

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
May 5, 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
Craig Walker, Zoning Administrator

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Doherty 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

Mr. Shilo moved to approve the minutes of April 7, 2020, as written. Mr. King 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 along with Scott Walton.

Mr. Irwin stated, per request of the Committee, they have redesigned the sign. He explained that the bracket system will no longer be mounted into the top of the arch. The sign will now hang from a traditional iron bracket. The color of the sign was originally white. They are proposing a new color scheme, a gray background with white letters. As far as the materials, Mr. Irwin explained that they would prefer to use wood rather than PVC. It is also their preference to move the sign out from the building about 5-6" more, which makes the sign more prominent from the North to South in light of the Concord awning sign, and it would also allow the archway to be featured better.

Mr. Doherty asked about the depth of the sign. Mr. Walton submitted a comment via the Zoom chat noting the thickness of the sign is two inches.

Ms. Hengen stated that she appreciates all of the modifications including the location and design; it is an elegant solution.

Mr. King made a motion to recommend approval as submitted, including the applicant's request to move the sign out five inches from the archway. Ms. Hengen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. CP Concord, LLC, on behalf of Harbor Freight Tools, requests ADR approval for the installation of a new internally illuminated wall sign and the replacement of an internally illuminated freestanding sign, at 310 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

Stu Levy represented the application.

Mr. Levy gave an overview of the project. He stated that Harbor Freight will be occupying approximately 70 feet of frontage of the former Toys R Us building. Two signs are proposed. The sign on the building is 67.6 square feet and is channel letters. It will be in the exact spot where the former sign was located. The second sign proposed is the pylon and they plan to utilize the existing pylon sign.

Mr. Walker noted that there is a silhouette of the Babies R Us and asked if the building would be painted. Mr. Levy stated that he would follow up with this item and report back to Mr. Walker.

Mr. Shilo noted that the proposed lettering is hard to read; it is stretched vertically and letters are close together. When looking at the Harbor Freight website, it appears that the signage is more laid out and is easier to read. He recommended that the height of the letters be reduced and be more in line with the branding. Mr. Levy replied that the channel lettered wall sign has been designed to stay within the allotted footage. As far as the pylon cabinet, they have designed that to utilize as much space as possible. Mr. Shilo suggested reducing the heights for both of the signs as they are both difficult to read.

Discussion ensued regarding the graphics provided and the fact that the letters are vertically elongated. Mr. Levy stated that he believes that the renderings provided do appear to be blurred.

Mr. Doherty asked if the letters are separate. Mr. Levy replied yes they are individual letters and are 31 ½ inches tall.

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Mr. Shilo mentioned that the wall sign and pylon colors are inverted. Mr. Levy stated that the Harbor Freight wall signs have red channel letters and the pylon signs are inverted with red backgrounds and white lettering. Mr. Doherty stated that he would prefer to see less white backgrounds on signs in the City.

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

The motion passed with a roll call vote as follows:

Ms. Hengen – in favor
Mr. Doherty – in favor
Mr. King – in favor
Ms. Tomas – in favor
Mr. Gentilhomme – in favor
Mr. Shilo – opposed
The motion carried; 5/1.

3. EJ Prescott requests ADR approval to replace an existing internally illuminated freestanding sign at 210 Sheep Davis Road in the Industrial (IN) District.

No one was present to represent this application.

Mr. Durfee provided an overview of the proposal, which is to replace the existing free standing sign.

Ms. Hengen stated that this is a brand new structure. Mr. Gentilhomme asked if the arch will be added to the sign. Mr. Doherty replied that the rendering shows the arch to be included and this new sign will be internally illuminated.

A discussion was held regarding the proposed materials. Mr. Walker stated that the frame is noted as aluminum; however, the materials for the panels should be identified.

Mr. Doherty asked if there are any restrictions for illumination. Mr. Walker stated this is the Industrial Zone; there are no restrictions for internal illumination.

Ms. Hengen noted that the phone number and website are included on one line of the sign. She stated that at 300 feet, driving by this is a lot of information to process. She suggested having only one listed.

Mr. Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend approval as submitted. Mr. King seconded.

The motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Ms. Hengen – in favor
Mr. Doherty – in favor
Mr. King – in favor
Ms. Tomas – in favor
Mr. Gentilhomme – in favor
Mr. Shilo – in favor

4. Namdar Realty Group, on behalf of Spirit Halloween, requests ADR approval for the replacement of three wall signs at 271 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

No one was present to represent this application.

Mr. Durfee provided an overview of the proposal for three wall signs. He stated that Spirit Halloween will be utilizing the former Sears building at the mall.

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Mr. Shilo commented that if these signs are temporary sign screwing it in using fender washers would be satisfactory; however, if these are to be permanent signs then there should be heightened scrutiny as to the fastening technic and the permanent attachment.

Mr. King made a motion to recommend approval as submitted, with the condition that should the signs be permanent then a more permanent fastener should be investigated; if these are only temporary signs then the wall must be prepared after the screws are removed. Ms. Tomas seconded.

The motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Ms. Hengen – in favor
Mr. Doherty – in favor
Mr. King – in favor
Ms. Tomas – in favor
Mr. Gentilhomme – in favor
Mr. Shilo – in favor

5. South Main Realty, LLC requests ADR approval for the installation of an internally illuminated projecting sign and the replacement of two internally illuminated freestanding signs at 406 South Main Street in the General Commercial (CG) District.

Brandon Currier represented the application.

Mr. Currier provided an overview of the sign packet noting the three different signs and locations. He explained that one proposed sign is an internally illuminated projecting sign with T-bones branding colors. This sign will project off the front of the building. The freestanding existing sign and structure, which was previously approved for the Tru Hotel, will be split now, advertising the restaurant and hotel. This sign will use the existing cabinet and is proposed to be internally illuminated. The pole will be covered and other improvements will be made to the sign. The last sign is also a replacement freestanding sign and will be internally illuminated with the T-bones vinyl graphics.

Ms. Tomas made a motion to recommend approval as submitted. Mr. Gentilhomme seconded.

The motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Ms. Hengen – in favor
Mr. Doherty – in favor
Mr. King – in favor
Ms. Tomas – in favor
Mr. Gentilhomme – in favor
Mr. Shilo – in favor

Other Business

Concord Hotel, 11 South Main Street

Mr. Durfee stated that the applicant did do a lighting test on April 16th in the early evening. He shared a picture that he took from the top of the School Street garage. He explained that some sections of the lighting did have the break metal. The test showed that the break metal did function properly and will accomplish what the City has asked. No update has been received as to when the installation will occur.

Mr. King asked if the hotel would be able to adjust the intensity of the lights. Mr. Durfee replied yes.

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Ms. Hengen asked if the lights are to be on all of the time. Mr. Woodfin stated that the hotel wanted the lights on all night, as a beacon.

Mr. Durfee stated that the hotel has been great with communicating to Staff and he will update the Committee as to when the installation will be done.

Mr. Shilo asked about future development in this area. He understood that there may be a potential development that would be higher in the next building. In the event that there is another building higher, will there be a remedy for the tenants if there is an impact from the lighting. Mr. Durfee stated that the maximum building height in the district is 80 feet. Any bulbs will need to be shielded. If there were to be a development and if higher it would be more difficult to shine into a higher building and may not be an issue; if lower, they could see some light trespass. He noted that there could be more downtown buildings looking into adding this type of lighting.

Members

Mr. Doherty asked if there has been any progress on finding a member to the Committee with lightening experience. Mr. Durfee replied that he does not have anything to report.

Adjournment

Mr. King made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Gentilhomme seconded. The motion passed unanimously at 9:26 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Administrative Specialist