

**City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
March 7, 2017 Minutes**

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on March 7, 2017 in the Second Floor Conference Room in City Hall at 41 Green Street.

Present at the meeting were members Elizabeth Durfee-Hengen, Jay Doherty, Jennifer Czysz, and Margaret Tomas. Craig Walker of the Code Administration Division; Beth Fenstermacher of the City Planning Division; and Lisa Fellows-Weaver Administrative Specialist, were also present.

The ADRC met to provide recommendations for the March 15, 2017 Planning Board meeting with regard to the proposed design of certain sites, buildings, building alterations, and signs subject to the provisions of the City of Concord Zoning Ordinance

Sign Applications Requiring Design Review:

1. Concord Loudon LP requesting ADR approval to install two new wall signs at 133 Loudon Road in the General Commercial (CG) District. *MBL: 114/D2/11*

The applicant was not present. Ms. Fenstermacher explained that at the March hearing, the Planning Board requested that this item be tabled because they had questions and the applicant was not present at that meeting. The ADR Committee had no additional comments regarding the sign proposed and supported their prior motion to recommend approval as submitted; they felt the sign colors reflect the culture of the business.

2. Life Storage LP requesting ADR approval to install a replacement wall sign, and a replacement sign on an existing freestanding structure, at 11 Integra Drive in the Industrial (IN) District. *MBL:110/K1/9*

The applicant was not present. Mr. Walker stated that the replacement is due to the company rebranding.

On a motion made by Mr. Doherty and seconded by Ms. Czysz, the application was unanimously approved as submitted.

3. Gems First, on behalf of John J. Pappas Revocable Trust, requesting ADR approval to install a new hanging sign at 88 North Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. *MBL: 45/3/5*

The applicant was not present. Members commented that the smaller font may not be legible from street level, and that it may read as a line or graphic element instead of text.

On a motion made by Ms. Hengen and seconded by Mr. Doherty, the application was unanimously approved as submitted.

4. Gothic Tattoo, on behalf of TDL Investments, LLC, requesting ADR approval to install an existing sign in a new location, and a new panel in an existing freestanding sign, at 374 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. *MBL:111/I 4/18*

The applicant was not present. Mr. Walker stated that this business is relocating, and the applicant is using the same graphics as the signs at the existing location. He added that there will be one sign on the directory and one on the corner of building.

On a motion made by Mr. Doherty and seconded by Ms. Czysz, the application was unanimously approved as submitted.

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- 5. Baron's Major Brands requesting ADR approval to replace existing channel letters with a new wall sign, at 350 Loudon Road in the in the Gateway Performance (CBP) District. *MBL:111/F1/5***

The applicant was not present. Mr. Walker stated that the proposed sign is an internally illuminated box sign.

On a motion made by Ms. Hengen and seconded by Mr. Doherty, the application was unanimously approved as submitted.

- 6. Goldsmith's Gallery, on behalf of Capital Plaza Concord, LLC, requesting ADR approval to replace an existing wall sign and an existing window sign, at 2 Capital Plaza in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. *MBL:45/I/12***

Paula Heath was present. She explained that the proposed sign is a replacement of the exact same sign from the 1990's; however, they are adding blue in the background. It is not proposed to be illuminated. Members felt that the blue was a nice accent to the sign.

On a motion made by Ms. Hengen and seconded by Mr. Doherty, the application was unanimously approved as submitted.

Major Site Plan Applications Requiring Design Review:

- 1. Nobis Engineering, LLC, on behalf of NH Distributors, requesting ADR approval as part of a Major Site Plan application for the construction and renovation of two building additions totaling 64,100 sf, additional parking, new access and circulation, and related site improvements at 65 Regional Drive in the Industrial (IN) District. *MBL: 111G/I/32 (2017-03)***

Erin Lambert from Nobis Engineering was present along with Bill Hickey, Architect from HL Turner Group, and Tom Painchaud representing NH Distributors.

Ms. Lambert provided an overview noting that this application is for the southwest building addition; a future addition is shown for information purposes, but has not yet been designed. She stated that they will come back to the ADR when that future addition is designed. Ms. Lambert reviewed the proposed site improvements to improve circulation and provide additional truck parking.

Ms. Lambert presented the landscape plan and noted that they will be making minor changes based on staff recommendations. Additional trees and shrubs will be planted along the frontage to meet the buffer requirements.

Mr. Hickey presented the proposed exterior building design, noting that the siding will match the existing building. The roof proposed will be a low, sloped roof, using the same materials as the existing roof. Mr. Painchaud added that they have increased distribution and are adding the addition to create a safer, more efficient warehouse.

Mr. Doherty questioned the location of the lettering on the building. Discussion ensued, and ADR recommended that the letter location be further studied, and if applicable, be shifted out of the building shadowing.

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On a motion made by Ms. Czysz and seconded by Ms. Hengen, the application was unanimously approved as submitted.

- 2. HL Turner Group, on behalf of the City of Concord, requesting ADR review as part of a Minor Site Plan submission pursuant to RSA 674:54 to demolish the existing skate house at White Park, construct a new skate house on the existing foundation, and construct a new sidewalk connecting to the existing parking lot at 1 White Street in the Residential Neighborhood (RN) District. *MBL: 48/7/1 (2017-05)***

Doug Proctor and Bill Hickey, architects from HL Turner Group were present along with David Gill, City of Concord Parks & Recreation Director, for the new skate house at White Park.

