

**MINUTES OF THE  
ROSWELL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
October 6, 2009  
6:30 p.m.**

**Members Present:** Kevin Caldwell, John Carruth, Neal Gasaway, Robin Millard, Roberto Paredes and Dr. Irwin Reps

**Staff Present:** James Baldwin and Kristie Yarger

Chairman John Carruth called the Tuesday, October 6, 2009 meeting of the Roswell Design Review Board to order at 6:30 p.m. He welcomed all of those in attendance. He reiterated that the DRB is an all volunteer Board. They serve at the discretion of mayor and city council. Carruth encouraged everyone to go vote. There will be an election on the day of the November meeting.

When one's item is called he should state his name and business for the record. Tell the Board a little bit about the project and they will ask him some questions and take it from there.

**INITIAL APPLICATION**

**09-0766**

**DRB09-41**

**GEORGIA COMMERCE BANK**

**1500 Holcomb Bridge Road**

**Land Lot: 613**

Harry Gadwinbeck stated that he lives at 1170 Wild Run Court, Roswell 30075. He works for Peacock Partnership in Atlanta, GA and they were hired by Georgia Commerce Bank to look at this existing building that is sitting on Holcomb Bridge Road. It is a couple of blocks from SR 400. It is an existing two-story building that the applicant believes used to be a furniture store. It has been sitting vacant for a little while. Because of the economy, etc. the retail store did not survive. The bank took over possession of the building. It is in foreclosure. The bank wants to sell it and they have found a buyer and the bank wants to turn the usage of the existing building into an office building, more specifically a medical office building which will be used for a dental hygienist, etc. To do that it all boils down to there is not enough parking on this site.

To get a business license and to comply with city of Roswell zoning they have got to increase the parking to get 300 for square feet. Today, there is just one row of parking that is facing the building and which yields to approximately 42, 40-something spaces. For them to keep the building exactly the way it is they are not touching the square footage. They are not altering the building itself except for one thing that Gadwinbeck will get to. But the square footage of the building

will remain approximately about 22-something thousand square feet, two stories. To comply with city zoning they need to come up to about 70-something spaces, 72 he believes it was.

What Gadwinbeck's proposal is to take the existing parking lot and shove from the building a little bit closer. So they are about four feet versus today's about seven something feet. That will allow them to put a second row/tray of parking. By adding this tray of parking and reconfiguring this back from the existing they can bump up the site to approximately 70-something spaces. He believes it was 72 spaces. That will make them comply with the city of Roswell so that they can get a business license, which is their ultimate goal. If they get approval from Design Review Board they will apply for an LDP, land disturbance permit and then get a building permit.

What they are doing on the exterior except for the parking lot is today there is an existing canopy or an arcade or entry feature that is coming out from the building about 10 feet. Unfortunately that will interfere with the parking layout so that if they were going to pull the parking a little bit closer they would have to demo the existing façade. What the applicant is proposing to do is the only alteration to the exterior of the building is to remove the portico and create about two feet or something like that, to create a tenant sign or give some kind of indication of a front door expression.

Material-wise they are not doing anything. They are keeping the existing storefront windows. There is nothing on the side of the existing building and there is nothing on the rear. So they are only going to paint the building, everything that is existing today, white. They are keeping the same white stucco. What was supposed to mimic this material is just a stucco coat. The exterior will just have a neutral color scheme to kind of blend in and allow the project sign or something to get the hierarchy of the attention.

Site-wise they went for the zoning variance because there is an existing 10-foot landscape strip that they are encroaching into. They received a variance to allow...it goes in a triangular shape from a couple of inches to all the way to nine feet at the worse case where they are encroaching into the landscape strip. Today, as one can see there are barely any trees at all along the Holcomb Bridge Road frontage. They are obviously going to comply with the city of Roswell landscape ordinance. They have coordinated with the landscape architect. All of the trees they are proposing along the frontage comply with the landscape ordinance. They will increase the number of trees on the site dramatically.

They are taking care of storm water detention with a standard underground tank to release so they are not impacting any of the storm water flow on the site.

John Carruth asked the applicant if he had seen the staff's comments regarding the bio-retention cell that they want him to do. The applicant stated that their civil

engineer had a discussion that there was a request of doing basically an above ground versus a tank. But he does not know if they understood that in order to capture the storm water the magnitude of it will basically be from the back of it all the way to the front. This would defeat their purposes. They could not get their parking. On the site it would just not work. Carruth stated that even though staff was offering that the applicant could eliminate the two landscape islands on the front and add parking there. The applicant stated that unfortunately he was not familiar with when those comments came out.

