

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
January 5, 2021 Minutes

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on January 5, 2021 via Zoom at 8:30 a.m.

Attendees: Co-Chairs Jay Doherty and Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Members Ron King, Margaret Tomas and Claude Gentilhomme - 9:06 a.m.

Absent: Member Doug Shilo, and Planning Board Chairman Richard Woodfin

Staff: Sam Durfee, Senior Planner
Lisa Fellows-Weaver, Administrative Specialist
Bob Nadeau, Code Inspector
Beth Fenstermacher, Assistant City Planner

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Co-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

Mr. King moved to approve the minutes of December 1, 2020, as written. Mr. Doherty seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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Sign Applications

1. Caring Family Dentistry requests ADR approval for the replacement of two internally illuminated wall signs at 327 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

Andrew Yvars from Fleet Graphics represented the application.

Mr. Doherty made a motion, seconded by Mr. King, to recommend approval of the sign design, as submitted.

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

2. Rite Aid requests ADR approval for the replacement of six internally wall signs and the replacement of an internally illuminated freestanding sign at 92 South Street in the Neighborhood Commercial (CN) District.

Jason Gagnon represented the application.

Mr. Gagnon stated that a variance had been granted to allow the additional façade signage. He gave an overview of the sign package explaining that the proposal is to replace all signage on the exterior walls and reface the freestanding sign.

Mr. Doherty stated that providing night views of the signs was appreciated. He asked about the white background in the free-standing sign. Mr. Gagnon stated that the white background will light up as will the logo in the pylon sign, but recognizes that it is the preference of this Committee that white backgrounds be opaque and he will pass this on to the owner.

Mr. King made a motion, seconded by Mr. Doherty, to recommend approval of the sign design, as submitted, with the recommendation that the white areas in the pylon sign will be opaque.

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

3. Market Street Settlement Group requests ADR approval for the installation of a new non-illuminated wall sign at 91-93 North State Street in the Civic Performance (CVP) District.

Virgil Williams represented this application.

Mr. Williams provided a brief overview of the sign proposal. He stated that the materials proposed for the letters are vinyl and laminate. The letters will be attached to the building.

Mr. Doherty asked about the height of the sign and if it will align with the neighboring signs. Mr. Williams replied yes.

Mr. Doherty made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tomas, to recommend approval of the sign design, as submitted. Mr. Doherty amended the motion to include the condition that the new sign will align with the sign on the opposite side. Ms. Tomas seconded the amendment.

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

Ms. Hengen – in favor

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Mr. Doherty – in favor
Mr. King – in favor
Ms. Tomas – in favor

Mr. Durfee noted that the following four agenda items are sign applications that are all for 211 Loudon Road. He explained that there were some issues with signage on the site and the applicants are working to bring the signage into compliance. Mr. Nadeau added that some business owners are using this as an opportunity to revise their existing signs or add signs.

4. Hodges Development Corp., on behalf of the US Army Corps. Of Engineers, requests ADR approval for the replacement of a non-illuminated wall sign and an externally illuminated panel on a freestanding sign at 211 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

No one was present representing this application.

Mr. Durfee gave a brief overview of the sign package for the wall sign and the panel in the pylon.

Mr. Dougherty stated that the proposed wall sign is a good alignment, is easy to see, and find the location.

Mr. Doherty made a motion, seconded by Mr. King, to recommend approval of the sign designs, as submitted.

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

5. Hodges Development Corp., on behalf of Rick Smith, requests ADR approval for the installation of a new externally illuminated wall sign at 211 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

No one was present representing this application.

Mr. Durfee explained that the request is for a new wall sign above the window. Mr. Nadeau noted that the proposed materials would be PVC.

Mr. King expressed concern about the proposed size and location of the sign. He added that he does not feel that there is sufficient information provided. Ms. Tomas agreed and asked about lighting as there is no information provided yet lighting is proposed.

Mr. King made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tomas to table the application to the next meeting to allow the applicant to provide additional information relative to the size and location of the sign and the proposed lighting.

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

6. Hodges Development Corp., on behalf of Rick Smith, requests ADR approval for the replacement of a non-illuminated wall sign, the replacement of two internally illuminated window signs, and the replacement of an externally illuminated panel on a freestanding sign at 211 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

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No one was present representing this application.

Mr. Durfee stated that the applicant has requested to replace four signs for the CBD Store; three building signs in total and a panel within the pylon.

A discussion was held regarding the window signage. Members felt that the window signage is excessive. Mr. Nadeau explained that with a temporary sign, 30% of the window is approved for signage, but for a permanent sign, what is shown in the package is allowed. Mr. Nadeau stated that all three signs proposed are allowed; door signs are directional and are not included in the square footage so the proposal does not exceed the square footage allowed.

Ms. Tomas commented that the proposed signs and pylon panel are attractive. However, the wording within the window is very overwhelming. Ms. Hengen commented that the two flanking windows go beyond the purpose of building identification. Ms. Tomas suggested using what is shown on the center window pane only. Ms. Hengen agreed.

Mr. Doherty stated that all of the signage of the entire building should be similar for each business so it is all connected. He stated that it seems out of place to have any signage over the doorways. Mr. King added that it would be nice to have more cohesive signage throughout the buildings.

Claude Gentilhomme arrived at 9:06 a.m.

A discussion was held regarding tabling the application for more clarification. Mr. Durfee stated that all of the signs are installed. Discussion ensued regarding alternative sign locations rather than over the entrances. Also noted was the different business names in the signs.

Mr. King made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tomas to recommend approval of the signs with the following conditions:

- Move the wall sign over between the door and the window and lower it as appropriate;
- Clear all signage in window panes except for middle pane, and clarify the title of the business between the panel on the pylon sign and the wall sign; and
- Provide updated information to staff.

