

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
July 10, 2018 Minutes

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on July 10, 2018 in the 2nd floor conference room at 41 Green Street.

Present at the meeting were Co-Chairs Jay Doherty and Elizabeth Durfee-Hengen, Members Jennifer Czysz, Claude Gentilhomme, Ron King, and Doug Shilo. Heather Shank, Sam Durfee, and Lisa Fellows-Weaver of the City Planning Division, and Craig Walker of the Code Division, were also present.

Sign Applications Requiring Design Review:

- 1. Beauty by Design, on behalf of Stephen A. Masters, requesting ADR approval for a new window sign at 22 S. Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.**

The applicant was not present at the meeting.

Mr. Doherty moved to recommend approval, with the understanding that the sign is just the red square and phone number below and not a large gray panel, subject to the condition that the bottom of the red square be justified with the sashes of the adjacent windows. Mr. Gentilhomme seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Building Permits in Performance Districts

- 2. New Concord Theatre, LLC, requesting ADR approval for construction of a new projecting marquee sign with both internal and external illumination at 16-18 S. Main St. in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.**

Steve Duprey represented this application along with Glenn Shadlick of NEOPCO Signs and Kreg Jones. Mr. Duprey gave a presentation consisting of historic pictures of the theater and examples of other neon marquee signs. He stated that the intent is to create an “old time” movie theatre look for Concord. He added that it is important to have the vertical “Concord” sign for visibility. Numerous variances were granted by the Zoning Board for the proposed marquee.

Mr. Shadlick provided lighting samples. A discussion was held regarding the proposed neon color choices. Ms. Hengen stated that the design is contemporary and felt that the colors should not be all primary colors. Mr. Shadlick explained that the color choices are neon and are primary; however, they will be softened in the winter due to the effect of temperature on the gases. The intent is to represent the color scheme from the 1950’s. He also noted that the colors are standard and will be available in the future, as opposed to specialty colors that may not be available in a decade. Mr. Duprey stated that the sign will not be flashing and the new theatre will incorporate the same sign and lighting agreement as the Capital Center for the Arts.

Members of the Committee felt that the proposed column should be removed if it was not structural. The applicants agreed and will remove it. Additional discussion was held regarding the structural wall on the north side. It was suggested that the playbill panel be shifted to that wall. The applicant agreed.

Ms. Hengen expressed concern with the white globe proposed and that it could be a focal point on Main Street. Mr. Duprey stated that this was not the intent and that it would be dimmed to prevent that.

Mr. Gentilhomme made a motion to approve the design as submitted, subject to the conditions that the column be removed, the white globe be better incorporated into the design, the playlist panel shifted to the north wall, the applicant looks into muting the neon colors, and the theatre is subject to the same sign limitations as The Capital Center of the Arts. Mr. Shilo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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- 3. Jonathan Chorlian, on behalf of the City of Concord, requesting ADR approval for construction of an ADA accessible ramp in the right of way in front of 1 Eagle Square; a park and new parking area in the right of way in front of 4-6 Dixon Ave; and a patio and green space along the Storrs Street frontage of 8-14 Dixon Ave in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.**

Jonathan Chorlian presented the application along with Steve Duprey, John Jordon of Jordon Design PLLC, and Eric Buck of Terrain Planning & Design, LLC.

Mr. Chorlian stated that project was presented to City Council last night by Mr. Duprey.

Mr. Chorlian explained that Granite Center is a redevelopment project with the overall goal to rejuvenate three spaces, enhance the facades of 4-6 Dixon Ave. and 8-14 Dixon Ave., and reconstruct 150 parking spaces. Façade improvements are proposed to 1 Eagle Square, 6 Dixon and 14 Dixon Ave. Construction of a new accessible sidewalk is proposed for 1 Eagle (“Eagle Plaza”), to improve portions of the Dixon Ave. right of way (referred to as “Gateway Park”), and to improve the existing City lot immediately adjacent to 14 Dixon (referred to as “Dixon Plaza”).