John Carruth asked James Baldwin if he knows how much of the information that the Board has in their packet has been given to the applicant. Baldwin stated that honestly he has not seen...he should have been the main contact. Carruth stated there was a lot of detail that it looked like the staff went into in their analysis and comments. Baldwin asked the applicant if he received the staff report? Gadwinbeck stated that he did not. Baldwin stated that is something that staff didn't get done in sending out a staff report and the staff comments from their departments.

Neal Gasaway asked the applicant if he can do an underground retention system that will comply as far as he knows from his calculations? Gadwinbeck stated that he submitted that with their application.

Kevin Caldwell asked Gadwinbeck how much change of impervious he is adding to this project in square footage. Gadwinbeck stated that he was simplifying this, but it is about 18 feet by the frontage which is 18 times 250. Caldwell stated that were he is going with this is one can avoid this detention if he can sneak under the 5000. John Carruth stated that they are over 5000. Caldwell stated that they were over 5000 but can they modify their plan? Retention here is going to be extremely expensive on this project.

Gadwinbeck stated that he has the budget almost down to...they have got to get almost every single parking space to make this a feasible project and be able to market it. Caldwell clarified that the applicant was okay with underground retention.

Neal Gasaway stated that the applicant does not have a choice. Gadwinbeck stated that he does not see any option to detain. Kevin Caldwell stated that it depends on what his square footage...if he is at 6000 square feet and 5000 is the trigger, then he should figure out how to come in under 5000 and he deals with 5000 additional square feet of parking and impervious....Gadwinbeck stated that if there was a way that he could get their parking spaces, he would love to be able to. It would save money for their client. But they looked at it and....

John Carruth stated that he thinks the Board is going to have to, because the applicant didn't come prepared to deal with what the staff has suggested. If the Board wants to approve it they are going to have to approve it with the staff

conditions and let them work it out. Give them some leeway to work it out with staff as they go through LDP.

Neal Gasaway stated that unless anyone has a problem with the landscaping, they could approve it as submitted with the condition that the applicant can use underground retention and comply. If he can't then he probably is going to cancel the whole thing anyway.

Gadwinbeck agreed that if their detention doesn't work they are not going to get an LDP. Then they are at nowhere.

John Carruth stated that he wants the applicant to be successful. Neal Gasaway stated that he did too. Carruth stated that the Board has seen this project before. This project did not get built the way it was approved and the Board had several issues with it. It is marvelous that the applicant's client is willing to do this effort with it and actually improve the appearance of that property.

Danelle Volpe, the water resources engineer for the city of Roswell stated that she is in the public works department. She was the one who made the comments on the detention and the water quality. The way that she understands the plans, she has not received any calculations, but what she understands is detention is being provided in oversized storm pipes and water quality will be provided in a box similar to an oil-water separator. The oil-water separators are considered by public works as a last resort option. They are notoriously not maintained. They require when one first signs up for it that they may have to sign up for a year of maintenance or something like that, but there is nothing that keeps that in place. The reason that Volpe would like to see bio-retention on this site is because she thinks it is a good option. The site generally grades to this direction and there is an inlet in this area. The whole island, that is these spaces, would remain. The spaces on the back would be taken and the whole island could be converted to a bio-retention cell. That means that the flow would enter along the parking lot. There may be areas of flow, which get by passed but considering that the water quality treatment in a box system doesn't provide very good sediment removal and very good protection. She thinks that having the majority of the site come to this site through overland flow and then if it rains too much and too much water goes in there, this is really just a planter. It is really just a planter that is graded down lower so some water can pond in there and there are things that are growing in there. This generally gets maintained. It gets maintained along with the landscape. But even if it doesn't get maintained, it still works because it is the low spot and that is where the water goes to. One would still have some storm drainage, that is he would still have detention that could be provided in this. He would put an inlet in here so that when it overflowed it would flow into the inlet back up into the same set of storm drains that they are talking about over sizing and the system would work essentially the same.

Kevin Caldwell asked Volpe how the Board would help this candidate find the extra parking spaces that they would have to forgive. Does she have a solution for that? Volpe suggested sharing some parking located somewhere around there.

Roberto Paredes stated that basically what Volpe is saying is that she is losing only six spaces with her proposal. Volpe stated that would be her proposal. She would rather see more trees so she would rather not see the trees along the road be gone. Just the six spaces. Paredes clarified that they can pick up three in the front if they eliminate those three islands.

Gadwinbeck stated that the trees were only there to comply with the city of Roswell landscape ordinance. If they get relieved from the landscape ordinance and they do not have to provide those, then they would gain three spaces. They could potentially lose....all of this would be, he is not talking aesthetics now, just purely functional things. If this was to become the detention pond, that is basically what it is, a raised detention pond. Volpe stated that she has to disagree with the applicant. It is not a detention pond. A detention pond is still being provided in the detention pipe just like it is being proposed. It is not a detention pond.

