



***LEESBURG BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
WORK SESSION MINUTES***

Monday, 03 October 2011
Town Hall, 25 West Market Street
Council Chamber

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Sisley, Vice-Chair; Richard Koochagian, Parliamentarian; Teresa Minchew; Paul Reimers; Edward Kiley;

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dieter Meyer, Chair; Tracy Coffing; Mary Harper, Planning Commission Representative; Marty Martinez, Town Council Representative

STAFF: Mike Watkins, Senior Planner; Annie McDonald, Preservation Planner

Call to Order and Roll Call

Mr. Sisley called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, noted attendance and determined that a quorum was present.

Adoption of Agenda

On a motion by Paul Reimers and seconded by Richard Koochagian, the agenda for the October 3, 2011 BAR work session was approved. 4-0-3 (Meyer & Coffing, absent, and Minchew absent for vote, arriving at 7:02).

BAR Member Disclosure

There were no disclosures

Deferred Cases/Referrals

a. TLZM-2010-0002, TLSE-2010-0006, 0007, and 0008 (H-2 Overlay District), Applicant: Lowe's of Leesburg, Project: New Construction on East Market Street

Annie McDonald began with an explanation of the expectations of the board, since they don't issue referral comments very often. She said that the applicant will not have a presentation, but is available to answer any questions the board members may have. She said that this was for referral comments only on the orientation size, scale, massing and arrangement of the building on the property, and was not to include details such as materials or color. She explained that if the BAR believes that materials or color might be significant in the visual appearance of the mass, then it might be appropriate for the BAR to say that once it comes in for a Certificate of Appropriateness application, materials will be a significant part of the discussion. She said that getting into the weeds on materials and color is not expected at this stage. She added that Ms. Coffing will not be at the meeting, but instead submitted comments via e-mail to be read into the record. Ms. McDonald introduced Michael Watkins, who is the project planner for the project and could answer any questions on the processing of the application. Ms. McDonald presented two aerial views of the site as well as the site plan that shows the orientation of the Lowes building and the land bays to the west, between Lowes and Battlefield Parkway. She said that Lowes will face Battlefield Parkway at quite a distance. The land bays are intended to be developed at a later date and are not under review right now. She said that the applicant is working on conceptualls for the land bays and that they will likely be subject to development-specific guidelines like the Village at Leesburg, but that the guidelines will have to be approved by the BAR. She provided an overview of the site, with the garden center to the south and a truck delivery access to the north of the building. She said that the current design is a modification of the prototypical Lowes building based on many discussions that the applicant has had with staff;

there has been an ongoing dialogue on the design of the building. Ms. McDonald began a detailed review of the building with the south elevation because, in her opinion, the modulation of the garden center side of the building was the most in-scale with itself and to the pedestrian. It is fairly regular and consistent, but that is not necessarily problematic. Each of the piers is broken down into the three-part division of base, shaft, and capital. The fascia or wall area above the fencing is proportional to the space below. There is also a hierarchical division of the elevation, with the central section containing the sign. The north elevation has similar modulation, but color and material could have an impact on the way the elevation is viewed. She said that the west elevation is successful in some ways in the way it is modulated, but there are some aspects that are somewhat out of scale, such as the large spans of wall above the entries; they seem to distort the scale of the building. She explained that the back of the building, or east elevation, will face an access road leading to the water treatment plant. There will be a screen wall along a portion of the elevation. She mentioned that the four land bays between Lowe's and Battlefield Parkway are to be developed at a later date. She emphasized that it is definitely a change from the prototypical Lowes, which is exemplified by the store in Boise, Idaho. She provided examples of Lowes buildings in other communities, including Cary, North Carolina and another North Carolina community that is not known for certain. She explained that staff had guided the applicant to the Lowes building in Cary, since staff thought it was one of the best examples of modulation and differentiation among the elevations of all the Lowes buildings that were identified. She said that staff guided the applicant away from the use of shallow projections that would not be perceived from a distance. In an example from the unknown community in North Carolina, she explained that the projections are much greater, creating more distinct shadow lines and more complex massing, with a central main block and ancillary wings. She said it is important to steer away from superficial applications of design components that are used to convey the appearance of a more complex mass and are done with the best of intentions, but might not be as successful if one is looking at a pasted on decoration. She said that more simple ornament may be more successful when looking at the physical breaking-up of a larger mass. She referred to the staff report for more guidance and information on staff's comments.

Mr. Sisley called for questions from the board members.

Richard Koochagian indicated his belief that the location of the site on the corner of Battlefield Parkway and Market Street. He asked if there was discussion of how to address the prominence from Route 7. He said that right now, the way it's designed, the north elevation could be better designed to address the primary street, which is East Market Street. Ms. McDonald said this had been discussed with the applicant and that she would direct that question to the applicant for a more complete answer.

