

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
April 7, 2020 Minutes

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on April 7, 2020 via Zoom at 8:30 a.m.

Attendees: Co-Chairs Jay Doherty and Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Members Doug Shilo, Claude Gentilhomme, Ron King, and Margaret Tomas; Richard Woodfin Planning Board Chairman

Staff: Sam Durfee, Senior Planner
Lisa Fellows-Weaver, Administrative Specialist

Call to Order

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

Mr. Durfee read the following into the record:

Due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm that we are:

a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means;

We are utilizing the Zoom platform for this electronic meeting. All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Zoom platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through clicking on the following website address: <https://zoom.us/j/754076629>, or by dialing the following phone # 1-929-205-6099 and entering the password 754076629. For those calling in who want to provide public testimony, dial *9 to alert the host that you want to speak. The host will unmute you during the public hearing portion of the meeting.

b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting;

We previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting using Zoom, and instructions are provided on the City of Concord's website at: <http://concordnh.gov/273/Planning-Board>

c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access;

If anybody has a problem, please call 603-225-8515 or email at: planning@concordnh.gov.

d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting; we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time.

Please note that all votes taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Hengen moved to approve the minutes of March 3, 2020, as written. Mr. Doherty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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Sign Applications

1. Oakstream Properties, on behalf of the Conservation Law Foundation, requests ADR approval to add a new projecting sign at 27 North Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

Tom Irwin of the Conservation Law Foundation represented the application.

Ms. Hengen asked about the proposed location of sign and placement of the brackets as it appears to be directly over the entrance. She asked about alternative locations rather than in the center of arch.

Mr. Irwin stated that he has been working with Rowland Studios relative to the design. He stated that the design does appear to be two planes. With relocating, there is some electrical hardware for the adjacent retailer and if the sign were moved to the right he is not sure as to how it interfaces with the existing large awning.

A discussion was held about the proposed materials and the design. Mr. Doherty commented that the sign appears to be thin. Mr. Irwin stated that the he is not sure as to the thickness of the sign. The sign will be a two-sided sign made from PVC, similar to the retailer to the left. He noted that he believes the sign will be 2 to 4 inches thick.

Ms. Hengen suggested that a border around the sign be considered. She suggested removing the bracket from the middle of the arch entirely and hanging the sign from the brick section band between the first and second story.

Mr. King suggested using a one arm bracket rather than the proposed planes as it would be more attractive.

Mr. Shilo made a motion to table the application to the May 5, 2020, meeting, pending receipt of additional information from the sign designer regarding the bracket materials, the installation of the sign to the building, the thickness of the sign, and a new design to be provided to include a sign border for more definition. Mr. King seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Warrenstreet Architects, on behalf of Christ the King Parish, requests ADR approval to install three new freestanding signs and replace four existing wall signs at 72 South Main Street in the Urban Transitional (UT) District.

Jonathan Halle of Warrenstreet Architects represented the application along with Father Roberge. Mr. Halle presented a video of the two larger signs.

Mr. Halle gave a brief overview of the 22 proposed signs throughout the site, noting some are directional signs. Mr. Durfee stated that the committee does not have any jurisdiction over directional signs. Mr. Halle stated that there are three pylon signs proposed. He referred to graphics 4 and 11 and indicated that these are the same sign, a granite sign. This sign is an Eagle Scout project. The Scout plans to re-engrave the sign with the school's name. Mr. Halle reviewed eight other existing signs throughout the campus that are proposed to all be refaced.

Mr. Halle explained that graphic 22 shows a new proposed sign that will be placed between the rectory and the church. The base, which has been previously approved for this sign, may be changing from a foundation to a stone wall. Ms. Hengen asked what the dimensions are for this sign and Mr. Halle replied 18 feet long.

Mr. Halle referred to the proposed electronic message sign, graphic 23, and explained that this sign will only display text messages. There will be no pictures. The background is

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interchangeable, either white or black with either black or white letters. He noted that a variance for this sign was granted by the Zoning Board.

Mr. Durfee stated that the property is adjacent to the Central Business Performance District, where no white background signs are allowed. Mr. Halle stated that the background is a LED screen.

Ms. Hengen asked about the height of the sign. Mr. Halle replied 18 feet high. Mr. Durfee stated that he believes signs in this district are only allowed to be 8 feet. Mr. Halle stated that a variance has been granted for the size of the sign.

