

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
February 1, 2022 Minutes

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on February 4, 2022 in City Council Chambers, in the Municipal Complex, at 37 Green Street.

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

Absent: Co-Chair Elizabeth Durfee Hengen

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 January 4, 2022, as submitted. Mr. King seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sign Applications

1. Barlo Signs, on behalf of Interchange Development, requests ADR approval for the replacement of an internally illuminated monument sign at 1 Whitney Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

Ms. Tomas recused herself from this application and left the room.

Brandon Currier of Barlo Signs represented the application along with Laurie Rauseo.

Mr. Currier explained that the proposal is to remove and replace the existing pylon sign at 1 Whitney Road. The ZBA granted variances for the size of the sign and scrolling prices at the December 1, 2021 meeting. The design incorporates the elements from other on site buildings; colors are subtle and also consistent with other tenants' signs. The sign will be channel letters; all other signs are cabinets.

Mr. Doherty asked if other tenants would be inclined to change their signs to channel letters. Mr. Currier replied that he was not sure if all tenants would do the change.

Members noted the white background and recommended that the white panels have opaque backgrounds.

Mr. Thompson made a motion, second by Mr. King, to recommend approval of the proposed sign, as submitted, with the recommendation that all white panels have opaque backgrounds.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Tomas returned to the meeting.

2. Signtech, on behalf of Bradford Hill, requests ADR approval for the replacement of an internally illuminated freestanding sign and the installation of a new internally illuminated wall sign at 19 Triangle Park Drive in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

Robyn Casey of Signtech represented the application.

Ms. Casey explained the proposal is to replace the monument and building signs. Ms. Casey noted that the Goodale signs are being removed.

Members had no comment relative to the building sign.

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Ms. Casey explained that the free standing is a double replacement and will be internally illuminated. It was noted that the white background will glow and Mr. Doherty explained that an opaque background would be preferred.

Mr. Thompson made a motion, second by Mr. King, to recommend approval of the proposed signs, as submitted, with the recommendation that white panels in the pylon sign have an opaque background.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Gregory Dragon, on behalf of Heather Dragon, requests ADR approval for the installation of one new non-illuminated projecting sign and two non-illuminated window signs at 62 North Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

Heather Dragon represented the application.

Ms. Dragon explained that the proposal is for a projecting sign and sticker appliques in the windows. The window signs are existing and are proposed to remain. A wrought iron bracket is proposed for the projecting sign what will protrude 42 inches and will be attached by four large bolts. The front of the façade is being redone. The bracket will be attached to the existing wood. There is no bracket existing. No lighting is proposed.

Mr. Doherty commented that usually a sign would be black with white text; however, the black border holds the sign well and is appealing.

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

The motion passed unanimously.

4. Sign-A-Rama, on behalf of Crimson Falcon LLC, requests ADR approval for the replacement of an internally-illuminated freestanding sign panel and an internally-illuminated wall sign at 108 Fisherville Road in the General Commercial (CG) District.

Igor Pvente represented the application.

The applicant stated the sign cabinet is being replaced at the street as well as the wall sign. Colors were explained to be a dark brown background with gold lettering.

Mr. Thompson stated that he liked the dark background.

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

The motion passed unanimously.

5. Sousa Signs, on behalf of Convenient MD, requests ADR approval for the installation of a non-illuminated wall sign at 265-273 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

No one was present to represent the application.

Members discussed the material of the sign as it appeared to be a banner or a sticker. Mr. Nadeau stated that the sign is an aluminum board for a temporary site. Ms. Tomas asked if the sign is a temporary sign. Mr. Nadeau replied no and explained the terms for temporary sign permits; this sign would not meet the permit terms. He added that he believes that the current Loudon Road medical facility has been inundated with patients and testing and the proposed site will be specific for vaccines and booster shots.

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Mr. Doherty stated that there is an overload of information on the sign and added that the sign appears to be like an advertisement; it should emphasize the business and purpose. Discussion ensued as to alternative layouts and with less content.

Mr. Gentilhomme stated that the white part of the sign should be framed to finish the sign.

