

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
March 2, 2021 Minutes

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on March 2, 2021 via Zoom at 8:30 a.m.

Attendees: Co-Chairs Jay Doherty and Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Members Claude Gentilhomme, Ron King, and Margaret Tomas

Absent: Planning Board Chairman Richard Woodfin

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

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

Ms. Tomas moved to approve the minutes of February 2, 2021, as written. Mr. King seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote.

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
March 2, 2021 Minutes

Sign Applications

1. NH Signs, on behalf of Global Partners, requests ADR approval for the replacement of an existing internally-illuminated freestanding sign panel and the installation of several new design elements around the gas pumps at 1 Whitney Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

Peter March, of NH Signs, represented the application.

Mr. March explained that the application is a request to amend a previously approved major site plan for the Mobile station. The amendments are a branding change for Mobile; changing the yellow diesel panels to blue. Another change is with the facilities architectural elements to improve the safety of gas station by better directional signage. He explained that these changes will be to the wave and blade items at the pump as well as the koalas and wedges. The changes will assist with better traffic direction for the entrance to the pumps and the exit of the station and will also reduce signage clutter. He stated that they are not able to regulate the traffic flow; however, feel that these changes will help. He added that there is no lighting on the poles and no lettering.

Mr. King made a motion, seconded by Mr. Doherty, to recommend approval for all of the signs, as submitted, with the understanding that there will not be any lettering on the blade or wave elements; no lighting will be added to any elements under the canopy; and the monument sign is internally illuminated.

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

2. Wood & Wood Signs, on behalf of Charter Trust Company, requests ADR approval for the replacement of three non-illuminated wall signs at 90 North Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

No one is present to represent the application.

Mr. Durfee stated that the proposal is a branding change from Charter Trust to Bar Harbor Wealth Management; replacement of the lettering and the plaques. He noted that the lettering is cut lettering with a Dimond aluminum background. Mr. Nadeau added that the plaque signs are surface mounts

A discussion was held regarding the size of the lettering proposed. Members felt that it should be increased. Mr. Nadeau stated that this is a part of the rebranding and he believes the lettering needed to be reduced to allow space for the new branding. In addition, discussion was held regarding the plaque signs. Ms. Tomas suggested to omit the mountains which may allow the signage to be increased. Mr. Doherty noted that there is a large amount of available space within the plaque sign that could be utilized. Ms. Tomas stated that the recommendations merit the application coming back to the Committee.

Ms. Tomas made a motion, seconded by Mr. King, to recommend revising the sign designs and resubmitting for approval, with the recommendations that the Bar Harbor text on the canopy sign be increased to be similar to what exists and be better incorporated within the canopy, and any logo symbols may be relocated before the words; the plaque text and logos should be more proportionate to better fit the proportion of the sign and the graphics, which will reduce the empty space on the top and the bottom of the plaque.

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

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
March 2, 2021 Minutes

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

Building Permit Applications in Performance Districts

1. Wilcox & Barton requests ADR approval for the renovation of the building at 10 Pleasant street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

Erin Lambert of Wilcox and Barton represented the application along with Dennis Mires of The Architects.

Ms. Lambert stated that 10 Pleasant Street will be the new home of Wilcox and Barton. She stated that the proposal is a complete renovation of the building to create office space. There will also be changes made to make an ADA entrance in the northwest corner in the ally. They are pursuing historic preservation tax credits.

Mr. Mires explained that they are currently working with a historic preservation consultant relative to the historic features of the building. He stated that they are doing both interior and exterior renovations. He stated that there are a number of different configurations of windows throughout the building. All of the windows will be replaced in kind with the same masonry and openings. The inside is fairly an open concept plan with a center stairway. In order to meet current egress requirements there must be two stairways leading to the outside; this will be the largest alteration made and to try to maintain the open space design. There will be some interior offices created. He added that the daylight in this building is very attractive and appeals to the owner for an open area office space.

Mr. Mires explained that they are proposing to change the main entrance from Pleasant Street to an entrance coming in off the ally. An ADA access from the first floor of the building is required and there were some grading issues along Pleasant Street. The ally way will be adequate for grading and drainage. A canopy will be provided over the door and will be supported from the building. The existing entrance will be infilled with windows and matching the façade of the first floor. He noted that they will be eliminating the basement access on Pleasant Street and replacing that with windows that are already there and roughed in.

After much discussion relative to the replacement of the windows, it was determined that the windows on the plans are not consistent with the windows on the building.