Gadwinbeck inquired what a tenant coming to the building would be viewing. Volpe stated that they would be viewing a landscaped island. It is a landscaped island, which is depressed.

Kevin Caldwell asked Gadwinbeck if he had been to Karl Black? Gadwinbeck clarified that there was not going to be a pool of water. Caldwell stated that at Karl Black in Roswell there are three or four bio-retention cells in the parking lot. The cars are parked up against them. It looks like a depressed landscape island. Volpe stated that there is also one at the BP on Holcomb Bridge Road and SR 400. The BP that is on the north side of the road. If one looks at it, it is right next to a gas station. It has trash, but it has plants growing in it and it receives surface drainage.

Gadwinbeck asked if they could compromise and say when his engineer, assuming they allocate this area for detention....Volpe stated that it was not detention. It is bio-retention, storm water quality. Gadwinbeck stated that they would have to ask for relief. If this Board is...

John Carruth stated that the staff has already indicated that they will give the applicant that relief without having to go through any approval process.

Gadwinbeck asked if they could somehow get something so that when their civil engineer runs the calculations, encase this area would have decree that they don't come into saying that they will lose this also.

John Carruth stated that the applicant is not going to lose that as parking because he is still going to have underground storm water detention. This is only a water quality feature that is going to be on the surface. He would invite their civil engineer to look at it and say if it really needs six spaces? That is something that is something that could be worked out with Volpe and her department. There are three spaces that they can add on the front. There is another large island at the entrance drive that he potentially could add one more space.

Roberto Paredes added that the applicant could probably add two or three parallel spots on the leg on the drive that is going back on the right side. The same road, he could probably put three.

John Carruth added that there are some opportunities for several staff parking.

Gadwinbeck stated that they would probably have to cut some existing trees. Carruth stated that the Board was trying to work with the applicant to give him some options. They feel like it is a good project. It is just a matter of a little tweaking that needs to occur to get the storm water quality that they need. Gadwinbeck stated that he understands. He is coming from his client when he originally stated that he needed 90 spaces to perform their work. They have cut it down. Carruth stated that they have 75 shown. He thinks he is going to end up close to that ballpark.

Kevin Caldwell stated that in having done a bunch of these bio-retention cells himself he thinks the applicant can use it as an enhancement for putting this building a little bit more on stage. It is going to give him a really bigger stage for that building because it is going to give it more mass on the side. The Board is going to forgive him from planting trees that are going to obstruct the building signage, which consequently are growing under power lines anyway. They are going to be completely cut out so he thinks as the landscape and arborists here it is a great opportunity for the applicant. And if they plant the cell with some evergreen it is going to keep this a little more on stage. He knows it has a lot of elevation troubles in visual from the street and the applicant is proposing to plant quite a few trees on it that the Board is going to potentially not allow him to do and that takes a lot of exception in this city to not have to plant a tree every 35 feet. Caldwell thinks this is a huge win for the applicant from a landscape and aesthetic point of view if they can work this out. Caldwell agrees with Volpe that this is a much better water quality thing and it is going to be maintained because it is out there.

Dr. Reps stated that he had some comments regarding the parking. On some of the plans Gadwinbeck shows on the south side two parking spaces for handicap instead of three. On the west side he shows none in some of his engineering drawings. Is it three and three, is it five? How many handicap spaces are there?

Gadwinbeck stated that unfortunately that has to do with some of these early things were existing. They thought they could keep them just to find out when they went to do field measurements that they don't comply with current ADA. So they had to remove them so that all of their ADA's are going to be at the front door. These drawings were drawn earlier to meet their submittal dates and that is when they found out that these existing spaces today do not comply with current ADA dimensions. Reps stated that Gadwinbeck does have a milliard designing this for medical purposes. And all he has then is three medical handicap spaces? Why can't he put a door on the west side for the other three handicap spaces? Gadwinbeck stated that these parking spaces do not comply with state of Georgia ADA compliance laws. They would have to alter the entire building. This is actually the condition by code and by federal law. A disabled person has to have an accessible route to the front door. As one can see from the picture the applicant does not have an accessible route unless they were to move the wall back.

Reps clarified that this medical center will only have three handicap spaces. Gadwinbeck stated that once the tenant comes in, it is really up to the tenant to decide what they want. Right now one has to think about their client as a broker. He is selling and leasing this building to Joe's Dentistry and if Joe's Dentistry wants to have 10 ADA spaces, it is up to him. Gadwinbeck has provided what minimum law requires and it is up to the tenant to make it an economically viable building.

Robin Millard stated that he thinks the Board needs to look at the colors of the building very closely so that they don't recreate the same. He is obviously open to the Board to express their feelings about the proposed color.

