



Public meeting

October 9, 2013 at 5:00 PM

The Estero Recreation Center

9200 Corkscrew Palms Blvd.

**Members in Attendance:** Al O'Donnell, Bill Prysi, Jim Wallace, Joe McHarris, Vicki Pierson, Jack Lienesch, and Tom O'Dea

**Absent:** Nancy Cohen

**Chaired By:** Bill Prysi

**Minutes By:** Vicki Pierson / Bill Prysi

The meeting was called to order by Bill Prysi at 5:00 PM

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:** N/A

**Announcements:** N/A

**Presentations:**

**APPLICANT:** Race Trac Gas Station

**Location of Project:** US 41 near Coconut Point Ford

**Presented by:** Kristina Johnson PE, Delisi Fitzgerald, Inc.

Others Representing the Applicant: Tom Hardy (Race Trac), Drew Fitzgerald, PE (Delisi- Fitzgerald), Scott Windam, PLA (Windam Studios)

The Applicant presented the Race Trac project and noted that they needed to file for four different variances. The project consists of a roughly 5,500 SF Main Building with a 287 LF Canopy that houses 20 pumps. The subject of the variances requested are as follows:

1. Deviation against the requirement for a maximum of 20% of the total parking being in front of the building (US-41 Overlay)

2. Deviation of the Main Sign to be within 15' feet of the property line to a maximum of 5 feet or the width of the perimeter easement, whichever is greater.
3. Deviation against the required berm height of 3 feet to 1.5 feet.
4. Deviation against the maximum amount of sod allowed for internal landscaping of 10% to 45%.

The Applicant also noted that they were presenting an Alternative Landscape Betterment Plan as part of the application.

#### **SITE PLAN- EDRC/Public Response:**

Upon the Applicant's presentation of the Site Plan, The EDRC/Public made the following comments that need to be addressed by the Applicant:

- A pedestrian pathway along US-41 from the north needs to be added to meet connectivity requirements. The Applicant agreed to bring one in along the north that bisects the driveway north of the canopy.
- The pedestrian connection from the south needs to be adjusted to avoid forcing a person to walk across the driveway away from the building and to provide an access point that is more conducive to actual pedestrian movement closer to the building entry.
- The Bike Rack needs to be brought closer to the main entrance of the building. The proposed location is not acceptable and is too far from the door.
- The EDRC/Public is comfortable with the Applicant's site design and desire to deviate from the 20% parking requirement based on the layout of the site.
- There was a lengthy discussion that took place with respect to stormwater by members in the public. However, the Applicant gave adequate responses to those concerns.

#### **LANDSCAPING-EDRC/Public Response:**

Upon the Applicant's presentation of the Landscape Plan and proposed Betterment Plan, the EDRC/Public made the following comments that need to be addressed by the Applicant:

- Generally speaking to the "Betterment" proposal, The EDRC Felt that the plan submitted to NOT propose any real mitigating factors that represented a "betterment" of what was proposed against what they did not desire to meet in requirements. The plan lacked an actual betterment.
- The use of Magnolia Trees was found not to be acceptable due to that species proven inability to thrive in this region. The use of other accent trees conducive to this region will be necessary.
- The use of East Palatka Hollies in the Buffers is not acceptable as that tree species clearly does not meet the intent of what the required trees in buffers are supposed to achieve. The EDRC noted that trees that reach of minimum of 30-40 feet in height and 20-30 feet in width would be necessary to meet this intent. Of

course a small percentage of accent trees or palms could be thrown into this mix for design interest.

