

SOUTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY
CORRIDOR REVIEW BOARD (CRB) MINUTES
May 22, 2013, Bluffton Library
120 Palmetto Way, Bluffton, SC 29910

Members Present: Joe Hall, James Atkins, Daniel Ogden, Ed Pinckney

Members Absent: Pearce Scott

Staff Present: Ian Hill, Beaufort County Historic Preservationist; Erin Schumacher, Town of Bluffton Senior Planner; Shaun Leininger, Town of Bluffton Principal Planner

Guests: John Binder, Michael Brock, Jessie Hancock, Judson Hancock, Roberts Vaux

1. CALL TO ORDER – 3:00 P.M.
2. PUBLIC COMMENT: None
3. MINUTES – Mr. Pinckney motioned to approve the minutes of the May 8 CRB. Mr. Atkins seconded. Motion carried.
4. NEW BUSINESS: None
5. OLD BUSINESS:
 - A. **Town of Bluffton COFA-2-13-5330. A Certificate of Appropriateness to allow the development of a Parker’s Convenience store consisting of a 3,875 SF building, 7 dual gas fueling stations, and associated site improvements on 1.71 acres of property located at the intersection of Buck Island Road and May River Road and zoned Neighborhood Core:** Erin Schumacher, Town of Bluffton, gave staff report. She said that the site plan has not changed since the May 8 CRB meeting. She said since that meeting, planning staff has met with the applicant to address the CRB’s comments in addition to staff concerns. She said that there were two lighting plans, one that had fixtures that matched the Town’s street fixtures, and the other plan had typical shoebox lights. She said that the architecture of the west elevation had been modified to include a shed roof over the entrance. The rear elevation has a shed roof added to it and landscaping to articulate and screen the building. The gas pump canopy was also modified to break it into three segments with shed roofs that match the building. The dumpster enclosure was modified to incorporate tabby piers and hardiplank panels.

John Binder with Parkers presented for the applicant. He said that the revised plan addresses the Board’s and staff’s comments. He said that the center canopy is raised two feet above the side canopies to help break up the length of the canopies. He said that there were no major modifications to the landscaping plan because the applicant received positive input on the plan.

Mr. Pinckney said he heard that the Town plans to extend the sidewalk along May River Road to the Buck Island intersection. He asked the applicant if they had access to these Town plans. Mr. Binder said that originally they discussed Parkers installing the sidewalk and having it meander. He said what they're proposing now is for Parker's to put in a easement along May River Road so that a sidewalk could be installed at a future date by the Town, but that Parkers would install a sidewalk that goes around Jennifer Court.

Mr. Pinckney commented that he felt that there were still too many azaleas on the landscaping plan. Mr. Pinckney also asked about the Town's requirement that no species could make up more than 15% of the plant materials in a landscaping plan. Ms. Schumacher said the requirement was supposed to promote plant diversity. She said that is why Town staff directed the applicant to lower the number of cathedral oaks and replace with a variety of species. Mr. Pinckney asked how 56 azaleas could be proposed with the Town's requirement of plant diversity. Shaun Leininger said that the staff memo cited redbuds and oaks as an example of a plant that needed to be diversified. He said that other plants needed variety as well. Mr. Pinckney said that at least half of the azaleas needed to be substituted with native or natural looking shrubs. Mr. Leininger said that staff directed the applicant toward azaleas as well as oaks and magnolias because he said that it was characteristic of the May River Road buffer. Mr. Pinckney said saw palmettos would be a good substitute. Mr. Leininger said that the two varieties of azaleas only made up 13% of the total shrubs. Mr. Pinckney said his comments were based on aesthetics, not percentages. Mr. Leininger said that staff was reevaluating their percentage requirements for landscaping and appreciated the Board's comments. Mr. Brock said that the original plan had many more azaleas. Mr. Hall said that there were some holes in the highway buffer as you went toward Old Town Bluffton. Mr. Brock said he addressed the holes by adding magnolias, azaleas, and inkberries to the buffer. Mr. Hall said he still would like to see more canopy trees in the buffer. Mr. Brock said that there are a variety of existing trees in the buffer.