Mr. Chorlian gave a presentation and provided additional detail of the construction work and renderings. The Eagle Square store fronts will be redone and will be redesigned with a black metal band sign and decorative cast iron columns, similar to the store fronts adjacent to “The Works” down the street. A canopy will be added over the entrance and will be parallel with the sidewalk. He stated that there will be a new elevated sidewalk section added, which will provide ADA accessibility to the four existing retail businesses and the lobby.

Improvements to 6 Dixon Ave. will consist of seven new apartments on the top two floors with prefabricated balconies and the removal of the existing entry vestibule, which will be replaced with a storefront door with frame color matching existing windows. Improvements to 14 Dixon Ave. will be minimal and include façade improvements such as new windows, a new storefront system with door and side lights, and new doors at the entrance to Dixon Ave.

Dixon Plaza is a proposal for a landscaped area with an elevated patio for a potential restaurant along with a lawn area, shade trees, and various plantings. This area is being purchased from the City.

The final component is for Gateway Park, which will be a complete redesign and reconstruction of a park area next to Remi’s Block. This proposal includes the reconfiguration of ADA accessible parking spaces and two new landscaped areas. It will create an enhanced pedestrian connection to Storrs Street.

Mr. Chorlian explained the deadlines for the projects and funding. He stated that he needs to have an approval from the Planning Board for everything to be completed by the end of July. He requested the Committee recommend approval with a strong recommendation that the approval be given so that he may be able to obtain building permits and he would return to the Committee for further review. He stated that the most important issue he needs firm verification on is that the Committee is in support of the proposed treatment of the Main Street storefronts; he has additional time to revisit everything else.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the removal of the steps in front of Eagle Square and an ADA ramp. It was suggested to either remove the benches or adding benches that are similar to other City benches and this will improve pedestrian areas on Main Street and be less constrictive to pedestrians as the sidewalk would then be wider. Additional discussion was held regarding removing the steps or leaving the steps along the west end or keep only in the front of the

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building. Members felt it was better to have a wider sidewalk and fewer stairs. Discussion continued relative to the construction details of the sidewalk.

Ms. Hengen requested that the Committee have a chance to discuss the balcony in more detail, particularly the dimensions. Mr. Chorlian stated that the balconies are proposed to line up with the eave line. He was fine with smaller dimensions as long as tenants would be able to set out a small table and chairs.

Mr. Chorlian stated that signage information will be provided when the signage packet is submitted.

Mr. Shilo moved to recommend approval subject to the recommendations that the sidewalk be wider than proposed, that the stairs be limited to the front of the building and at the end of the walk; that the applicant investigate whether the front of Main Street Realty Trust will be turned into a walkway that is ADA accessible; that the fencing and any railing be kept simple such as a black pipe rail for 14 Dixon Ave.; and that the Committee will review the components of the balconies and have future discussions. Mr. King seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Site Plan & Subdivision Applications

- 4. Nobis Engineering, on behalf of Smokestack Realty, LLC, requesting ADR approval as part of a Major Site Plan approval to relocate previously approved but never constructed parking spaces along a new 20' wide emergency access road and the installation of storm water management controls in the Residential Open Space (RO) District, Institutional (IS) District, and the Industrial (IN) District.**

The applicant was not present at the meeting.

Mr. Durfee explained that this project was originally approved two years ago and was proposed as a multi-phase project. This proposal is to relocate the approved parking area to the west side, with the number of spaces to remain as originally proposed. It appears that landscaping will need to be added; the applicant has not confirmed whether existing vegetation can meet the requirement.

Mr. Doherty stated that the proposal is an overall improvement to the original plan in that it proposes a more compact layout, and provides circulation around the building for emergency purposes. Mr. Walker questioned whether sufficient pedestrian connectivity has been provided to the entrance from the parking lot per the ordinance. Mr. Durfee will look into this and relay the concern to the applicant.

Mr. Doherty moved to recommend approval, subject to the condition that the proposal meets the requirements for pedestrian connectivity to the entrance from the parking lot. Mr. King seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- 5. HL Turner Group, on behalf of The Granite State Baptist Church, requesting ADR approval as part of a Minor Site Plan approval for the construction of a two-story addition to the existing building at 236 Sheep Davis Road in the Industrial (IN) District.**

Dan Hall of HL Turner Group and Pastor Chamberland of Granite State Baptist Church presented the application.

