

**CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW SUMMARY MINUTES
COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2007, 7:00 P.M.**

Chairperson Jonathan Whitney called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commission members present were Mary Margaret Carroll, Chris Culbreth, Gretchen MacNair, Laura K. Moore, Scott Nilsen, and Robin Whitsell. Staff members present were Senior Planner Kay Pearlstein, and Planning Technician Kay Tapp.

**GATEWAY BANK AND TRUST COMPANY AT MEADOWMONT
File No. 9798-04-72-5845)**

The Town has received a request for a Revised Concept Plan Review. The site is located on the southwest corner of Barbee Chapel Road and Hwy 54, and is adjacent to Finley Forest on the south (see area map on back). The revised plan includes a 2-story bank and office building with 12,000 square feet of floor area, a drive through window and 26 parking spaces. The plan previously reviewed by the Council on March 19 included 9,000 square feet of floor area and 42 parking spaces.

Vehicular access is proposed from Barbee Chapel Road and from Friday Center Drive across a shared driveway on the Courtyard at Marriott Hotel. The 2.34-acre site is located in the Residential-5 (R-5) zoning district and is encumbered by the Meadowmont Master Land Use Plan. The site is identified as Durham County, Parcel Identifier Number 9798-04-72-5845.

CONCEPT PLAN PRESENTATION

The applicant, Gurlitz Architectural Group, presented a Concept Plan for a revised bank building with 12,000 square feet of floor area. The sidewalk entrance from the public sidewalk along HWY 54 and location of proposed public art were proposed within the HWY 54 right-of-way. The drive-thru driveway and a proposed stone planter were proposed within the landscape buffer.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

No citizens spoke on the application.

COMMUNITY DESIGN COMMISSION QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

1. Commissioner Robin Whitsell thought the building design was exciting and imaginative. She liked the drive-thru window incorporated within the building footprint. She cautioned that vehicle exhaust from the drive-thru window may invade the interior of the building.

She asked the applicant to identify the location of the photo voltaic panels and to represent them realistically on the elevations with future applications. She did not like the proposed building signage shown on the building elevation.

2. Commissioner Gretchen MacNair asked if the glass was "see through," The applicant replied that it would be non-reflective and energy efficient glass.

Commissioner MacNair asked if the view of the building from HWY 54 was of the sloping roof. The applicant replied that the approach to the building from the highway was of the sloping roof, but standing in front of the building, the slope would not be evident.

3. Commissioner Laura K. Moore stated she thought the building was beautiful. She endorsed the relationship between the Site Plan and building. She approved of the incorporation of public art.

She was concerned about the necessity of NCDOT approval of some of the prominent features of the site design. She believed that the project had the potential to "fall apart" without NCDOT approval. Without the approval, the drive-thru would be the view from HWY 54, especially if HWY 54 is widened in the future.

She noted the applicant's response to the Commission and Council's request to bring the building closer to the road. She wondered if it was at the expense of the landscape buffer. She was concerned with the width of the buffer.

4. Commissioner Chris Culbreth thought the architecture was refreshing and beautiful. He stated that the video presentation was a good technique for visualizing the design.
5. Commissioner Mary Margaret Carroll was concerned the appearance of the building looked like State Park architecture. She wondered if the architecture had the appropriate look for buildings along this section of HWY 54.
6. Commissioner Jonathan Whitney liked the design but was concerned about the encroachments into the NCDOT right-of-way that appeared to be integral to the design of the site. He stated that if buffer was lost along the HWY 54 frontage as a result of moving the building closer to the highway, then the view from HWY 54 could be of stacked cars at the drive-thru line.

Prepared for: Jonathan Whitney, Chair
Prepared by: Kay Pearlstein, Staff *KP/aw*