

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
August 31, 2021 Minutes

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on August 3, 2021 in the 2nd floor conference room at 41 Green Street.

Attendees: Co-Chairs Elizabeth Durfee Hengen and Jay Doherty, Members Ron King, Claude Gentilhomme, Margaret Tomas, Zarron Simonis, and Timothy Thompson.

Staff: Sam Durfee, Senior Planner
Lisa Fellows-Weaver, Administrative Specialist
Bob Nadeau, Code Inspector

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Doherty at 8:30 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Thompson moved to approve the minutes of August 3, 2021, as submitted. Ms. Hengen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sign Applications

1. SB Signs, on behalf of Spirit Halloween, requests ADR approval for the replacement of three non-illuminated wall signs at 271 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

No one was present to represent the application.

Mr. Durfee provided an overview of the application explaining that the proposal is the typical three wall signs that Spirit Halloween has used in previous years.

Ms. Hengen made a motion, second by Mr. King, to recommend approval of the three signs, as submitted, with the condition that any holes in the wall resulting from the installation or removal of the sign be patched.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Barlo Signs, on behalf of Banfield Animal Hospital, requests ADR approval for the replacement of an internally-illuminated wall sign at 299 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

Brandon Currier of Barlo Signs represented the application.

Mr. Currier explained that the application is due to rebranding of the Banfield Pet Hospital. The sign color is orange during the daylight and at night the sign lights up white.

Ms. Tomas made a motion, second by Mr. Thompson, to recommend approval of the sign, as submitted.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Advantage Signs, on behalf of Christ the King Parish, requests ADR approval for the installation of a new non-illuminated monument sign at 72 South Main Street in the Urban Transitional (UT) District.

Josh Messenger of Advantage Signs represented the application.

Mr. Messenger stated that this monument sign was approved in April 2020; however, it was proposed as a glass sign. Due to complications and costs the sign has been amended to be made of granite with aluminum letters attached and a concrete base clad in granite. He stated that he believes that the new design is a better fit with the building and City. He noted that the granite sign structure is already built.

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A discussion was held regarding the issue of having both “Christ the King parish” and “St. John the Evangelist Church” on the sign and if it could be misinterpreted to mean there are two churches on site.

Mr. Doherty stated that he feels that the original design previously proposed was more elegant. He explained that the block base appears to be very heavy. Mr. Messenger provided an updated design proposing gold letters. Members agreed that the gold letters are more pleasing than black letters. Additional discussion was held regarding the font size and if the design would be better with all capital letters.

Ms. Hengen noted the dates proposed under each text line and stated that she would prefer a date range.

Mr. Nadeau explained the history of the churches noting that in 2011 four churches were consolidated into one, all falling under Christ the King Parish. Additional discussion ensued regarding the regional brand and what the campus contains.

Mr. Thompson made a motion, second by Mr. King, to recommend approval of the sign, as submitted with the recommendation that ‘Christ The King’ be all capital letters and the lettering on the granite wall is gold.

The motion passed unanimously.

4. Dealers Choice LLC, on behalf of Tokoos International Market requests ADR approval for the replacement of an internally-illuminated freestanding sign and a non-illuminated wall sign 374 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

No one was present to represent the application.

Mr. Durfee provided an overview of the application explaining that the applicant is changing the name of the store and will be installing a new sign with a green background and black lettering. He added that the applicant is open to changes suggested by the Committee.

Mr. Gentilhomme stated that all signage for the business should match with the name of the business on top and should be in bold text; any subtext can be smaller. He noted that the wall sign is difficult to read and the overall appearance of the wall sign is similar to a business card layout.

A discussion was held regarding approving the design for the freestanding sign and recommending approval for the wall sign if it is to match the freestanding sign. Mr. Thompson suggested adding a condition to waive the applicant from having to return to the Committee and give staff the authority to approve the design if it matches. Ms. Tomas stated that it is difficult to approve a sign with a new design that the Committee will not see. She commented that this Committee holds applicants to a higher standard; therefore, a design should be submitted for the wall sign.

There was some discussion relative to the logos proposed. The wall sign has a crown while the freestanding sign has a completely different logo.