John Carruth stated that he would like to just question the applicant. He has proposed a dark stucco color. Does he have an example of what is existing? Is it darker or lighter? Gadwinbeck stated that everything here is dark in here. One can take any color, any material that is inside and they take it outside it is going to be....Carruth stated that he was saying relative to the actual building is that a darker color? Gadwinbeck stated that it is a darker color.

Neal Gasaway stated that if one looks at the picture it is darker. Gadwinbeck stated that the pictures are kind of....it is a yellow building. It is a bright yellow building today. John Carruth stated that it was as mustard building before that.

Robin Millard asked Gadwinbeck if he would mind letting the Board have those samples so that they can look at them closer? Millard stated that his concern with the color is that it is approaching a color that was previously on the building that became an issue for the community. He thinks as a Board they have got to be very sensitive to what colors that they are going to approve on it. He thinks that there is some discussion about possibly lightening that color and one of his comments would be is to have it be more of a taupe color rather than a "spicy

mustard" color that he is looking at. They need to get away from that as much as they can.

Gadwinbeck stated that he would have no objections to going lighter.

John Carruth commented that architecturally it is much improved. This is an initial application. He senses from the Board that they would like the applicant to work out the site issues with staff and bring it back to the Board next month. And provides some additional color samples if he could.

Kevin Caldwell stated that what might help with the color, and perhaps his sense in the background is that color was painted a mustard color and about 10,000 people called the city of Roswell and told them that they had a problem on the east side. The building got repainted because it was actually painted a not agreed upon color and the Board is trying to prevent that. He thinks it was a \$20,000...Gadwinbeck asked if it was close to this.

John Carruth stated that it was close to that but it actually went into a little more mustard, a little more yellow was in it. It was a deep color.

Kevin Caldwell stated that it was like a Dijon Mustard.

Robin Millard stated that as far as he is concerned he thinks the applicant needs to bring a couple of scenarios on his colors rather than just bringing one back and say, "what do you think?" He thinks they will get to the end of it much quicker if they have several scenarios that are acceptable.

John Carruth stated that it would be useful if the applicant could come up with a color that matches what is existing so that the Board can compare them side by side what is out there. They are all familiar with the building but in a meeting like this it would be helpful to have that comparison.

The Board has given Gadwinbeck some advice tonight. He has heard from the city staff.

Gadwinbeck stated that he assumed he would receive a copy of staff's comments since they have not seen them. John Carruth asked James Baldwin to fill them in on what the applicant will get from this stage.

James Baldwin stated that the applicant will get a letter giving the Board's comments and a copy of the staff report and staff comments.

John Carruth stated that he would like to apologize that Gadwinbeck did not get his staff comments because that is a normal thing that should have been faxed or emailed to him a week or so before.



Gadwinbeck clarified that he was not eligible to move forward with an LDP application until this Board has approved them. John Carruth stated that was correct. Gadwinbeck asked if any of the items could be conditionally approved that he would still come back giving the Board a lighter color sample and that they have already agreed that they will re-work...since they do comply legally with their storm water detention and water quality.

Kevin Caldwell stated that he thinks there are so many variables on how one is going to modify the site. He speaks for himself in saying that he does not see how the Board can approve this in good faith and do their job. Clearly the architecture of the building the Board has given him a thumbs up but that is not the only job the Board does. They are supposed to review the site and there has been an awful lot of input on this site. They have made an issue about paint and said that the building looks good. He is not comfortable in seeing this as a final and moving forward. He will however say that he wants the applicant to this and do a good job and he wants him to do the due diligence to do a good job. Whereas what they have seen in the past is a halfway attempt to do what they asked them to do where the columns aren't...they are incorrectly sized, the building was painted the wrong color. This has been a disaster every time it has come before the Board before. And that is because there has been someone in a hurry. Caldwell cautioned Gadwinbeck to, the Board all wants to see a nice site and see it to be successful. And another 30 days he does not know that is going to have a huge impact on the applicant in today's market for them to do a little more work.

Gadwinbeck stated that Christmas is coming up. John Carruth stated that what he needs to communicate to his client is that this Board is very receptive to what he is doing. It is just that they have enough loose ends that they are not comfortable giving him a final approval tonight.

## **REZONING**

**09-0810**

**DRB09-45**

**SEVEN GABLES HOLDINGS, LLC**

**2745 Holcomb Bridge Road**

**Land Lot: 781**

Joe Alcock with Rutledge-Alcock Architects presented the rezoning application. He is representing Seven Gables Holding on a rezoning for 2745 Holcomb Bridge Road. The property is located at 2745 Holcomb Bridge Road. North is kind of diagonal and Holcomb Bridge Road makes a little turn south. There is a multi-family townhouse development nearby, a lawn and garden company, Weed-Pro in the area, a construction business and a school across the street. They are at the intersection of a light on Holcomb Bridge Road for that school. Presently this triangular piece of property is undeveloped. It is vacant, raw land. It