

**City of Concord, New Hampshire**  
**Architectural Design Review Committee**  
**October 1, 2019 Minutes**

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on October 1, 2019 in the 2nd floor conference room at 41 Green Street.

Attendees: Chair Jay Doherty, Members Margaret Tomas, Doug Shilo, and Ron King. Co-Chair Elizabeth Durfee Hengen arrived at 8:38 a.m.

Absent: Claude Gentilhomme

Staff: Sam Durfee, Senior Planner  
Lisa Fellows-Weaver, Administrative Specialist  
Craig Walker, Zoning Administrator

### **Call to Order**

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

### **Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Tomas moved to approve the minutes of September 3, 2019, as written. Mr. Shilo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### ***Sign Applications***

1. Lashing Out Studio, on behalf of Alexander Constant, requests ADR approval to install a new freestanding sign on an existing sign post at 35 South Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

Melena Ash represented the application.

Ms. Ash stated that this is a new sign to be placed on the existing post. The sign will be the same on both sides.

Mr. King made a motion to recommend approval of the design, as submitted. Ms. Tomas seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Dartnell Properties requests ADR approval to install 4 new externally illuminated wall signs at McGuire Street and 272 North State Street in the Industrial (IN) District.

Cate Dartnell represented the application along with Josh Messinger of Advantage Signs.

Ms. Dartnell stated that the business is relocating by the end of October. The exterior of the building will be gray siding.

A discussion was held about ancillary signs. Mr. Walker noted size requirements and stated that the amount of signs proposed exceeds the limit; three signs are permitted based on the square footage. Ms. Dartnell stated that the signage above the overhead doors is to explain the different departments. Mr. Messinger added that the signs should be considered directional. Mr. Walker stated that as directional signs, they would not need permitting; however, the signs not considered direction, exceed the total square footage allowed. Ms. Dartnell stated that they would reduce the size of the overhead door signs. She noted that the awning shown on the plan will now not be requested.

Ms. Hengen arrived at 8:38 a.m.

Mr. Shilo made a motion to recommend approval of the wall signs as submitted, with the recommendation that the directional signs be resubmitted meeting code requirements to staff and noting that the awning will not be built. Mr. Kind seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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3. Concord Terminal LLC requests ADR approval to install two new wall signs and a new freestanding sign at 118 Hall Street in the Industrial (IN) District and the Opportunity Corridor Performance (OCP) District.

Josh Messinger of Advantage Signs represented the application.

Mr. Messinger explained that the proposal is for three, non-illuminated signs, one along the road and two on the building. The material for all of the signs is aluminum. The letters are reverse channel letters with the front portion of the letters hollow, allowing more depth. He added that there may be a raceway connecting the letters but no panel is proposed.

Ms. Tomas made a motion to recommend approval of the design, as submitted. Mr. King seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Lovering Volvo requests ADR approval to install two new internally illuminated wall signs, a new internally illuminated freestanding sign, and replace an existing freestanding sign at 95 Manchester Street in the Commercial Highway (CH) District.

Phillip Naffah of Harvey Signs represented the application.

Mr. Naffah explained that the signs on the front of the building, “Volvo” and “Concord” are prefabricated and will be smaller than the existing signs. Window graphics are noted on the door. The “Service” sign will be channel letters and proposed to be white.

Mr. Naffah stated that the free standing sign will not be illuminated as indicated. All site signs are being replaced. The existing pylon is being removed and replaced with a new plastic ACM panel and will not be illuminated. It is proposed to be 10 feet high and will be in the same location as the old sign. Mr. Walker mentioned that the location of the monument sign should be verified to make sure that it will not obstruct sight distance of cars leaving the site.

Mr. King asked how the Committee is going to approve signage without having actual locations of the signs identified on a site plan. He also suggested adding a border around the Volvo sign proposed on the building or reducing the size of the sign. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Shilo asked if the signage on the buildings is illuminated. Mr. Naffah replied yes and added that the freestanding signs are not illuminated.