Ms. Hengen stated that the windows are a key element of the design of the building and the treatments are important. She asked about the infill painted panels and trim and noted that the colors should match the window sash. Mr. Mires replied that they are looking at historic colors and are working with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

Ms. Tomas asked about the access into the building as there will now not be a doorway off the sidewalk. Ms. Lambert stated that they will be proposing a canopy over the door off of the alleyway. There will be signage on the canopy and a sign on the Storrs Street façade. Ms. Tomas expressed concern with not being able to see the sign and discussion ensued regarding placement of the signage. Mr. Mires stated that they are planning to return to the Committee with a complete sign package. Additional discussion was held regarding the changes required to relocate the entrance and create the ramp. She stated that the slope will be level at the door and she is trying to avoid adding a wall; however, a hand rail may be necessary. Ms. Lambert stated that the alley way will not continue as a driveway. She added that there is are several existing easements, which will be maintained.

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
March 2, 2021 Minutes

Ms. Hengen asked if the existing nameplates will remain on the building. Mr. Mires replied yes, they do not intent to remove them.

Mr. King asked about the lighting. Mr. Mires stated that they will add lighting in the soffit of the canopy, all other lighting will be removed.

Mr. King referenced the comment that the concrete on the building is to be power washed and asked about the brick. Ms. Hengen stated that power washing is not typically allowed by SHPO.

Granite lentils were noted over the door and are currently not shown on the plan. Ms. Hengen stated that the west elevation fenestration is not the same as the proposed documentation. Mr. Gentilhomme suggested the applicant consider using the same type of paneling as the basement or a clerestory. Mr. Mires stated that the intent is to maintain all sash configurations that are historically on the building. He added that he will correct the drawings accordingly.

Ms. Tomas made a motion, seconded by Mr. Doherty, recommending the applicant revise the plans and resubmit to the Committee showing the proposal to include more resolutions of the canopy, the upper east side entrance and the sidewalk, to provide a concept of the signage, add more information relative to the cleaning mentioned for the building, and to add information on the colors of infill and fenestrations.

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

Site Plan Applications

1. TF Moran, on behalf of ZJBV Properties, LLC, requests Comprehensive Development Plan approval for a 2-Phase mixed use project consisting of multifamily structures, attached residential structures, and a commercial use; also requested is a Major Site Plan approval for construction of Phase 1, consisting of three (3) residential apartment buildings totaling 236 units, with associated parking and site improvements, and a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow construction of fewer parking spaces than are required at 70 Pembroke Road in the Opportunity Corridor Performance (OCP) District.

Gregg Mikolaities and Rob Martel of Berard Martel Architecture represented the application.

Mr. Martel gave an overview of the proposal. The plans under review are for buildings A, B, and C. Building A consists of 90 units and buildings B and C are proposed at 70 units each. Most units are one-bedroom units with a few two-bedroom units on each floor. Each building is 4 stories with a flat roof. Elevations and sample floor plans were reviewed. The exterior of the buildings is proposed to be low maintenance materials such as siding similar to clapboards. The base of the buildings is brick and the colors are harmonious. The lower color is intended to be lighter in color to contrast to the sides and the stairway area has a grid like appearance. The buildings are constructed to be energy efficient with insulated roofs and walls and in the ground as well. The windows have shutters. The entrance to the building is in the center or the “L” of each building with a canopy over the main entrance. The sides of the buildings also provide entrances.

Mr. Gentilhomme commented that he appreciates the proposal and being low maintenance and environmentally friendly. He sees the proposed location as a reasonable location and sees the possible future development in the rear of the property and feels that it is a good fit for this area. He stated that the proposed style of buildings is not traditional or colonial and requested that the shutters

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
March 2, 2021 Minutes

not be added as the shutters are not appropriate and extraneous to architecture. Shutters fade, fall apart, fall off, and overall, are a maintenance problem. The proposal is a transitional architecture and shutters are not appropriate to this building. Mr. Martel stated that the building style is a contemporary, transitional style and the ambiguity of this type of elevation the shutters can be removed easily. He added that the low maintenance panels have a small projection at the joints and are in a gird like fashion. Ms. Hengen agreed with the shutters being removed and suggested they look at defining the window openings and to make sure that there is enough window frame and trim. She commented that there is every bit as much benefit to make the building residential looking and define the windows as a design element with proportionate trim and not shutters. Mr. Gentilhomme stated that there is no reason why the development has to relate to traditional architecture; it is not surrounded by a context that they need to relate to so it could be more contemporary. He suggested a 2 over 2 window as a suitable design. Ms. Fenstermacher provide an example which the Committee found very appealing.

