommends building it out along the western edge of the property at least as far as the "future connection" stub out. It would also be helpful to have a potential trajectory through the site for this road and the layout of future parcels, even though they are not part of this project.

In regard to pedestrian circulation, Ms. Kelly said a sidewalk is required, unless the board waives it, along County Shed Road. It should tie into the Parris Island Gateway sidewalk with a landscape buffer between the road and sidewalk.

Ms. Kelly said the number of parking spaces meets the city's requirement. The Board has been "advocating for no head-in parking against the road," she added.

A tree survey is required, Ms. Kelly said. A certified arborist's report is required for any grand trees to be removed or retained –which construction could affect. Trees should be shown on the site plan to determine if there are any that should be designed around.

In regard to stormwater, Ms. Kelly asked if the stormwater pond in the rear is going to be designed to accommodate the entire parcel. A pump station will be required for the waste water, she said, and location and screening details are needed. The applicants will also need to present plans for a bike rack and lighting, and mechanical equipment, trash/recycling receptacles, and propane tanks and their screening.

Building

- Ms. Kelly said the general size, mass and scale meet UDO requirements. The elevations and floor plans should be coordinated for the next submission, as there are some discrepancies between them that need to be resolved.
- The building is organized with a porte cochère internal to the property, so it doesn't address Parris Island Gateway or County Shed Road with a front façade. The applicant has been trying to figure this out, Ms. Kelly said; staff is encouraging them to articulate a corner and tie it in with circulation and landscaping, so it has "a presence on the street," even if it's not the main entrance. That detail will be important, she feels, because they will have to address the main roads in some way.
- There are details on "the portico that's shown along there," Ms. Kelly said, and the one in the porte cochère: "about the bay openings being square, vertical and proportioned, column size, and just some details that . . . need . . . refinement."
- The elevation facing Parris Island Gateway is very unarticulated. Ms. Kelly said staff suggests adding windows and enhancing the portico.
- Along County Shed Road, there are 3–4 doors shown in the plan. These present good opportunities to provide articulation, such as awnings, "to liven up that façade."

- The northern façade has the main entrance and will have water views, so the applicants could consider balconies (or French balconies).
- The corner tower element has signage, but it is not the building's entrance, Ms. Kelly said, though an accentuated tower would typically signify that. Staff recommends resolving that and considering its use as an entrance. Some glazing shown on the floor plan that is not depicted on the elevations was also noted.

Tom Michaels said there are two entrances: one to the left of the porte cochère and one that was around where the pool is. To push the building closer to the street, they brought the pool inward. Normally, the tower is on one side, but they moved it to the corner to address views: that's why there's not an entrance there. There are windows that weren't shown there. Ms. Frederick asked about the room behind the tower. Mr. Michaels said underneath is the fitness room, and above that will be guest rooms, so they can add windows there. There's a covered trellis walkway; it can be made more of a colonnade, and that will better articulate it.

Proportions

- Ms. Kelly said the different components of the building help break up its mass.
- The horizontal banding across it is not typical of the Lowcountry; staff recommends breaking it up more vertically with pilasters. A horizontal band dividing the ground floor and the upper floors is appropriate, as is a cornice at the top.
- All window openings should be square or vertically proportioned, as should the portico bays. Ms. Kelly said the applicants should consider using mullions and/or making the windows operable.

Materials and details

- Ms. Kelly said there are a number of materials, colors, etc. The applicants should create a true, simplified palate. The green would be a trademark color and would count toward the signage allotment: 1 square foot of signage per linear foot is allowed, Ms. Kelly said.
- Reconstructed stone is a broad category, Ms. Kelly said, so they need details and a physical sample. Larger cast stone is more typical of this area and is appropriate around building entries.
- Windows and doors need headers, and the windows need sills.
- Signs should face County Shed Road and Parris Island Gateway on those facades.
- Solar panels on the roof should be shown, as should mechanical equipment.

Ms. Kelly said staff recommends preliminary approval for the site plan and the size, mass, and scale of the building, with staff recommendations on the site and building details to be incorporated into the next submission.

Mr. Michaels said the porte cochère is too close to the road if they flip it to put the

tower on Parris Island Gateway, and they would have issues with turning into the property if there was traffic stacking up on graduation weekends. Ms. Frederick asked if they could make it so people “had to come in off (Highway) 73”; Mr. Michaels said that “might be a possibility.” Ms. Kelly said “the tricky thing is turning left.” Chairman Franklin said there’s not a lot of room to come in off Parris Island Gateway.

Greg Baisch said there should be a left turn lane. The hotel will want people to be able to be dropped off without having to circle the whole hotel. Chairman Franklin and Mr. Baisch discussed where an entrance needed to be modified.

Mr. Ahern asked if this project is “one developer controlling one part of this” parcel. Mr. Baisch said this is the only parcel they control. The adjacent property owner is willing to work with them on the utilities and stormwater. There’s only one portion – on which the hotel would be built – being bought, and they don’t know what else will occur. Mr. Ahern asked if Parker’s was still in, and Mr. Baisch said no. Mr. Ahern asked, in that case, “why not have the hotel on the corner?” Mr. Baisch said, “That’s just not the property they’re able to buy.”