- The Applicant's failure to meet the requirements for building perimeter planting was not acceptable to the EDRC or public. The EDRC agreed that by expanding the island in the SE Corner of the building to include a parking space both to the north and to the west would be a sufficient step in mitigating the lack of building perimeter planting. At no time would the Estero Community accept parking to sidewalk to the building without a 5 foot landscape break as acceptable. The amount of overall area shy immediate to the building may be added in surplus to the buffers as a betterment so long as the parking to the building with plantings is addressed adequately.
- If the Wall for the Dumpster is going to be detailed architecturally, the EDRC would be agreeable to lower shrubs in this area as to not hide the detail.
- The EDRC is not overly comfortable with the Applicant's request to lower the required berm and to install and maintain lower plant material than required. The safety argument is not a mitigating factor to the requirements set forth for this specific buffer requirement. The EDRC is agreeable to meandering the berm between 1.5 feet and 3 feet and to allow the material to be maintained at 48"H above the berm so long as a landscape plan is prepared that clearly indicates a design that is 'better' than that required.

The Applicant agreed to return with a revised Landscape Plan

#### **ARCHITECTURE-EDRC/Public Response:**

The Applicant noted an attempt to follow the checklist for the Mediterranean building in Estero. They noted the tower elements and the awnings. The awning colors have been changed to work with Estero colors. On the application that was presented with the application packet for the meeting the building type was listed as Old Florida. Old Florida would mean more of a cracker type building which is what you have presented this evening. What was presented is not Mediterranean at all. There is no porch but an outdoor patio area. The building is under the maximum height requirement. The items presented are good but in no way are Mediterranean or Old Florida. The columns on the canopy are not Mediterranean at all. There was a full discussion on the way to present and build a Mediterranean building that will have the Estero ambience the EDRC is looking for. Mr. Hardy stated that what they are willing to do is one thing and what the EDRC wants is different. He thinks the price of construction to adhere to Estero recommendations is going to be way too much. The following are specific recommendations and comments by the EDRC with respect to the architecture presented:

- The Building clearly represents an approved prototype, but does not convey any architectural features that would make the building Mediterranean or Old Florida as required by Chapter 33. The building as presented clearly does not meet the architectural requirements set forth by Chapter 33.

- The Canopy above the gas pumps is in conflict with the requirements set forth by Chapter 33 and clearly does not relate to the building architecturally. This structure MUST meet a similar standard and MUST have a design conducive to and compatible with the main building.
- The EDRC suggested that the Canopy be built with a series of three pitched roofs in effort to break up its linearity. The EDRC did not feel that the Applicant's suggestion to break up the length with horizontal breaks would be sufficient. The Applicant noted that they may support the idea of a mansard roof, but not a pitched roof. The canopy needs to be broken down into several elements. Its style is simply visually too big and too long as proposed.
- The canopy as proposed would require a variance and the EDRC would not support a variance for the canopy proposed. The EDRC noted that it would be unfair for the community to accept the Race Trac prototype based on the number of previous prototype applications that were forced to be changed to meet Estero standards. The EDRC feels that the standards can be easily achieved with relative design changes without much if any real costs.

The Applicant agrees to return with a revised Architectural Design.

#### **SIGNAGE-EDRC/Public Response:**

Tom Hardy presented the revised Signage Package that included a re-designed monument style sign along US-41. The EDRC pointed out to Mr. Hardy, that even though they agree that an electronic sign for the gas prices (only) would be more appropriate, that a variance for this would be needed due to electronic signs being prohibited in Estero. The following comments were noted by the EDRC/Public:

- The height of proposed numbers for the electronic portion of the monument sign. At 3 feet in height, they are too big. This could be accomplished with much smaller numbers.
- The architectural details of the Monument sign would need to be revised to be consistent with where the revised building would be going. The current proposed sign lacked sufficient architectural detail. Mr. Hardy noted that they would at the least extend the overhang of the cap and the base to add to the detail. This may or not be sufficient based on the final design.
- The EDRC reminded the Applicant that ONLY the lettering and logos could be illuminated in signage. The background colors must be opaque from light.
- No additional advertising outside of property identification is permitted on the building.

The Applicant agreed to return with revised signage.

**New Business:**

N/A

**Old Business:**

N/A

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 7:02 PM.

**Next Meeting:**

Wednesday November 13, 2013