Mr. Ogden asked why Parkers wasn't building the same type of store that they had on SC170 near SC 46 because that store seemed to have better architectural features such as sloped roofs. Mr. Binder said that size of the store was different then other Parker's in the Bluffton area, and that they were asked to blend the architecture into the Town and hardiplank was a material that would help them achieve that goal. Ms. Schumacher said that the proposed store met the Town's architectural guidelines which allow flat roofs if they are screened with parapets. She also said that this site serves as the western gateway into Old Town Bluffton and warranted a different design approach than the store on SC170. Mr. Ogden asked about the details for the exterior trim of the canopy. Mr. Binder said that there was a small fascia on the canopy. Mr. Atkins said he appreciated the canopy being broken up into three separate canopies, but he suggested having the three canopies the same height. He said that the detailing of the parapet wall with the dentil moulding was too formal. He said he would like to see some of the detailing of the canopy reflected in the building. He also said that having a sloped roof in the building would be good. He also said that if there is rooftop equipment, it will need to be screened from view. He said that the scaling of the canopy columns needed to be increased to be

in better proportion with the canopy and its height. Mr. Binder said that having a pitched roof required them to place mechanical equipment on the ground instead of the roof. He said having a flat roof with a parapet serves a purpose.

Mr. Hall said that ceiling material under the canopy was important and shouldn't be glossy white. He said that 19% gray would be better. Mr. Hall disagreed that the building should have a pitched roof. He said that the building should not stand out.

Mr. Hall asked about the vegetation that would screen the rear elevation. Mr. Brock said it was a combination of podocarpuses, Hollywood junipers, and dwarf yaupon hollies that gave three different height layers. There will also be street trees closer to Jennifer Court. The actual landscaping will have better height variation than what is rendered on the elevation.

Ms. Schumacher summarized the staff recommendations. She said that Town staff said that the project met the UDO requirements with the following conditions:

- No more than 15% of plant material can be of one species.
- The Town strongly encourages the use of lighting plan A with the traditional fixtures.
- The applicant needs verification that the project meets the subdivision covenants and restrictions.

Roberts Vaux complimented the applicant on the changes that they have made, but said that the project still didn't meet what the Town asked the applicant to do. He said that the project did not blend into the Town. He specifically commented that subdivision covenants required all four elevations to be articulated, and the rear elevation did not meet this requirement. He was concerned that the nine compressors on the roof would be visible to other property owners. He asked the Board that their recommendations need to be requirements not suggestions. He asked the applicant to change the steel columns supporting the canopies to 8" x 8" wood posts. He also said that brackets under the canopy would be more in keeping with Town architecture. He also urged that the sidewalk shouldn't be along May River Road but along Jennifer Court. He asked that the CRB make sure that the building actually blends into the Town.

Doug Hancock said he welcomed Parkers, but said that the store was still too big for the lot.

Mr. Binder said that blending into the town was a challenge. Many of the existing commercial buildings in the area are not what the Town would want them to blend into. He felt that they made enough changes to the project to adequately address concerns by the CRB, Town staff, and the public.

Jesse Hancock said that her driveway was directly across from the entrance to the site. She said that the only time she can get out of her driveway was when the Buckwalter light changes. She said that the area was not industrial, or commercial, it was a neighborhood.

Mr. Pinckney motioned that the project be tabled because there have been enough design comments that there needs to be revisions to the landscape plans and the architecture that address the comments. The motion failed because of lack of a second.

Mr. Ogden asked if the properties behind the Parkers were residential or commercial. Mr. Leininger said they were mixed use. Mr. Ogden said that he did not want to second Mr. Pinckney's motion because he felt that there were a set of conditions the CRB could place on the project and move forward. He said that the applicant should address the rear façade with architectural detail, not merely screening it from view. Articulation should be added to the columns in the forms of wood trim and bracketing. Mr. Ogden said he would like to make a motion with conditions that would be reviewed by Town staff and one Board member. Mr. Atkins said he would second the motion if there were clear conditions. Mr. Pinckney and Mr. Hall said that if the motion did not include another meeting where the public had a chance to comment, they would be inclined to vote against the motion. Mr. Leininger commented that there seemed to be things that the CRB wanted to be done versus things that are required to be done by the Town's code. He said that, for example, the lighting plan A which had the traditional lighting fixture was being encouraged by the Town but their code did not require it.

Mr. Pinckney motioned to table the project with the following conditions:

- Articulate the rear of the building using parapets or other measures to adequately screen the roof top mounted equipment from all sides.
- Add bracketing to the canopy posts.
- Simplify or eliminate the dentil detail on the building.
- Examine the use of rafter tails and other details on the pitched roof elements of the building to create the sense of a porch.
- Consider using a flat color finish on the ceiling of the canopy or a 19% gray (or similar color).
- Reduce the number of azaleas in the buffer.
- The canopy and the building designs should be consistent and reflect similar details.

Mr. Ogden seconded.

6. OTHER BUSINESS: Mr. Hall informed the Board that the next scheduled meeting was Wednesday, June 5 at the Bluffton Library.
7. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:31 pm.