



**MINUTES  
CITY OF HARTSVILLE  
PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 2022 - 5:30PM  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 100 EAST CAROLINA AVENUE**

PURSUANT TO FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT SC CODE 30-4-80: WRITTEN NOTICE WAS DELIVERED TO THE PRESS BY EMAIL ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2022 AND DULY POSTED AT CITY HALL LOCATED AT 100 EAST CAROLINA AVENUE AND ON HARTSVILLESC.GOV. CITY HALL IS AN ACCESSIBLE FACILITY, FOR ASSISTANCE, CALL 843-383-3018.

**Members present:** Vice Chairman Curtis Lee, Warren Felkel, Mallory Hankins, Scottie Hill and Trevor McDonald. **Absent:** Chairman Chris Shirley and Dan Askins. **Staff:** Brenda Kelley, Michelle Brown and Ex-Officio Daniel Moore. **Press:** Absent. **Guest:** Audie Bates and Audrey Freeman.

**Call to Order/Welcome**

Chairman Lee called the meeting to order at 5:32p.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

Trevor McDonald made a motion to approve the July 25, 2022 minutes as submitted; Second: Felkel. Carried: All in favor.

**New Business**

**Request to Modify the Hartsville Crossing Planned Development Standards**

Audie Bates of Bergmann submitted an application on behalf of Walmart to revise the approved color scheme from tan and forest green to earth tone shades of gray and “Walmart Blue.” Mr. Bates and Audrey Freeman of Walmart attended the meeting by phone.

Mrs. Kelley provided background information regarding the Hartsville Crossing Planned Development Standards and the requests that Walmart made in the past to change the colors. The detailed information was in the staff report. Mrs. Kelley also provided a PowerPoint presentation that showed the original tan and forest green colors, the revised tan and forest green colors and the new gray and blue color scheme that was requested. The presentation also included pictures of the new color scheme that were taken from a Walmart that had been painted with the gray and “Walmart Blue” colors.

Mr. Bates comments were as follows: Walmart refreshes its paint every few years. The Hartsville store is currently on the list to update its paint. One the reasons for the new color scheme is what is considering wayfinding, which is a way for people to identify where they are going, and where the major entrances are. Since COVID, the grocery pickup is used often and Walmart wants to be specific about where that occurs. The color scheme is set up to define the front of the building and where the entrances are. The grays are more neutral to most things. The lighter gray band at the bottom is called anchoring the store so that it feels like it’s not floating in the air but actually sitting on the ground. The lighter gray, which is the majority of the store feature, does not make the store look large and heavy. It darker around the entrances just to draw attention by people who are driving in and where they should go. It makes the sign more legible with the background colors. It is what Walmart has been doing around the country.

Vice Chairman Lee asked Mr. Bates if the “Walmart Blue” was a copyrighted color and if it was specific to Walmart. Mr. Bates was uncertain. He knew it was based on a specific color blending that Walmart referred to as Walmart Blue. Lee stated that the blue does not look like what he refers to as Walmart Blue. The blue is rather a bright blue. It really does not fit in well to everything else around there. He said he was all about branding but that is a pretty, strong blue and you are putting a lot of it on the building. Mr. Bates excused himself from the call to get additional information about the “Walmart Blue.”

Warren Felkel made a motion to modify the Hartsville Crossing Planned Development Standards to incorporate the plan Walmart has put together to repaint; Second: McDonald.

Warren Felkel was in favor of the change. He stated that the wayfinding was important. Walmart is visited by many who do not live here. The parking lot poses a problem for navigation. It would be beneficial to see where you are going well before you get to the store. The new color scheme is a fresh clean look. He appreciates the way Walmart maintains their buildings.

Mr. Bates returned to the call to let the planning commission know that the "Walmart Blue" is a specific blend. Vice Chairman Lee updated Mr. Bates on the conversation the commission had in his absence. The commission appreciates the wayfinding and the fact that Walmart refreshes the building every six (6) years. The two main concerns are the shade of blue and the amount of blue on the building.

Audrey Freeman of Walmart joined the conversation by phone. She asked if they modified the blue and limited it to certain areas, would that be approved. Lee said it would incline him more to approve it. It would be more acceptable if there were less blue. He gave other commissioners a chance to share if they agreed or disagreed with anything he said.

Scottie Hill said she does not view Walmart as a part of another development of buildings. Ms. Kelley stated that Walmart was a part of a Planned Unit Development. She then provided information about the muted earth tone colors and any changes that occurred over the years to any buildings in the development. She reminded the commission that we were discussing a revision to the Hartsville Crossing Planned Development Standards for Walmart only. Ms. Hill said that in 2022 people are using apps to shop and the app is using the revised color scheme. It makes sense that Walmart would want their colors to be consistent with what people are seeing on the app. She said if it were downtown, it has a certain feel but she does not get that feel about the Walmart area. It is like a bunch of chain stores put together.

Mr. Felkel said he appreciate that we want to be somewhere between the Planned Unit Development Standards and Hilton Head which is so restrictive. The McDonalds has a gray color scheme. The only question would be the blue. Shrinking the Walmart sign was a good compromise.

Mallory Hankins said she disagrees with the gray. The brightness of the colors is too bright for the area. She asked if the green awnings would be changed. Ms. Freeman said the awning would change to vinyl wrapping in either the blue or the gray. They are currently shown as gray. The majority of the shopping centers are tan and beige. Something that big and not that color will cause it to stick out more. There are not a lot of trees in the shopping center especially as you get up closer to Walmart. You are going to see that line of sight straight across. Keeping the tan color would make the most sense.

Ex-Officio Moore stated that while the commission should be cognizant of the other buildings, the discussion should only include Walmart because they requested the revision to their color scheme. The rest of the buildings would remain the same. The PUD was created in 2001. It is now 2022. The recommendation is does the commission want to maintain it or change it. The adjacent shopping center would be allowed to change their colors to match Walmart's.

Vice Chairman Lee called for the vote. Felkel, McDonald and Scott were in favor. Lee and Hankins opposed. The motion passed.

### **Adjournment**

Chairman Lee adjourned the meeting without objection at 6:16 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled on Monday, September 26, 2022 at 5:30p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall.