

A meeting of the Design Review Board was held on **December 11, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.** in the City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Chairman Eric Brown, John Dickerson, Dan Ahern, Brian Franklin, 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**

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

### **MINUTES**

**Mr. Dickerson made a motion, second by Mr. Franklin, to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2104 meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Taco Bell**, 209 Robert Smalls Parkway, Identified as R122, Tax Map 29, Parcel 245 (14-07 DRB.1)

Applicant: Allison Ramsey Architects for Bill Baker

*The applicant is requesting approval to construct a new restaurant.*

This building would be in one of the outparcels of Lowe's, down from the Dollar Tree, Ms. Kelly said. The applicant will construct a 2,500 square foot new building that would replace its store in Beaufort Plaza. It has a drive-thru. The parcel was recently zoned to Highway Commercial to permit drive-thrus.

Ms. Kelly reviewed the applicable guidelines from the staff report. The Civic Master Plan has a long-term vision for this area to be a walkable mixed-use center.

Site comments: There are a few live oaks on the property, and staff appreciates the effort to save them. A certified arborist's report will be required for any tree that will be affected.

The setback right now is 85' from the right-of-way. There is a required 20' minimum setback. The connectivity is appreciated, Ms. Kelly said, and the sidewalk should also connect. She said they might consider installing a sidewalk along the rear of the Lowes access road, similar to the one at Dollar Tree. This should connect back to the sidewalks that provide access to the building, as close as possible to the eastern property line.

All sidewalks need to have ramps, be ADA accessible, and not end in a vertical curb. There are trajectory issues with the sidewalk that connects to Robert Smalls Parkway. It could go more directly into the store, Ms. Kelly said. The small corner sidewalk area south of the entry point should be studied and cleaned up.

In the pre-application conference, the proximity of the entrance to the curb cut on Robert Smalls Parkway was discussed. It seems close to the entrance for the Lowe's parcel, and Ms. Kelly said staff wants to know "if one-way in only has been considered." They had also discussed reorienting the building to allow more building frontage along Robert Smalls Parkway. The drive-thru is now on the corner and will be difficult to screen to keep it from being seen from Robert Smalls Parkway. Also they could have a better circulation pattern that brought it further away from Robert Smalls Parkway. Also on the drive-thru, reorienting the building as described could be a potential solution, and landscaping could also help.

- Staff wants to confirm that drainage will be accommodated in the existing ponds that serve the larger development.
- A bike rack is required.
- A lighting plan for the building and site will be required.
- There needs to be screening of trash receptacles and mechanical equipment
- Large amounts of glazing and articulation of the different masses is appreciated. Size, mass, and scale seem appropriate, Ms. Kelly said. Staff wants more information on the materials to be used and feels they could be more cohesive, more consistent, and more Lowcountry-oriented. The awnings are of "a few styles" and are not functional, and there are no awnings in places where they *could* be functional.

Ms. Kelly said staff recommends conceptual approval of the site plan, contingent on a Board resolution on the circulation and drive-thru screening. In regard to architecture, staff recommends conceptual approval of size, mass and scale with more details and continuity of elements to be brought to the Board next time.

**Cooter Ramsey** asked if the Board wanted to entertain the question of building reorientation. He said there's nothing to prevent it, but he doesn't know that anything would be gained by doing it. Taco Bell will still want a double row of parking on the side of the building, and that will have to be on the highway side, if it's reoriented. He'll get more building front, but he doesn't know if that outweighs the extra row of parking. Mr. Ramsey said that Taco Bell insists on a double row of head-in parking off of the entry. There are requirements for a site that they won't budge on, and that double row is one of them. He said they could be convinced to do diagonal parking. Chairman Brown said the Board would probably like to see that. He asked Ms. Kelly if in the packets for next time this applicant came before the Board they could have the site plans for Dollar Tree. Ms. Kelly went to get them.

Discussion about the consequences of reorientation continued. Mr. Ramsey said he could show the alternative orientations, but he's not convinced it will help. **Dave Karlyk** said that shifting it will mean they can save fewer trees. Mr. Ramsey said he thinks they can still save the trees, but it serves no purpose in relation of the building to the highway, the façade on the street is not better, and a little more asphalt and parking will be seen. He sees an enclosed courtyard with trees and a small wall as a nice space, and he feels "it will soften it."

Mr. Ahern asked about the staff recommendation to move it forward 15'. Mr. Ramsey said he could do that, but it's back right now because the owner has a drive-thru issue in the current store and loves the idea of customers being able to turn left easily and safely. Mr. Karlyk said they are trying to keep a nice cluster of trees that are 30", 18", and 16", and if the building is moved forward, more tree roots will be affected.

The one-way entry is not an issue, Mr. Ramsey said. Mr. Franklin suggested making the parking on Robert Smalls Parkway 90 degrees. Mr. Ramsey and Mr. Karlyk both explained why they had thought diagonal would be better.