Farther Roberge stated that the property is $\frac{3}{4}$ of a block. There is no access or main entrance on Main Street so this new, 2-sided sign will aid in the entrance of the property. The location is more in line with the actual center of the parking lot.

Mr. Shilo asked if the intent of the sign is for pedestrians or traffic. Father Roberge replied both and explained that there are many ongoing activities daily throughout the campus. He noted that there will only be one message at a time on the sign and that message will be change after two hours.

Ms. Hengen commented that she finds the signs overall scale overwhelming; it is nearly 2-stories high. Father Roberge replied to look at the sign and keep the scale of the property in mind. Ms. Hengen replied she has.

A discussion was held regarding the large berm. Mr. Halle explained the grade will be diagonal across face, closest to the parking lot. The base may be only 12 to 18 inches high.

A discussion was held regarding the text of some signs as it appears that there are different sizes and the capitalization is not consistent throughout. Mr. Halle replied that they will address these inconsistencies.

Mr. King suggested adding a border to the signs to be consistent throughout the campus. Mr. Halle agreed that a border could be added to the signs, to be consistent except for the granite signs. Mr. Shilo noted that graphic 20 appears to show a double border. Mr. Halle will adjust this accordingly.

Ms. Tomas asked what the sign materials will be. Mr. Halle replied that the signs are all $\frac{3}{4}$ inch PVC.

Mr. Shilo asked about the gold leaf text on the glass sign, graphic 22, and expressed concern that there will be readability issues. He asked if it would be illuminated. Mr. Halle replied that this sign will be illuminated; lighting will project upwards.

Ms. Hengen commented that overall, the proposed signs work well. Sign 22 is proportionally fit for the site and will join the two buildings. Sign 23, she commented, is large and over scaled for the site. She does not feel that there is a need for seven lines of text, particularly since the message can change every two hours. The sign is close to road and when driving by, the text will not all be read. She suggested reducing the amount of sign that allows the text. Mr. Durfee noted that the size of the text can be increased or decreased to address passing traffic.

Ms. Tomas suggested a smaller base for sign 23.

Mr. Gentilhomme commented that sign 22 is a straight forward sign with a stone base. He stated that other than the stone, he would like to see more similarities with sign 22 and sign 23 as they are for the same facility. He asked if the gothic top of sign 23 is necessary and noted that there is

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no detail to sign 22. Changing the monument sign would lower the scale of the sign and be more consistent.

Ms. Hengen asked what the monument sign would look like if it were reduced 20 – 30%.

Mr. Doherty stated that he feels the arch of sign 23 ties the sign to the building. Mr. Gentilhomme added that the other sign does not.

Mr. Shilo stated that the messages may be easier to read on a horizontal sign.

Mr. Halle explained that the monument sign supports both the school and church on the property. He stated that architecture of the sign has been done so to match the narthex; the arch of the sign matches the arch in the building.

Mr. King stated that both sign 22 and 23 are street side signs and are two distinct signs; colors, size, orientations. He feels that they may play against each other. Father Roberge replied that the two signs have two totally different functions and they are 200-300 feet apart.

Mr. Shilo commented that he would like to see the larger signs be more alike. The lower sign is clearer and does not compete with the church or buildings and is not trying to mimic the church in any way. The tall sign competes because it is so tall and has more architectural features, which he feels competes and takes away from the church.

Mr. King stated that as shown in the video when people walk by, the sign appears to be very high, 3x their height, and he feels that is problematic.

Mr. Doherty agreed that the sign will feel bigger in real life; however, this is religious architecture that is meant to be vertical and point upwards to heaven. He likes the orientation and the way it works. It could be scaled down but not 40-50%. As far as the height, it could be reduced to be a bit shorter.

Ms. Tomas stated that she likes the massiveness of the sign; however, it could be made to be a bit smaller. She likes the statement of the sign.

Additional discussion was held regarding the location of the monument sign. Ms. Hengen suggested moving the sign north, closer to Thorndike Street, which may accommodate the fact that the sign represents the school and church. She suggested a reduction of 15% as 22 feet high from the street is substantial. Mr. King agreed.

Mr. Halle replied that the grade, coming from the sidewalk, will be at an angle, and sloped.

Additional discussion was held regarding the lettering. Mr. Shilo commented that he would prefer the background of the sign to be black with white lettering. Ms. Hengen noted the Red River Theatre sign, the Capital Center for the Arts sign, and the Concord Theatre sign all have black backgrounds.