Mr. Gentilhomme made a motion, second by Ms. Tomas, to recommend approval of the freestanding sign, as presented, and that the applicant must return to the Committee with revised designs for the wall sign to closely match the freestanding sign with regards to colors, font types, and logo.

The motion passed; 6/1. Mr. Thompson was opposed.

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5. Sign-A-Rama, on behalf of Express Jewelry Center, LLC, requests ADR approval for the installation of a new externally-illuminated projecting sign and a new externally-illuminated wall sign at 6 North Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CPB) District.

No one was present to represent the application.

Mr. Durfee stated that this is a new business and the proposal for a blade sign and wall sign. It was noted that the sign will be illuminated by an existing exterior light.

Mr. Doherty complimented the simplicity of the black and white design.

Mr. Thompson made a motion, second by Mr. King, to recommend approval of the sign, as submitted.

The motion passed unanimously.

4. Advantage Signs, on behalf of Christ the King Parish, requests ADR approval for the installation of a new non-illuminated monument sign at 72 South Main Street in the Urban Transitional (UT) District.

Jonathan Halle of Warrenstreet Architects requested the Committee reopen the application for Christ the King Parish.

Mr. Thompson made a motion, second by Ms. Hengen, to reopen the discussion for Christ the King Parish application.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Halle explained they would like to add a lighting option for the top of the granite wall. They are proposing a bronze light bar for down lighting across the top on the Main Street side that would be cantilevered out.

Mr. King expressed concern with the fact that the bar would stick out and cause shadowing. Additional discussion ensued with regard to shine and washing out the front of the sign. Mr. King requested a plan be provided of the front and side view. He commented that the light bar could change the sign dramatically. Other options were mentioned. Mr. Messenger noted there is a similar sign at Presidential Oaks.

Mr. Simonis asked about the height and expressed concern with visual blocking from the road. Mr. Halle stated that the sign is 48 inches off grade and it does sit back from the sidewalk and road so there will not be any visual impacts.

Mr. Gentilhomme made a motion, second by Ms. Tomas, to recommend approval of the lighting with the recommendation that the light bar be the full width of the granite.

The motion passed; 6/1. Mr. King was opposed.

Major Site Plan Applications

1. McCourt Engineering Associates, PPLC, on behalf of Pitco Frialator, LLC, requests ADR approval for the construction of a 356,224 sf manufacturing facility and associated site improvements at 15 Integra Drive in the Industrial (IN), Office Park Performance (OFP), and Residential Open Space (RO) Districts.

Jennifer McCourt from McCourt Engineering and Jonathan Halle of Warrenstreet Architects represented the application.

An overview of the proposal was provided. The parcel is on an existing dead-end road. A 350,000 square foot building is proposed.

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The traffic pattern and landscape plan were reviewed. Mr. Halle stated that there are a lot of trees required; he does not feel that they are all necessary for this site.

A waiver has been submitted to not provide all of the parking. That area will be used for any snow storage. Ms. McCourt added that there is also a waiver requested for the sidewalk as there is currently no sidewalk.

Mr. Halle stated that they are proposing a solar array on the roof. It will be as large as possible according to State guidelines.

Mr. Simonis asked how much lighting will be provided in the parking area as it appears that the lighting around the parking islands is being mounted within the trees. This will be looked into.

A discussion was held regarding the turning radius of the trucks. Ms. McCourt referenced the turning templates provided. Mr. Thompson stated that the building area is over 8 acres. Mr. Durfee stated that the lot is 54 acres.

Ms. Tomas stated that there is a lot paving. Mr. Thompson asked how much of the parking area is for future parking. Ms. McCourt replied 75 spaces. She added that they have projected parking for 400 employees and additional spaces could be added, if necessary.

Ms. McCourt stated that the area is sandy and they will need to infiltrate for the 100 year storm.

Mr. Durfee stated that there are no variances required for the project. He added that a CUP was submitted for reduced parking and for the construction of impervious surfaces in the Aquifer Protection District.

Ms. Tomas suggested that they consider more natural landscaping around the property and add meadow mix around the back. Mr. Halle stated that there may be some overall design changes necessary and they will return to the Committee if necessary. He stated that at this time it is imperative they keep moving forward as time is of the essence with the purchase of the property.