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

7. Hodges Development Corp., on behalf of True Confections, requests ADR approval for the replacement of a non-illuminated wall sign, the installation of a new non-illuminated wall sign, the replacement of an externally illuminated panel on a freestanding sign, and the installation of a new non-illuminated projecting sign at 211 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

Paul Foskitt of True Confections, represented the application.

Mr. Nadeau stated that all of the four proposed signs meet the regulations; two wall signs, pylon panel sign, and a blade sign.

Mr. Foskitt stated that they are trying to add more signage to improve visibility as they are so far back from Loudon Road. He stated that the sign handing is a banner; however, they would like to add a sign hanging from the roof or add to the gable end as they are allowed more signage based on the square footage.

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Lengthy discussions were held regarding the location of the hanging sign for best visibility. In addition, the 3x5 sign to the right of the door was noted as being confusing and was determined to have no real benefit as a sign due to the placement of the “open” flag. Mr. Foskitt explained that this sign was a replacement to what existed when they moved to this location. He stated that they want to make it known where they are in the complex and are open for business.

The pylon panel and the colors were discussed. Ms. Hengen stated that the pylon sign is a disservice to the business as the colors do not indicate the same business. Mr. Foskitt replied that he understands the need for continuity of the signage; however, with the traffic speed and the number of signs in the pylon it is difficult to read and identify any business. He stated it is difficult to pick out any one sign as one drives by and there is a variety of colors on the pylon. He explained that he was looking for something that stood out and did not blend in with the existing signs. He noted that the pylon sign is different than now than what is presented in the sign package. Mr. Doherty commented that the Committee should be looking at and approving what exists.

Discussion ensued as members offered suggestions for a simpler sign design that may be more visible and overall a better design. Mr. Foskitt expressed concern and frustration with the costs of the signs, and the additional costs of the permits. He added that he would then have to pay for new signs should he choose to change the design and/or size based on these Committee’s suggestion or recommendations. Mr. Doherty stated that he likes the color logo of the business and wished the pylon sign had a similar logo with the colors. He added that he understands the costs involved. Mr. Gentilhomme agreed and expressed concern with the different signs for this business and another business, as well as the differences in the pylon signs.

Mr. Nadeau stated that all of the tenants in the complex, except for the Armed Forces, have all been there and have had signs without permits so they are trying to correct that matter now and bring all of the signs into compliance with proper signage and permits. He noted that all temporary signage has since been addressed and removed. At this time, some tenants are taking this as an opportunity to modify their signs. He added that he has not seen the pylon since the picture was taken to see any changes with and will look into.

Mr. Foskitt expressed frustration with the current regulations in place and the need to review them as they were put in place 30 years ago. They may not be applicable in this time. Mr. Nadeau explained that the site plan regulations deem any sign replacement to be change, which requires ADRC review along with fees for the new sign permit.

Ms. Tomas made a motion, seconded by Mr. King, to recommend the following:

- Recommend approval of the pylon sign with the condition that if the pylon sign is to be replaced it should be replaced to match the current banner;
- Recommend approval of the hanging blade ice cream cone sign, as submitted;
- Recommend sign 1 be removed;
- Recommend sign 2 be relocated to where sign 1 was and reconfigure sign 2 to a size that will fill the space between the windows and trim boards and is the same height of window or allowed by code, keeping within similar colors and font design of the existing sign 2; and
- Recommend that the applicant consider adding a sign to the glass pane of the door that reflects the business name.
- The applicant may choose to submit the designs to staff for additional review.

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

Ms. Hengen – in favor
Mr. Doherty – in favor
Mr. King – in favor

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Ms. Tomas – in favor
Mr. Gentilhomme – in favor

Major Site Plan/Subdivision Applications

1. Jarbel Realty, LLC requests ADR approval for conversion of an existing nonresidential structure to a five unit residential and commercial use at 189 N. Main Street in the Urban Commercial (CU) District.

Mr. Benjamin Kelley of Jarbel Realty, LLC, represented the application.

Ms. Fenstermacher provided an overview of the application explaining the proposal is to do a conversion of a non-residential building into a residential and commercial use, which requires a major site plan. She stated that there are existing mature trees on site with no changes proposed to the landscaping. No parking changes are necessary. The majority of the conversion is occurring on the inside. A fence is being added at the back corner of the property to provide screening for the dumpster.

Mr. Kelley stated that there will need to be repairs and maintenance done to the roof components. He stated that they are replacing the existing storm windows with a glazed historic window from Harvey. There will be a different color scheme. The current trim is a yellowish and will be changed to a cream or gray, less dated color scheme. He explained that the first floor is for office space and the interior will be repurposed into two other smaller suites. The second floor will be units also repurposed for residential.

Mr. King asked about cleaning the brick. Mr. King described the bricks to be in good shape and they will be pressure washing, low pressure.

Mr. Doherty noted that the ADA clearances as noted on the plan may need to be re-checked. He stated that he appreciates the efforts taken to preserve the building and to match the existing colors. He requested the applicant provide samples of materials and colors that will be used for the painted trims. Ms. Hengen noted that dark sash on the windows, and that the sashes should all be painted dark for uniformity across the building and historical accuracy. Mr. Doherty commented that there are some windows that appear to be white sashed or cream colored. Mr. Kelley stated that they would provide samples when available.

Mr. Doherty made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tomas, to recommend approval of the plan, as submitted, with the condition that any colors chosen that are different than the exiting color scheme be submitted to staff along with any materials changes, such as the storm windows, for the record. The Committee applauded the efforts of the applicant that have been taken to preserve and maintain this important building within the City.

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

Adjournment

Mr. King made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Doherty seconded. The motion passed unanimously at 10:22 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Administrative Specialist