Mr. Doherty asked about the mechanical system. Mr. Martel stated that he anticipates that there will be individual units on the roof for heat and air conditioning; however, he is not sure at this time. Mr. Gentilhomme suggested that they add the units to the drawings and add the screening so the Committee can see that as part of the design.

Ms. Tomas mentioned that design of the building entrances and suggested that the applicant dress it up more. She noted that there is not much for outdoor space in and around the entrance. She stated that there is a potential for a lot of people in these buildings and there is a lot of parking and there does not appear to be an area for the residents go to gather and do outdoor activities. Ms. Hengen agreed. Mr. King commented that the entrance area feels very uncomfortable and unfriendly. He suggested adding benches, potted plants, or something to create and an entrance that is more welcoming.

Ms. Hengen asked if the apartments are market rate. Mr. Mikolaities replied yes and further explained that this phase of the development is a challenge for developing amenities for the residents. He explained that currently there are leases in the Sprague building of anywhere from three to five years, so they cannot develop the entire development at the same time. He explained that the City has asked them to look at phase 2, which will include pedestrian walkways, townhomes, and a retail building, which may include a coffee shop. He explained that the Town homes will have a pedestrian connection and there will be a buffer between the apartment buildings and the town homes. At this time, they are only permitting Phase 1; however, they have been talking about traffic and the future potential for the entire property. He added that the project has been being discussed with the City for over a year and they do meet all of the requirements for density and lot coverage in the ordinance. He stated that they are not building all of the parking spaces required.

Ms. Tomas stated that there is not much connectivity of green space; there are small areas but they are not as useable. She stated that it appears that the proportions may not be as user friendly as they could be.

Ms. Fenstermacher clarified that they have applied for a Conditional Use Permit requesting to not build the required amount of parking.

Ms. Tomas asked about the future of the Sprague building. Mr. Mikolaities replied that, at this time, the Sprague building will remain.

Ms. Hengen asked if the grove of trees shown will be usable outdoor space. Mr. Mikolaities replied that they will leave the grove of trees as buffers and will look into the surrounding areas. He added that they will be enhancing the area and adding screening. Ms. Fenstermacher commented that Keach Park is nearby and she suggested the applicant consider building a safe access along Canterbury Road in Phase 1. Mr. Mikolaities stated that they will discuss this option. Ms.

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
March 2, 2021 Minutes

Fenstermacher stated that this could address some concerns. Ms. Hengen stated that this is still important to have some open space to access on-site and have an open area to sit at.

Mr. King stated that he would like to see the application again to review the architecture. Ms. Fenstermacher stated that the applicant is looking to have an approval for the site and for the architecture. A public hearing has been scheduled with the Planning Board for March 17. Mr. Mikolaities stated that they could return to the Committee next month.

Mr. Gentilhomme made a motion, seconded by Mr. King, to recommend that the project be approved for development purposes, subject to providing green spaces within Phase 1 and clear connectivity to Keach Park; however, the architecture should return to the Committee for further review of suggested improvements.

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

Other Business

Brixmor

Mr. Durfee provided the Committee with an update on the status of the Brixmor application at the Storrs Street and Pleasant Street Extension intersection. He explained that the project has been postponed numerous times due to conversations between Staff and the Applicant over the site layout. He stated that the project is the redevelopment of a portion of the Capital Shopping Plaza. It is a 16-acre parcel and the tenants all lease their space from Brixmor who recently purchased the property. The Applicant informed Staff that some leases do not expire until 2035, and some leases prohibit the construction of multistory buildings, which is why the buildings are only 1-story.

Council approved a zoning change to allow a drive through based on concept drawings submitted by the applicant. Mr. Durfee explained that the applicant has had some challenges developing a layout consistent with the concept shared and the intent of the Master Plan for this area. Mr. Durfee stated that there are revised plans forthcoming and that he would send them a copy of the concept that was submitted to Council.

Committee members felt that a drive through does not belong in the downtown area and that a more appropriate location would be Loudon Road.

The Committee agreed that Ms. Hengen should draft a letter stating their opposition to the drive through in this location, and to note that they feel it is inconsistent with the Master Plan.

Adjournment

Mr. King made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Gentilhomme seconded. The motion passed unanimously at 10:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Administrative Specialist