Mr. Hall provided an overview of the project, stating it had received Major Site Plan approval for construction in 2016 and the new Minor Site Plan application is for a 2,600 sf two-story addition with 9 foot ceilings that includes bathrooms and a handicap accessible ramp.

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Mr. Doherty recommended increasing the verticality of the windows on the front of the building; Mr. Gentilhomme suggested enlarging and raising the canopy over the entrance and adding decorative pilasters on either side of the door. A discussion ensued over the pitch of the canopy as it was noted that it is close to the pitch of the roof above. It was suggested that the pitch of the canopy should be steepened or matched to the pitch of the roof. Mr. Doherty asked why only ramp access is proposed for the front entrance and not stairs as well. The applicant expressed concern about additional requirements pertaining to stairs. Mr. Walker stated that the stairs would not trigger any additional requirements.

Mr. Gentilhomme moved to recommend approval with the strong suggestions that the canopy be enlarged and the pitch adjusted to work better with the roof above, pilasters be installed on either side of the door, increase the verticality of the front windows, and add stair access to the front door. Mr. Doherty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Conceptual Review

- 6. Jonathan Chorlian, on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church of Manchester, requesting conceptual ADR review of a Major Site Plan application for construction of a 10 unit attached residential development, and renovation of a carriage house for a community center, at 135 N. State St. in the Neighborhood Residential (RN) District.**

Jonathan Chorlian presented the application along with Steve Duprey.

Mr. Chorlian provided an overview of the proposed redevelopment of 135 N. State Street to a pocket neighborhood consisting of 10 1³/₄ story cottages units of 1,800 sf in area, each with a two car garage. The current church would be demolished and the existing carriage house would become a community center. The center of the development would be a green court yard. Parking and traffic circulation were discussed.

The Committee was receptive to the project and felt that it was a creative example of fitting this new type of community into Concord. Mr. Shilo suggested that the colors of the garages and be darker to minimize visibility since they are not the real focal point of the development. Mr. Chorlian replied that he felt similarly and intended the landscaping and main houses to be the focal points

- 7. Irving Oil, requesting conceptual ADR review as part of a Major Site Plan application for construction of a new building and related site improvements for the purpose of a fueling station at 163 N. State St. in the Urban Commercial (CU) District.**

Frank Montero, Jenn Daigle, and Maria Dolder represented this application.

Mr. Montero explained the application noting that Irving is proposing to redevelop this parcel. Two additional parcels have been purchased to allow for an expansion of the existing site and changes will be made to the curb cuts. Variances for setbacks have been obtained from the Zoning Board. The site will consist of a new canopy, 5 dispensers, and a 3,280 sf convenient store. The exiting curb cuts will be closed and one new full access point will be added along with a right turn in/out only access. An 8 ft vinyl fence will be added to the back side of the site. A new free standing sign will be proposed. Samples of the exterior were provided for review. The vinyl siding is proposed as a sandy beige color and stone along the base.

A discussion was held regarding the landscaping. It was noted that they plan to add a hedge row along the N. State St. property line. Ms. Shank requested that there be some thought to the proposed species of landscaping, including trees and potential conflicts with power lines, and

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shrubs to form a complete hedge. The landscaping should be allowed to grow and fill in to perform the intended functions.

Ms. Shank suggested the vinyl fence be changed to a dark brown or green to better blend with the background vegetation and not stand out so much.

Mr. Doherty commented that he appreciates the design of the roof lines with the steep gables and steep slopes. He stated that the design fits into the neighborhood. He suggested that the open area of the roof line be placed on the other side of the building so it is not so visible to traffic heading into the City.

A suggestion was made that the crosswalks or other visual indicator be added to emphasize that the sidewalks continue across the drive aisles. Ms. Shank stated that the area is within the City's right of way. Mr. Montero will check with the City and find out if they can get permission to add crosswalks.

Adjournment

As there was no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather R. Shank, City Planner