Mr. Proctor provided an overview of the project and explained that the existing skate house was built in the 1950's and is approximately 1,700 square feet. He stated that the proposal is to demolish the existing structure down to the foundation, and to construct a new two-level, wood framed skate house on the existing foundation with restrooms, a skate rental area, a viewing area, a double-sided fireplace, and outside seating areas. He stated that the upper level area will be for storage and a meeting space. There will also be a new ADA compliant sidewalk that will connect the skate house to the existing parking lot. It was noted that the existing pump house will also be removed.

Discussion ensued regarding materials for the stone wall and accents. ADR recommended that the applicant use stones to match the field stone on the nearby footbridge, and use locally sourced stone to match the naturalistic design of the park. ADR members also asked the architect to reconsider the western façade, which faces the pool area to provide more visual interest. Recommended treatments to be given further consideration included: mural; applied trim to give more color and planar relief; increase size of the two windows but fill with recessed clapboard instead of glazing; or, add timber trim and wrap the stone base around to that side of the building.

Lighting will be added to the exterior of the building and face downward towards the pond. Mr. Gill stated that the building will be open throughout the year, more than it has been in the past. The restrooms will be accessible for programming offered year round.

The roof materials were discussed. The architect indicated that they are looking into ways to address snow falling off the roof onto the outdoor patio. Although the General Services Department suggested that the roof be metal; it is proposed that the roof will remain as a shingled roof to hold the snow.

- 3. Nobis Engineering, on behalf of the Merrimack Superior Court House, requesting ADR review as part of a Major Site Plan submission pursuant to RSA 674:54 to demolish the existing Registry of Deeds building and construct a new 2½ story 60,055 sf Courthouse at 163 North Main Street in the Civic Performance (CVP) District. *MBL: 46/1/1 (2017-07)***

Chris Carley was present along with Erin Lambert and Landscape Architect Doug Greiner.

Mr. Carley provided an overview of the project explaining that the plan is to demolish the existing Registry of Deeds building and construct a new 2½ story, 35,000 sf building behind the existing Courthouse, and construct a parking lot on the former location of the Registry of Deeds. He stated that the proposed site layout meets the needed 150 parking spaces.

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Mr. Carley provided an overview of the interior layout of the building noting the public areas and non-public court rooms and office spaces, and described how the interior layout was reflected in the design of the exterior – the large black granite protrusion creates the physical/visual divide between the open public space (glass) and the intentional solid and regular part of the building that houses the court rooms. He stated that the exterior of the building will consist of solar-gray glass, metal, and stone veneer or black granite and poly-chrome masonry have been reviewed and approved by the State. He explained that the entrance to the Courthouse will be from Pitman Street with secured parking and secured access provided from the Court Street side. An ADA accessible sidewalk with ramps is proposed from N. Main Street and Pitman Street. This proposal will require a 6’ height maximum retaining wall within the City’s right of way on N. Main Street, a license with the City will be required for this encroachment. Mr. Carley stated that the retaining wall design has not been finalized and they will return to ADR when the design is complete. He further explained that they are currently looking into a planted wall, and provided an overview of the details. Discussion ensued as to the use of a planting wall as opposed to a retaining wall. Mr. Carley stated that the objective is to try to minimize the impact of the pavement and vehicles when looking up to the old court house.

Mr. Greiner provided a very detailed overview of the proposed landscaping of the site. He explained that the intent of the landscaping is to provide plantings wherever possible, and to visually break up the area around the parking lot and the paved areas. He stated that the proposed tree and perennial plantings were selected based on the many constraints on the site, including small planting areas and urban conditions. He described the plan for the interior parking lot island, stating that the 4’ width would not be sufficient to plant trees due to threat of damage from car bumper overhang. Instead he is suggesting a hardy 4’ to 5’ high ornamental grasses to provide an interesting visual barrier, but also the grass would be hardy and flexible, able to withstand impacts from car overhang. Mr. Doherty expressed concern regarding the tall grass as it may be more of a trash collector and the design intent may be lost. He suggested removing that planting strip entirely, and adding a planting strip between the retaining wall and parking lot edge. Ms. Hengen was also concerned but noted that the State may not be up to the challenge of the maintenance required. Discussion ensued as to the constraints throughout the site.

Ms. Czysz expressed concern about the visual impact on the residential properties Montgomery Street with the dumpster screening and “Sally port”, the architect stated that they had treated this area as the backside, and will look into adding plantings to screen the area. Mr. Carley confirmed that the dumpster will be within a fenced enclosure. Ms. Czysz also suggested that the generator be painted so it does not stand out so much. Further discussion was held as to the potential restrictions imposed on the approach to the sally-port. The architect will follow up with the sheriff’s office to determine what sight lines need to be maintained. Mr. Greiner suggested planting high-branched columnar trees.

Mr. Doherty asked about the screening of mechanical equipment on the roof. Mr. Carley described the design for that area in detail.

The ADR commented that overall the design was a creative approach for a difficult site.

As there was no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Fenstermacher, Assistant City Planner