Mr. Thompson stated that the site is for vaccines and booster shots. He noted that the sign does state the NH Department of Health and Human Services and is probably a submission for Convenient MD from DHHS.

Mr. Doherty made a motion, second by Mr. King, to recommend the applicant revise the sign and resubmit.

Mr. Doherty amended the motion, second by Mr. King, to recommend the applicant revise the sign and resubmit as it does not meet the City requirements/recommendations to include:

- Overload of information;
- Framing;
- Too much text and too small of text;
- Name should be on the top of the sign; and
- Partnership should be removed or reduced.

Mr. Thompson stated that he will not support the motion due to the purpose of the sign. Mr. Doherty replied that the purpose of this Committee is to make sure that the signs throughout the City are well designed and attractive.

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

6. Philadelphia Sign, on behalf of TD Bank, requests ADR approval for the replacement of two internally-illuminated wall signs at 277 Sheep Davis Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

Heather Dutchi represented the application.

Ms. Dutchi explained the proposal is to replace two existing signs. The existing 18 square foot sign on the front of the building will be replaced with a 22 square foot sign. The sign on the side is 11 square feet and will be replaced with an 18 square foot sign with a different design. Both of the new signs will be internally illuminated where the existing signs are not. The full face of the sign is proposed to be illuminated. She noted that opaque backgrounds will be used, if necessary.

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

The motion passed unanimously.

Major Site plan Applications

1. Wilcox & Barton, Inc, on behalf of SPCA of Concord-Merrimack County, request ADR approval for construction of a new 2,515 sf structure and associated site improvements for the purpose of a commercial kennel at 93-95 Silk Farm Road in the Open Space Residential (RO) District.

Christopher Carley of CN Carley Associates and Erin Lambert form Wilcox & Barton represented the application.

Ms. Lambert stated that the SPCA purchased an additional property, which will now allow the SPCA to build a new facility. She stated that the major change to the site plan is to relocate the loop driveway with a 20 foot driveway, which could terminate some pavement if needed.

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Mr. Carley stated that the last time he met with the Committee they were proposing additions. With the additional land purchased, there are now more options available including the opportunity to build. The entire building will now be moved to the north end of the parcel. This new location allows for easier access and it is also easier to orient the front of building to the south. He noted that there will be solar panels added and the design of the building will be simplified. The concept is still the same with a large meeting room, an administrative space, entryway, and a modest catering kitchen for events. Materials will consist of clapboard siding and asphalt shingles with synthetic wood trim. Color is, at this time, proposed as a sage green with white trim. There will also be a terrace on the north side.

Ms. Tomas stated that this proposal is a big improvement.

Mr. Doherty agreed and added that it has a nice orientation to the street and the parking lot. He requested that color samples be provided to the Committee along with samples of materials. Mr. Carley noted that the color may change.

Mr. King expressed concern with the driveway. Ms. Lambert stated that the entire site slopes and the driveway has been designed so water will flow away from the road and will head into a swale.

Mr. Durfee noted that the landscaping plan meets the City requirements in terms of diversity. Ms. Lambert added the client has requested stone be used as opposed to mulch; it is less cumbersome and allow the grounds to remain as natural as possible.

Ms. Tomas recommended the driveway end after the left hand turn. Mr. Thompson stated that the hammerhead would be brought closer to where the parking lot begins.

Mr. Gentilhomme made a motion, second by Mr. King, to recommend approval of the proposed design, as submitted, to include the landscaping as described, materials and color samples be provided, and with the recommendation to bring the hammerhead portion of the driveway closer to where the parking lot begins.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Nobis Group, on behalf of HLF East, LLC, requests ADR approval for the construction of new 22,800 sf structure and 1,250 sf structure for the purpose of a car dealership, and associated site improvements, and Conditional Use Permit for the addition of impervious surface area within the Aquifer Protection District, at 134 Manchester Street in the Highway Commercial (HC) District.

Scott Donovan of Warrenstreet Architects, along with Morgan Dunson and Cory Bouchard of Nobis Group.

Ms. Dunson gave a brief overview of the project and parking area.