Trent Farrell of Blue Ridge Architecture, Knoxville, TN came forward and explained that the site sits lower even than Wegmans and with landscaping and vegetation. He explained that the goal was to break it up into smaller shop-like situations and provide what appears to be true glass and break up the lengthiness of the wall. He said that on the higher portion they have the Lowes sign because that's all that will be seen. He said that the north elevation sits along side a truck access route and normally it's completely blank. Mr. Koochagian responded that the elevation changes are difficult to read on the site plan that was provided, and that it's hard to tell if one would be looking at the roof of the building from Route 7. Mr. Farrell said that the building sits lower than Route 7 by nearly twenty feet and that they've raised the parapet, too. He said that they are fighting issues with scale while also trying to conceal the HVAC units. He said that they are in a cats-22. Mr. Koochagian asked about the example from North Carolina that had a squared-off façade instead of the gable, and that the current design has a very thin parapet with the gabled profile. Mr. Farrell stated that the North Carolina example is a much, much older store and was built by a developer rather than directly by Lowes.

Paul Reimers said that his primary concern is that one isn't looking at a whole sea of heating and air conditioning units on the top of the building. He said that he's gone to the water treatment plant a lot

and that it does drop off pretty well. He said that he wants to make sure they address screening. He said that the elevation facing East Market Street is vastly improved over what most Lowes look like.

Teresa Minchew stated that Mr. Koochagian addressed most of her questions. She said she is most concerned about the north elevation and what would be visible from Route 7. Mr. Farrell apologized, adding that they had done a sight line study from Route 7, to which Ms. Minchew responded that it would be really helpful for the BAR to have for the rooftop equipment and also for the back of the west-facing pediment. She said she'd be interested to know what it will end up looking like from the roadway. Mr. Farrell responded that he'd not thought of that and said that they used to use roof structures, called doghouses, on the back of the pediments but that they'd gotten away from them because nobody ever saw them. He ended by saying that it might be a good thing to add in this situation.

Mr. Sisley said that he didn't have any questions or comments at this point, but asked for Ms. McDonald to read for the record the comments that were submitted via e-mail by Tracy Coffing. Ms. McDonald read the comments, which were:

"I agree that some glazing should be incorporated to break up the overall massing and to create a more pedestrian scale. Architectural detailing should be consistent through ALL elevations, due to the building's proposed siting and high visibility. Ensure that sufficient screening will be utilized to hide mechanical equipment. Consider some treatment to minimize the visibility of the large 'pediment' sign from the back (from the east)."

Mr. Sisley asked if the board members had any comments.

Teresa Minchew indicated that she could tell the applicant had worked hard with staff, based on the appearance of other Lowes buildings. She said that she does not vary from the staff assessment on anything. She said that everything else is workable; certainly the final details will be very important to make it actually work.

Mr. Kiley asked if they were looking at signage, to which Ms. McDonald replied in the negative.

Mr. Sisley said there appeared to be no comments from the public.

Ms. McDonald said that it seems to her that most of the BAR comments are fairly in line with her comments in the staff report. She said that she will communicate the BAR's comments to the applicant through the project planner, Michael Watkins, and will copy the BAR members on the memo so that they know their comments are not misrepresented. She said that she may also include a transcript of the meeting along with the comments. She said that there appears to be generally more support for the design of the structure relative to other Lowe's buildings, but that there are some details when it comes in for a Certificate of Appropriateness that could be important such as mechanical screening and the visibility of the roof structures.

Work Session Discussion

- a. **Debrief on appeal of TLHP-2011-0034 (326 E. Market Street).** Annie McDonald passed around some samples stating these were not the approved materials. The Board's decision, at the applicant's request was to replace the ACM panels with simulated stucco, or EIFS. The applicant changed this and it was heard by the Council last Tuesday. The Council took the staff presentation and the appellant along with a brief statement from the property owner and proceeded on with questions for the applicant. The comments of Council members appeared to reflect approval of the applicant's request. Then the BAR spoke, the Council heard more comments and questions, the Council agreed with the appellant and modified the decision, so it was not a complete reversal. They modified your decision to permit the use of ACM on that portion of the building. So the entire entry

will be the shiny metal, and then the black matte and white with the rest of the fascia in black and white. While this does not jeopardize the integrity of your decision, but it does indicate how the Council might act in a future similar circumstance.

Ned Kiley asked if GM indicated they were happy with the Council's decision? Ms. McDonald said she is not certain.

Teresa Minchew asked if the appellant was happy with the decision. The response was yes.

b. **Other Business** There was no other business raised at the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 7:37pm

NEXT REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING:
Monday, 17 October 2011 at 7pm
Council Chambers
25 West Market Street
Leesburg, Virginia

Dieter Meyer, Chair

Annie McDonald, Preservation Planner

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