Mr. Thompson made a motion, second by Ms. Hengen, to recommend approval for the facility, as submitted, including the approval for the solar array, and recommend that the applicant add more natural landscaping and add meadow mix around the back of the property, and address any conflicts with the lighting and trees within the parking area.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Wilcox & Barton, Inc, on behalf of Pope Memorial SPCA of Concord-Merrimack County, requests ADR approval for a 1,970 sf building addition, new parking lot, and associated site improvements at 93-95 Silk Farm Road in the Residential Open Space (RO) District.

Erin Lambert of Wilcox & Barton represented the application along with Chris Carley of Carley Associates.

Ms. Lambert gave an overview of the property and stated that the applicants are in the process of consolidating the lots into one. In addition, the two driveways will also be consolidated into one.

Mr. Carley stated that the intent is to preserve a small section of the existing house and to add on to the east side. The new building will include a meeting hall for functions, training areas and storage. Materials proposed are clapboards, a shingled roof, and synthetic wood trim.

Ms. Lambert explained the egress around the building for fire safety and the location of the sidewalk that will be added around the building. Mr. Doherty asked if there could be a pathway loop around the building to the parking lot. Ms. Lambert stated that the septic system is in that

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location. She noted that it is at grade and the proposed design is the most direct route, would be the fastest way to exit the building, and most effective egress from the building.

Ms. Tomas stated that it appears that there are a lot of trees being cut down. Ms. Lambert described the topography of the land as being sloped. She stated they are proposing to plant five trees and are working to minimize tree clearing. She stated that the requirements have been met.

A discussion was held regarding how visible the new building will be from the road. Mr. Carley explained that the visibility will not be much.

A discussion was held regarding the design of the windows on the proposed meeting room. Ms. Tomas commented that the windows looks like they are a mix of residential and commercial design. She does not feel that the elevation fits with the design of the existing house. She suggested that the windows be reduced from six to only three windows. Mr. Carley was not receptive to the suggestion and noted that typically there would not be six windows; this is an ambiguous design

Ms. Hengen commented that she does not have any issue with the window design. She referenced the smaller, stall-like, windows proposed and noted that they are proposed for the storage area and are still allowing light. Mr. Carley concurred that the area is the storage area only.

Mr. Carley stated that they will be returning to the Committee with a signage package.

Mr. Durfee stated that they are continuing to work with engineering relative to the drainage.

Mr. Gentilhomme made a motion, second by Mr. Thompson, to recommend approval of the application, as submitted.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Greenman-Pederson Inc. on behalf of Wheelabrator Concord Co., requests ADR approval for paving of new parking at 11 Whitney Road in the Industrial (IN) District.

David Jordan, engineer from GPI, represented that application along with the land surveyor

Mr. Jordan provided an overview of the proposal, which is to add a new paved parking area. He explained this will be in the location of an existing gravel parking lot located in the front of the facility. The new parking lot project will relocate the employees to park closer to the building where there is ample parking already. He continued to explain the activity of the business and how tractor trailers move throughout the site moving ash from the building to landfills. The new parking lot will become the waiting area for the tractor trailers that need to be picked up by the contractors. The area could have as many as 12 tractor trailers waiting; typically, there is only three to six.

Mr. Jordan referenced the existing fence on the property and stated that this will remain. He added that there are actively used pedestrian bridges on site and they plan to continue the use of these; however, the use could be less.

A discussion was held regarding the drainage. Mr. Jordan stated that the site is very sandy site and everything pitches toward the back corner. They plan to tie into the existing swale which will drain into the detention basin; it will mitigate any runoff.

Mr. Simmonis asked about lighting. Mr. Jordan replied that there are no plans for lighting at this time. There is existing lighting along the paved access driveway, which has been sufficient and there should not be any additional lighting necessary, in fact, it should be even less with this proposal since employees will no longer be parking in this location.

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Mr. Jordan noted that there is a large berm that separates the new Whitney Road development from this business. He explained that they are requesting a CUP to allow payment of a fee in lieu of planting trees. He stated that the area is very well screened and planting trees is really not necessary. They feel that the funds could be better used elsewhere than on this site.

Mr. Thompson made a motion, second by Mr. Gentilhomme, to recommend approval of the application, as submitted.

The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Mr. King made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Gentilhomme seconded. The motion passed unanimously at 9:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Administrative Specialist