Mr. Donovan addressed the architecture of the new location, a retail evolution prescribed design. He stated that this is the same prototype being proposed throughout the country as Mazda rebrands. Programming elevations were reviewed. Exterior materials were provided for review. A variance has been requested to not use EIFC due to the amount of maintenance needed in New England, and continue with different colored metal paneling.

Ms. Tomas stated that she appreciated the request to change out the EIFC; the paneling design is simple and clean.

Ms. Tomas asked about the trees in the middle of the parking area and out front. She commented that it would be nice to see more landscaping.

Mr. Smith asked about the lighting and the light trespass. He stated that it is very bright now and suggested using 5 and 10 foot candles with 20 being the highest.

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It was noted that bollards will be strategically placed to protect the metal façade.

Mr. Thompson made a motion, second by Mr. Gentilhomme, to recommend approval of the site plan and building, with the understanding that the lighting plan will be examined to minimize trespass to the surrounding properties and reduce very high foot candles throughout property, and to add trees in the parking lot.

3. Dennis Mires, P.A., on behalf of the Flatley Company, request preliminary ADR review for the construction of a new multi-family building at 32 South Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

Attorney Raymond D'Amante of D'Amante Counsel represented the application along with Doug Richards from the John Flatley Company, and Lono Hunter from Dennis Mires, The Architects. Matthew Walsh, Director of Redevelopment/Downtown Services and Special Projects, was also present and he spoke to the ownership of the building when the City purchased it from the State of NH in 2014.

Mr. Hunter stated that he would introduce the Committee to the project today with hopes for comments and a feel of what the Committee is looking for and then return next month for a formal review from the Committee.

Mr. Hunter stated that the proposal is for a 64 unit, 5 story building. Parking is proposed underneath the building with a small surface parking area on South State. A pool is also proposed on the south side with a patio area and pool house. He noted that a ZBA application was filed at the end of January for the next meeting in February.

Mr. Doherty asked if the lower level is parking. Mr. Hunter replied yes and explained that they area making an ADA entrance on Main Street, store front style/art gallery; however, the area will not be a commercial space. He stated the parking area is not visible from this area or from the street. Spandrel glass will be used in the entry way. Mr. Doherty commented that it would be nice if they considered adding lighting and a commercial space in the entry way. Mr. Richardson added that they would not be proposing to do that at this time.

Mr. Hunter explained that there are many challenges with the site; however, they are in line with the City's Master Plan. He continued to review the elevations. He spoke to the pool, stairway, and active area on the south side of the building. He added that these are good things for this part of the street. The building is pulled back four feet, which will open up the property. They plan to add some prudent features to the area. He stated that the building is wood framed, with residential towers, a brick base, planter boxes will be added around the area, cementitious double and triple windows, and colors will be added to the decks to break it up. The decks will be tucked in and not hang off the building; not all units will have decks. All mechanical items will be on the roof top and screened if needed.

Mr. Doherty stated that the public art display is a nice addition and suggested that they research this as there is concern that art spaces are ignored. Discussion ensued relative to the future use of the front entryway space and if the area could be functional in the future. Mr. Richardson noted the layout of the streets and the sidewalks.

Mr. King asked about noise from the garage and venting. Mr. Hunter replied that the garage is closed to the ground floor and it does not appear to be read as a garage; the doors are reduced size and any venting is done through the planter boxes. He stated that overall, it is a pretty quiet system.

Ms. Tomas spoke to the pool access and mentioned that pools are really only used for a few months. Mr. Richardson explained the pool entrance area would be off of Main Street and the

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southern side of the proposed building. It would be gated with pillars and the stair case would also provide access to the surface parking area and doorway into the lower parking. Ms. Tomas expressed concern with the steps during the winter months and commented that she does not feel this is very pedestrian friendly with the access on Main Street. She suggested a front door that would enter into the lobby rather than walking through a parking area to get to the upstairs. Mr. Richardson stated that the slope of the site creates the problem as the second floor is the first floor on State Street. He added that it is not conducive to make the parking level the first floor; there is one space per unit to not impact the public parking areas. It was noted that the applicant could return if an additional gate was necessary.