Mr. Shilo made a motion to recommend approval of the design, as submitted, with the recommendation that the freestanding signs are not illuminated, and to continue to work with staff so that all required site lines for traffic will not be impeded by the monumental sign. Ms. Hengen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Sanel Napa, on behalf of Automotive Supply Assoc., requests ADR approval to install 6 internally illuminated wall signs at 219 S. Main Street, in the Opportunity Corridor Performance (OCP) District and the Urban Commercial (CU) District.

Max Tejada represented the application.

Mr. Tejada stated that the proposal is to replace the signage which will consist of replacing four panels in the existing sign cabinets and two sets of channel letters. Sign cabinets are internally illuminated.

Mr. Walker stated that the proposed sign on the back of the building does not meet the current codes as it is too high, it needs to be below the second floor window sills, lowered, or a variance would need to be applied for. Mr. Tejada replied that they are trying to raise it so that the sign

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would be visible from Water Street bridge. Discussion ensued. An option of a freestanding sign was suggested.

Mr. Tejada stated that he will submit revised drawings to staff.

Ms. Hengen made a motion to recommend approval of the design, as submitted, with the understanding that the sign proposed in the gable end does not meet zoning and needs to be resubmitted to staff showing it below the sill. Ms. Tomas seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

***Building Permits in Performance Districts***

6. Holden Engineering and Surveying, Inc, on behalf of Baron's Major Brands, requests an amendment to a previously approved Minor Site Plan application for a changing in the proposed siding for an addition to the existing building at 350 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

Doug Brodeur of Holden Engineering represented the application.

Mr. Brodeur stated that in July 2019 the Planning board approved an addition to the existing retail building. The request is to modify the architecture of that approved addition from concrete modular block to a prefabricated steel panel. The steel panel will match the color of the existing façade and the red stripe will also be matched.

Ms. Hengen noted that the building addition is not very visible to Loudon Road. She stated that she would prefer that the color of the steel be darker on the addition if it cannot be matched perfectly. In addition, she stated that she would prefer no stripe at all as it could be a maintenance issue and lose the effectiveness. Additional discussion was held regarding the process of painting and matching of the red stripe and the potential maintenance problems.

Ms. Hengen made a motion to recommend the material change of the addition with the understanding that the color of the steel will be either an exact match or a darker shade of the existing building and unless the red stripe can be factory finished on the steel, it will be deleted all together. Mr. Shilo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Warrenstreet Architects, on behalf of the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness, requests ADR approval for the conversion of office space to four residential units and the construction of an accessible ramp at 10 Green Street in the Civic Performance (CVP) District.

Jonathan Halle of Warrenstreet Architects represented the application.

Mr. Halle stated that the property was a former attorney's office and a single family residence. The Concord Coalition to End Homelessness is purchasing the building from the County. The proposal is to convert the office space into four one bedroom or studio apartments and to add a handicap ramp onto the existing porch to access one of the first floor units. The trim will be painted and the windows will be replaced.

Mr. Halle stated that all of the stairs are to be replaced. The back stairs are being removed. At this time they extend out 8½ feet. The ramp will be 6 feet wide and will not be as far out as the stairs are now. It will not be a permanent ramp as there will be no foundation. The ramp will have four inch balusters if necessary; they are not required if the fall is less than 3 feet.

Mr. Halle stated that the project funding has been approved through New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority; the building is now empty. Multiple variances have been received including for the change of use. He stated that he is asking for numerous waivers from the Planning Board. He noted that he was not able to locate any pins or a survey.

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Ms. Hengen is pleased that the plans include retaining the siding and the trim will be painted. She asked if storm windows were looked into as it would be less money with better results. Mr. Halle replied that NHHFA requires everything to meet energy codes; He added that he will look into the use of storm windows.

Additional discussion was held regarding the drainage on the site. It was asked if gutters would be added. Mr. Halle is unsure and added that he believed that the roof is a ballasted roof.