Chairman Franklin said he would suggest looking at what staff had recommended about extending the road coming off of Highway 73. Mr. Baisch said, “One reason we cut it short is because we didn’t know where that curve would go,” so they’re forcing it to be more of a 90-degree angle by pushing it back on the site. Chairman Franklin said the first developer will set the tone for everybody else who develops in this area. Mr. Baisch discussed a possible location for the pump station.

Mr. Albright said he doesn't think whether windows are operable or not should be the purview of a group like this. In most hotels, they’re inoperable for a variety of reasons, and whether they open or not doesn't effect the way they look.

In regard to the horizontal banding comment, the separation of spaces in a townhouse is one thing, Mr. Albright feels, but to him, a smooth façade is “more appealing than going the other way.” Mr. Albright asked why the portico bays need to be square, and he said he’s not sure about windows and doors needing headers.

Ms. Frederick said she thinks Mr. Albright is saying that if something is more contemporary, they should let it be that way. She said that she has a problem with stone because it’s not commonly used in the Lowcountry. Mr. Michaels said they have looked at all-brick.

Ms. Frederick said she’s concerned with working out how the building addresses the streets. From the photos, the colors don’t seem to harmonize; Mr. Michaels said they would get a materials board together.

Mr. Rushing asked about the half-height, long, skinny windows on the west elevation.

Mr. Michaels said that's a bed wall, and those are high windows above that. Mr. Rushing said it seemed "very 50s" and not pleasing. He also has concerns about the Parris Island Gateway façade.

Mr. Ahern asked if the pond is an infiltration pond. Mr. Baisch said Parker's had two ponds, and one along County Shed Road was to be a water feature. Mr. Ahern said one had poor soil, and they might have to do irrigation. Maybe they could store some water for that purpose. Mr. Baisch said they might have to force volume control just for the hotel at this point, but they haven't gotten into the stormwater aspect yet.

Chairman Franklin said he would reiterate the northern connection, and they must screen the dumpster, which may cause them to lose a parking space, because it will be visible from Parris Island Gateway. Ms. Kelly said the board could reduce a requirement in the amount of parking space. Mr. Baisch said if they can lose a space or two, they would like to, in order to make it less tight. He said there may be more uses as the site develops.

Chairman Franklin said internal planting is good on the sketches, but they need to address what's going on with street trees and architectural façade articulation. They want it to be a good-looking building on all 4 sides. Ms. Frederick would like to see more detail around the pool. Chairman Franklin said they should make the building address the corners. There needs to be a hierarchy of elements, so people know where the front door is.

Chairman Franklin made a motion to recommend preliminary approval of the site plan, with the addition of the sidewalk comment from staff, and bringing landscaping to the base of the building and filling it in up to the sidewalk. Size, mass and scale will remain for the next approval, after the applicants they have worked with staff, and then they will come back to the Board for final approval. **Mr. Rushing seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Michaels asked about the banding. Ms. Frederick said the different materials break up the horizontal; if the Board sees the different materials that will help. She thinks it breaks up the massing, but "adding stuff to it . . . to look Lowcountry" is not appropriate.

Ms. Frederick said she's "not a huge fan" of the light on top. Mr. Michaels said he's not sure how that detail, which is a franchise element, works, and he will look into it. Chairman Franklin said he, too, would like to see more details on material boards. Mr. Michaels said the main body is brick, and the accents are a smooth stucco.

<u>OTHER BUSINESS</u>

Ms. Frederick asked what has happened with Harris Teeter. Ms. Kelly said they haven't submitted anything, but she believes the project is moving forward. Staff had received a new site plan with the back of the building along Sea Island Parkway and no liner

buildings. They're working on this with the applicants.

Mr. Ahern said, if extra run-off is a problem, he has a problem with bringing in water for irrigation, but he doesn't know if this is the board's purview. Chairman Franklin said they are constrained by code in terms of what they can ask an applicant to do. If the board sees a lot of projects that require that, they can let the city know. The applicants can't be required to go against the city ordinance "in the name of being green." Ms. Kelly said she would look at this in regard to volume control and irrigation. Chairman Franklin said if it's in the zoning ordinance and is applicable on the site, it could be referred to. Mr. Ahern said bringing in more water creates a greater volume issue.

Chairman Franklin said that all commercial properties will have irrigation because their landscaping will require a year-long bond. Ms. Frederick suggested incentives to have cisterns; Mr. Ahern said not having to pay for water is an incentive. Chairman Franklin said maybe there could be a property tax break for reusing. Ms. Kelly said landscape requirements could be reduced as an incentive, because property tax incentives "are going to be a tough sell." There are probably some places where on-site retention and reuse makes more sense than in others. In more urban sites, it may not make sense.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.