Mr. Gentilhomme suggested the grassed area be the same elevation as the pool or to enhance the pool area and noted that they could add landscaping. Mr. Richardson explained that there will be a 14 foot wall. There will also be fire pits and BBQ stations and a lawn to the west. Further discussion ensued regarding options/scenarios that would eliminate the need for the wall. He stated that the pool space is a space that is typically added to the Flatley designs. He stated that the cabana is also a functioning space. There is a black aluminum fence, which looks like rod iron, around the pool. He stated they would provide the committee with renderings of the pool area and pool house.

Mr. King commented that there is a lot of space devoted to a pool that he believes would not be utilized by many; however, the amenity of having outdoor space may be more attractive than a pool.

With regard to the snow, a five foot snow storage area has been proposed in the parking area. Should snow be an issue, it will be removed. A property manager will be on site. Ms. Tomas asked if they had considered other uses for the 30% sloped grass front area and suggested they consider options such as a terrace, a sitting area, adding a few trees, or make a garden/decorative area.

Ms. Tomas asked if the elevator could be relocated to be towards the front of the building and incorporated into the public space. Mr. Walsh explained the redevelopment plans of this area.

Mr. Richardson explained the demographics of the property include 2/3 young professionals and 1/3 empty nesters; there are few children, only about 8% of the tenants are families. The units are one and two bedroom apartments. There is a fitness element as well.

Atty. D'Amante stated that there is no financial TIF districts or other incentives with building this project. He commented that Concord is the amenity and this development is adding business to the downtown area; this is a community facility. There are a variety of venues all within walking distance that are additional attractions for the tenants. He added that they are adding parking too and not using the parking in the city; this is a real benefit for the City.

Mr. Richardson commented that they cannot change the inside of the building; the design has been refined over multiple projects. Ms. Tomas stated that there is a standard for every building; however, this is a unique site and a plan should be adapted to the site. Mr. Richardson replied that the plan works the way it is; however, there is some room for amenities on the first and second floors. He stated that the elevator will not be relocated as the entrance off of the surface parking area is there and it would be complicated to move the elevator. He stated that what is possible is a gate and an area to the south for the connection of the building. Additional discussion was held regarding the wall on Main Street and making the area more functional.

The elevations were reviewed.

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Mr. Gentilhomme stated that the plan is quality architecture and overall looks good. The proposed colors are fine. He stated that he would like to see renderings and requested the applicant show better alignment of the panels and windows. Cementitious panels are a good choice for this building and meet energy and weather requirements. Mr. Richardson stated that the City was very firm in that vinyl was not going to be an option for the exterior. Mr. Hunter added that the durability is 30-year finished; it is a dominant material and a good fit.

Mr. Walsh asked if the Committee has any comments or issues with the accent colors or the height of building. Mr. Doherty replied that he did not see any issues with the height of the building; members concurred. Mr. Doherty commented that he feels the accents are fine as they are tucked away. Mr. Gentilhomme stated that the accents must be subtle and carry the brick colors. He suggested that the brick be at the base of the building and added to the top of the terminations on some of the towers. Mr. Thompson suggested the brick not go beyond the entry level. Mr. Gentilhomme stated that the layout is put together very nicely.

Mr. Thompson asked if there would be solar panels on the roof. Mr. Richardson replied that there is not much room.

Ms. Tomas asked about patterning the panels. Mr. Hunter replied that the windows typically drive the layout. Ms. Tomas stated that detailed panels and trim and integrating the windows will make a big difference to the presentation. Mr. Hunter added that they will end with a long and narrow profile to keep it less vertical and pull the scale down.

Additional discussion was held regarding the types of vinyl windows. Mr. Doherty suggested they look at options. It was suggested that a charcoal gray frame be looked at as it would be more attractive. It was noted that pets will be allowed, with some restrictions, and there will be a small area for dogs; it will not be a dog park.

Mr. Hunter confirmed that the Committee's biggest concerns appear to be the area to the south of building and to look into options for this section; patio, landscaping, terrace area. Items requested were trim details, samples of all proposed materials, and renderings of pool area.

Adjournment

Mr. Doherty made a motion to adjourn at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Thompson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Administrative Specialist