Ms. Tomas made a motion to recommend approval as submitted with the understanding that the ramp is the only renovation proposed, and that the application will have to come back to ADR if the ramp protrudes from the recess formed by the bay window. Mr. King seconded.

Ms. Hengen stated that the location of the ramp makes sense, being tucked within the jog. She added that retention of the key architectural detail of the exterior will enhance the appearance of the building and historic character on the street.

Ms. Hengen amended the motion to include recommending the approval of the railing as submitted, with the understanding that there may be additional vertical elements added to the ramp in order to meet codes; however, the ramp will remain tucked within the existing jog, formed by the bay window; and she applauds the decision to retain the existing architectural trim and repaint. Mr. King seconded the amendment.

Mr. Doherty stated that adding anything additional to the motion may blur the lines of what is being approved and the Committee is not approving anything else, such as the type of windows, or paint color. Ms. Hengen explained that the Committee is the Design Review and she would like to acknowledge the thoughtful approach to retain the architectural features of the structure.

The motion passed unanimously.

8. TFMoran, on behalf of Unitil, requests ADR approval for the expansion of a substation at 5 Gulf Street in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

Nick Golon of TF Moran and Nathan Sherwood of Unitil represented the application.

Mr. Golon explained the project proposes to rebuild and expand the Gulf Street substation. A building permit is required for the foundation. The lot is 12,500 square feet and most of the lot will be utilized by the substation.

Mr. Sherwood provided an overview of the 1920's substation and the equipment. He stated that the existing equipment will be replaced or upgraded.

A discussion was held regarding the elevations. Mr. Golon described how the lot will be built up by at least one foot so the lot will be out of the floodplain. The existing telephone poles will be reconfigured. He stated that there is a wetland on the abutting State of NH land. The existing retaining wall will be removed and replaced with a segmented four foot high block wall. The blocks are pre-fabricated blocks and are approximately 40 inches each; larger blocks will last longer.

A discussion was held relative to screening. Mr. Golon stated that two shrubs are proposed. Ms. Fenstermacher stated the proposed screening is not adequate as this is the Gateway Performance District and there are higher standards. Mr. Golon replied that there are limitations due to the underground utilities; however, there may be an option to remove the sidewalk and plant in that area, and/or relocate the underground utilities. He noted that there is a requirement for no plantings within 10 feet of the fencing as well as restrictions for root base. Mr. Shilo suggested there be some communication with NHDOT regarding landscaping and perhaps consider supplemental plantings in the DOT right of way.

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Mr. Golon referenced the current Broken Ground fence and stated that this fence will be similar. The fence will be seven feet high with barbed wire on top; however, tighter meshed. Alternative options for screening were mentioned such as a higher fence, upwards to nine feet as would provide more screening, a vinyl fence, a screened chain-link galvanized fence. Another option was suggested to hang horizontal slats off of the existing fence; it would not alter the design or the ground penetration. Color of the fence could be a forest green or black rather than the normal metal and so industrial looking. Mr. Golon stated that he will discuss alternative plantings with General Services and DOT and will take the other screening proposals back to Unitil.

Mr. King made a motion for the applicant to return to the Committee for further review. No second was provided.

Mr. King made a motion to table the item until the November meeting. Ms. Hengen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Shilo left the meeting at 10:27 a.m.

9. Other Business

Mr. Durfee stated that the City has received some mixed comments and concerns relative to the lighting and glow of The Concord Hotel roof line. While there have been some comments supporting the lighting, there have been concerns that the roof line is very bright at night and is a very sharp and of color. The dark skies ordinance has been referenced. Ms. Tomas stated that the lights overshadow the Capitol dome.

Members thought that there had been discussion that the colors were to be static and muted and the color was to be more of a band, not something that reflects under the soffit. The June 2018 ADR minutes were reviewed. Staff will continue to research this issue for the next meeting.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Doherty made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Tomas seconded. The motion passed unanimously at 10:35 a.m.