Chairman Brown indicated the Dollar Tree plans. Chairman Brown said he'd like to see the plaza Mr. Ramsey had mentioned, but he prefers "to see uniformity with the Dollar Tree." The head-in parking at the Dollar Tree is the pattern he thinks the project should match. Mr. Ramsey said pulling the building up is "easy," though there are tree issues. He prefers not to have parking in front of the building because "the Taco Bell people want customers to come in easily and quickly." Mr. Ramsey said this parking matches the pattern for Bojangles and Buffalo Wild Wings, which are close by, and the Dollar Tree is the one that is different, with the head-in parking in the front.

Mr. Ahern asked if the exit out the other side is for connectivity for the next development. Mr. Ramsey said yes. The next parcel goes down to the other entry. Mr. Franklin asked about the trees in the island. Mr. Ramsey said there are a couple of nice live oaks; Mr. Karlyk said there are a 17" and a 25". Mr. Ahern said the drainage would go to the existing development drain, and Mr. Karlyk said the shopping center was master planned. He showed the green space for this plan, which is much more than is at Dollar Tree, he noted, and "more than what is out there now" at other parcels as well.

Mr. Dickerson said at Publix they had used a kind of pervious concrete that lets water through and suggested they could do that for these parking spaces. He said it will put the water back in the soil and will save on maintenance. Pervious concrete is new, Mr. Karlyk said, and maintenance is required. Mr. Ramsey said that they could maybe use some of that. Mr. Ahern asked what the soil underneath is. Mr. Karlyk said it's "a C soil," he thinks; he'd have to check the soil survey. Mr. Dickerson said it would reduce the outflows to the pond.

Mr. Franklin commented that additional sidewalks for connectivity would be good. Mr. Ramsey said he is sure that they can get those approved. Mr. Karlyk explained where they could put them and said he would look at where they could add them.

Mr. Ahern asked what happens when they develop Parcel D, and if people would cut through. Mr. Karlyk said that people would cut through. Mr. Dickerson said eliminating the right turn "keeps people on the site too long." Mr. Franklin explained how he envisioned the traffic would flow if the building were flipped/mirrored. Mr. Ramsey said to flip/mirror the building that way, they have to "flip the other side" as well, and "then the service yard is on the highway" side. Mr. Ahern said, if it couldn't be rotated or moved up much, could the front island be expanded, and then after they go through the drive-through, they could have a one-lane? He asked if there need to be two exit lanes. After the food is picked up, couldn't people go out a single lane? Mr. Ramsey said they could definitely do that. Mr. Ahern said they could landscape out in front, and it would

alleviate staff concerns. He said he didn't know if the two lanes were a requirement. Mr. Ahern said they would still have to merge to exit. Mr. Karlyk said they could look at that.

Chairman Brown said the staff concerns are articulated and "frame everything." He said in regard to giving conceptual approval, the building is fine, but he feels the drive-thru on that side is "an unresolved challenge." He said, "There's a lot that could go wrong here."

Looking at the parcel, Mr. Dickerson indicated a tree and asked if were a sweetgum. Mr. Karlyk said it's a 10" sweetgum. Mr. Dickerson asked if there were other plants of value, and if the apps were planning other plantings. Mr. Ramsey said they are able to buffer 40' heavily. Mr. Dickerson said he likes the "random ... forested feel" and recommended putting native trees back in the area to create "a kind of park space." That would be a natural buffer in front of the Lowe's entrance side and would "create a nice space."

In regard to architecture, Mr. Ramsey showed the prototype of the building, which he thinks is "pretty good." They "hope to clean it up a little," he said. The brick mass will be an oyster shell stucco wall. He showed where they would like to develop a little more massing. He agreed with staff that the canopies could use some work; they will probably go back to a consistent metal-bracketed canopy to break up the façade, Mr. Ramsey said. They would repeat it on the other side for consistency. They will stretch it out so it can be functional. Mr. Karlyk said if they could do away with the foundation buffer, the sidewalk could be right up by the building and under the canopy.

Mr. Ramsey said they didn't revise the prototype much except to wrap the storefront around the corner /and "make the structure read cleaner." Mr. Ramsey and Mr. Dickerson discussed screening. Chairman Brown showed Mr. Ramsey an elevation that he said "could use more articulation." In regard to the slat wall, typically "everyone has been made to Lowcountry" their prototype. Chairman Brown said the Board would have the same conversation with this restaurant that they had about the Buffalo Wild Wings "zinger." Chairman Brown said the slat wall with some lap siding would help. Mr. Ramsey said the slat wall is better than siding, he feels, and "it pulls in the right elements"; it's "done in a commercial and contemporary way." He doesn't want it to look "rural," and he doesn't want it to look like Dollar General. Chairman Brown said, "The Taco Bell prototype isn't going to fly." Mr. Dickerson said, on plans they bring in, they need to show what is and isn't going to be visible. Mr. Ramsey said that the equipment is sized to be hidden.

Mr. Franklin said he likes the detail on the architecture, but on the back side, it could be any kind of store, so he would like to see the thought Mr. Ramsey is putting into the corner put into the rest of the building, especially if it's rotated and that façade is seen from the street. He doesn't "want to see nice landscaping" used "to hide bad architecture." He feels the building needs to be finished, and a big blank wall with a logo isn't enough. Material changes, windows, etc. will be needed so that it's not just a blank wall with an awning on it.