Ms. Hengen asked if the variance addressed the colors. Father Roberge replied that a black and white sign with no video was approved.

Mr. Doherty made a motion to recommend approval of the campus signs; wall signs to be matching with borders, paying attention to the capitalization consistency; sign 23 to be relocated closer towards Thorndike Street, reduced by 10-14% with a black background and white text, height of sign is to be measured off of the lower side of the grade. Mr. King seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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3. FourKph, LLC, on behalf of the NH Division of Personnel, requests ADR approval to install a new awning and wall sign and to replace a panel on an existing monument sign at 54 Regional Drive in the Office Park Performance (OFP) District.

Tom Balon represented the application along with Josh Messinger of Advantage Signs.

Mr. Balon described the signs to consist of acrylic letters on the brick portion and vinyl letters on the directory sign and awning, which will allow them to be removed if necessary.

Mr. Doherty made a motion to recommend approval as submitted. Ms. Tomas seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Ledyard National Bank requests ADR approval for the construction of a new freestanding sign and the installation of two new wall signs at 74 South Main Street in the Urban Commercial (CU) District.

Glenn Shadlick of NEOPCO Signs represented the application.

Mr. Shadlick provided an overview of the pylon sign. The sign height is proposed at 12 feet because they believe that going any higher, the sign would be lost and there would be more potential to vandalism, which has occurred at this location in the past. They feel that this height is aesthetically pleasing. Raised letters on both sides are proposed, letter colors are consistent with the brand. The business poles are painted similar to granite. A granite slab will be around the base similar to that of the neighboring church. The sign is illuminated from above.

Ms. Hengen asked about landscaping. Mr. Shadlick explained that there will be landscaping around the entire area.

Ms. Tomas asked about the granite sign base. Mr. Shadlick explained that the base cannot be moved as it would be in the setback. The granite will be built around the poles. The granite is 12 inches wide and the poles are only 8. Discussion ensued. Mr. Doherty stated that he feels that the granite will be adequate set into the granite curbing, and will tie well into the neighboring site. He added that the proposed height of 12 feet is also sufficient.

Mr. Shadlick reviewed the proposal for the side signage, a 4' x 8' sign, set into the slate siding. Lighting will shine downward.

Mr. Shadlick explained that the archway sign over the entrance will be metal letters or cut out. The letters will appear to be floating; not finished.

Ms. Tomas made a motion to recommend approval as submitted. Mr. Doherty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Ciborowski Associates, LLC, on behalf of NBT Bank, requests ADR approval to install a new projecting sign at 118 North Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

Scott Aubertin of First Signs represented the application.

Mr. Aubertin stated that the sign will be placed to hang over the entrance of the business, above the painted 118. The sign will be a matte black, with gold leaf lettering.

Ms. Tomas asked if the proposed sign would be adjacent to the existing sign. Mr. Aubertin replied that the sign is proposed to be a squat oval sign, which will allow for more clearance. The sign will be designed to disappear and look like the existing surface.

Mr. Doherty asked if there are restrictions for the amount of area. Mr. Woodfin replied yes. Mr. Aubertin added that the sign sets back into the recess.

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

6. Ciborowski Associates, LLC, on behalf of Rich Ruel, requests ADR approval to install a new wall sign and awning at 9 North Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

Josh Messinger of Advantage Signs represented the application.

Mr. Messinger reviewed the sign packet. He explained that the proposal is for an awning and sign. The sign will be two inches thick, made of foam and will not be illuminated. The sign will be framed and there is a custom bracket. The awning is canvas, with painted letters.

Mr. Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend approval as submitted, with the recommendation that the word “Gifts” be moved left to better balance the sign. Mr. Doherty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Sanel Napa requests ADR approval for the installation of a new wall sign at 102 Old Turnpike Road in the Industrial (IN) District.

Max from the Sign Gallery represented the application.

An overview of the sign packet was provided explaining that the proposal is for a backer board with channel letters. The backer board allows for depth and ease of installation. The sign will be one inch thick. The logo, letters, and red swish are all internally illuminated.

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

Other Business

Concord Hotel, 11 South Main Street

Mr. Durfee stated that the applicant will be doing a lighting test Thursday evening at 6:30 p.m.

Adjournment

Mr. King made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Gentilhomme seconded. The motion passed unanimously at 10:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Administrative Specialist