Chairman Brown said he's "not comfortable" giving conceptual approval, and the applicant doesn't need one, either. Mr. Dickerson asked Mr. Ramsey if he had what he needed to move forward. Mr. Ramsey said he knows what he wants to do but would like

a clearer sense of what the Board wants so he can go back to Taco Bell with that information. Mr. Ramsey said he doesn't need a motion from the Board, just consistent ideas.

Mr. Franklin said he'd like a couple of options for building layout and parking before giving the site layout preliminary approval. Ms. Kelly said they could circulate sketches around via email. Chairman Brown said what they are showing the Board is "vague," and Mr. Ramsey should show the Board what he wants to do. He told Mr. Ramsey that he "can take the comments" and "go with your design." Mr. Franklin said he would like the site orientation resolved, and then they could go forward with the architecture.

**Sea Pointe Apartments**, 61 Hazel Farm Road, Identified as R123, Tax Map 18, Parcel 39 (14-05 DRB.1)

Applicant: Bradley Beaufort, LLC, and ASI Engineers, Inc.

*The applicant is requesting final approval to develop a 56-unit apartment complex.*

Ms. Kelly said these apartments came before the Board in November. They received preliminary approval then with some conditions, which she reviewed. On the building, there were suggestions from the Board to look at some details and refine them.

The applicant has given attention to the Board's requests, Ms. Kelly said. The applicant has decided to irrigate the site with the stormwater pond water and well water if necessary to supplement. She asked the applicant to clarify if the pond would be wet or dry. Ms. Kelly asked the applicant to state how many bike racks were proposed; for this size development, a minimum of one per building (at least two total) is appropriate. There is a question still of the window detail. It needs to coordinate with the elevations. On the porches/porticos, the ends of the beams should align with the face of the column below it. In regard to signs, Ms. Kelly said a separate application should be submitted for that. Staff recommends final approval as submitted.

**Tim Harris** said they had "created more streetscape." They pulled in the pump station to be landscaped better. They have one parking lot now where before there were two. They were able to redo another parking area and are staying away from the large live oaks. They made the irrigation change and checked on the time for the pond to drain, which Mr. Ahern had asked about; it's 34 hours. They reduced some radiuses per staff request.

Mr. Ahern said he very much appreciates their using the stormwater as a resource. Mr. Harris said that the ditch would be filled by agreement with the adjacent property owner. They have made an application with DOT, and he indicated where the drainage will go and then discharge into an existing ditch. Mr. Ahern asked if there is a chance in dry periods to use that flow for the pond. Mr. Harris said the problem is the pond is as big as it can be on that site now. They are just meeting the criteria they can meet. If they bring in off-site water, it will be problematic. The properties adjacent will do their own

stormwater management as they develop. The majority of the water they are getting is coming to them from Publix, Mr. Harris said.

Ms. Kelly said the landscaping plan shows some live oaks by the building and asked if they could be relocated to the entrance drive among the lights, "so they can be appreciated." They are new and can be moved wherever it works. Ms. Kelly said **Liza Hill** is very happy with the plan, and "all the mitigation requirements are being exceeded."

Chairman Brown said staff's landscaping comment makes sense to him, and that's his only comment on the site. The architectural concerns have also been addressed very well. He asked about the exposure on the site; he was told it is a 6" exposure. On the rake detail, Chairman Brown asked what size it is. **Michael Haynes** said it was 9". Chairman Brown said that's a little big. Mr. Haynes said it's because of the 6" exposure on the siding. He tried to make it bigger because of that.

Chairman Brown said in regard to the staff comment about the column-beam alignment, a beam seems like it might be missing. Mr. Haynes said it probably should be articulated a little better. Chairman Brown said on the building with the gable, typically there should be a clear beam before the roof sits on it. It should default to the size of the column.

Mr. Franklin asked about the rear elevation on Buildings 1 & 2 and said the landscape plans aren't showing the utilities. Ms. Kelly said they changed that in the digital copy because the landscape plan was updated. Mr. Franklin said in the elevations, the bottom windows in the unit center are 2' off the ground, and the landscape architect is putting Southern wax myrtle in front of the windows, a tree that will grow to 6'-12' tall. It may end up hiding the building and the architecture. That's a big plant to put in front of those windows. Mr. Haynes said they have addressed the trim profile on the window schedule.

When the pond is sized, they will know the size of the fountain, and they will make it nice. The roof color is "weathered grey," Mr. Haynes said, which is brown with a tint of grey. Mr. Dickerson said they would appreciate the cost savings of that instead of black.

**Chairman Brown made a motion for final approval of site and architecture with the only conditions being the column and beam alignment and the presence of a beam on the elevations. Mr. Ahern seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Ms. Kelly said in regard to appointments, **Jane Frederick** has been approved to replace Chairman Brown in February. The January meeting will be on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Council still has to approve the reappointments of Mr. Franklin and Mr. Rushing and find a replacement for Mr. Dickerson, which will probably be in February.

Publix is getting everything priced, Ms. Kelly said in response to a question from Chairman Brown.

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Chairman Brown made a motion to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.**

