

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
September 5, 2023 Minutes

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on September 5, 2023 in City Council Chambers, in the Municipal Complex, at 37 Green Street.

Attendees: Chair Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Members Claude Gentilhomme, Ron King, Zarron Simonis, Douglas Proctor and alternate Member Amanda Savage.

Absent: Co-Chair Jay Doherty

Staff: Heather Shank, City Planner
Alec Bass, Senior Planner
Tracey Hutton, Zoning Administrator
Brian Tremblay, Code Inspector

Call to Order

1. Co-Chair Hengen called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

2. A motion was made by Member King, seconded by Member Simonis, to approve the minutes from the August 1, 2023 meeting. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Sign Applications

3. NEOPCO Signs, on behalf of Gregory Sturgis, request ADR approval for a new 12 sf externally illuminated blade sign at 5 Pleasant Street Extension in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

Glen Schadlick (NEOPCO Signs) presented the application.

Mr. Schadlick explained that the sign may or may not be illuminated externally through some LED box cans which would be directed down.

Member King made a motion, seconded by Member Simonis, to approve as submitted with the stipulation that there be no illumination. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

4. SAR Concord, on behalf of Curry Leaf, requests ADR approval for a new 20 sf non-illuminated wall sign, a new 7 sf window sign and a new 10 sf non-illuminated hanging sign at 6 Pleasant Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

No one present to represent the application.

Co-Chair Hengen asked why this application has three signs but only two sign applications. Ms. Hutton explained that staff in the Code Department are currently reviewing the application process with the newer Energov permitting software. All signs are being still being assessed appropriately.

Mr. Tremblay clarified that the 32" x 42" sign will not be hanging as written in the application, but is actually wall mounted on the brick between the two businesses facing South. Additionally, the vinyl window sign will have a clear backing and is 1.37' tall x 5.2' wide.

Member King expressed concern that the window and "hanging" wall mounted sign are redundant.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion, seconded by Member King to approve all three signs as submitted. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

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5. Classic Signs Inc, on behalf of Evolution Realty, LLC, requests ADR approval for a new 80.25 sf internally illuminated wall sign and a new 39.25 sf internally illuminated wall sign at 10 Langdon Ave in the Opportunity Corridor Performance (OCP) District.

Benjamin Devall (Classic Signs) presented the application.

Mr. Devall informed the committee that this is a company rebrand. A formal measurement had not been conducted on the existing channel letter. Instead the owner is working within the allowable square footage and reducing the size to allow signage facing both the parking lot and South Main Street. Member Proctor asked if there is existing street signage on the pylon sign providing signage on South Main Street. Mr. Devall indicated there is not. Mr. Bass informed the committee that according to a street view, there does appear to be an existing pylon sign on South Main Street for this business. Mr. Devall indicated that this sign is no longer visible, either it has fallen down or it has been overgrown with vegetation. If this sign was to go for rebranding, it would require coming back before ADR.

Member King made a motion, seconded by Member Gentilhomme to approve both signs as submitted. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Spirit Halloween, requests ADR approval for a new 120 sf non-illuminated wall sign at 10 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

No one present to represent application.

Member Simonis made a motion, seconded by Member Gentilhomme to approve as submitted. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Ethos Signco, on behalf of Indigo Blues, requests ADR approval for a new 9 sf non-illuminated hanging sign at 70 North Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

No one present to represent application.

Member Simonis commented that the sign permit is for a non-illuminated sign, but noticed that there is existing external illumination on the mounting bracket.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion, seconded by Member King to approve as submitted, which will also include approval for the Applicant to make use of the existing external illumination present if desired. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Victoria Poland, on behalf of Stephen Duprey, requests ADR approval for (6) window signs, including (4) new 2.5 sf signs, (1) new 12 sf sign, and (1) new 8.25 sf sign at 45 South Main Street in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. (Variance is pending.)

Stephen Duprey and Victoria Poland presented the application.

Mr. Duprey informed the committee that when the book store opened ten years ago, they placed signage in the windows and he is not sure what was, or what wasn't permitted from that time to now. They did provide curb side pick-up services during COVID-19 era.

Member King asked why the signs are being looked at today. Ms. Hutton explained that these signs were identified as part of a separate sign request. These signs were put up during Covid-19 and are no longer being considered temporary and need to be legitimized as permanent. Mr. Duprey is in support of their additional signage.

Mr. Duprey indicated that the variance request pending is due to the Blade sign which will also be proposed for square footage, but they do exceed the amount of signage.

Member Gentilhomme motioned, seconded by Member King, to approve the six applications as submitted for the six pre-existing signs.

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In discussion, it was clarified that the motion was for the 5 proposed corrugated carboard window signs and the books, toys, fun and games neon sign. According to Ms. Hutton and Mr. Duprey, the neon sign was previously permitted. The Applicant unnecessarily submitted a sign application for that sign and it is not necessary for review.

Member Gentilhomme withdrew his motion, with Member King removing his second.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion, seconded by Member King, to approve all 5 corrugated signs which are placed above the door lintel as submitted.

In discussion, Co-Chair Hengen questioned the need for redundancy in presenting the information. Member Savage agreed that placement over the “adult” side of the entrance is more pertinent than perhaps having the same information placed over the children entrance.

Motion withdrawn by Member Gentilhomme and Member King

Member Gentilhomme made a motion, seconded by Member King, to approve three of the five corrugated signs. Specifically, one sign each, reading “Call 224-0562 for pick up”, “Curbside pick up” and “we ship!”. The owner can place the three signs as they see fit at either entrance so long as they are above the door lintels as they currently are. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Building Permits in Performance Districts

9. Warren Street Architects, on behalf of Delta Dental, requests ADR approval for an amendment to the originally approved Major Site Plan, specifically with regard to building and landscape lighting at 1 Delta Drive in the Institutional (IS) District. (2023-130)

Scott Donovan (Warren Street Architects), Jeff Paquin (The New England Holiday Light Company), and Joe Casper (Delta Dental), presented the application.

Mr. Casper considers the building in a gateway location and wants to enhance the aesthetics. They are proposing track lighting around the roof line, ground mounted lighting shining on the building, and up lighting the trees. They are sensitive to dark sky compliant standards and are proposing lighting that is intended to meet those recommendations with very low watts.

Ms. Shank expressed staff concern regarding up lighting of trees and impact on birds and other species. Mr. Paquin said they are utilizing lighting and methods that are specifically intended to minimize those impacts.

Mr. King noted that there are not specific architectural features to be lit. Ms. Savage expressed concern that this is not a commercial or retail building, that it seems to advertise a destination for tourism, though it is not. She feels it may be misleading to people passing by on the highway. Mr. Gentilhomme agreed and suggested they make the lighting less attention seeking and more of a subtle enhancement of the building.

Members clarified that images were not accurate representations due to image quality, and tree lighting was not presented. They asked staff whether the application was complete., Ms. Shank recommended asking the applicant to come back with a plan indicating the locations of fixtures, the proposed light spread, specifications for each fixture, and colors proposed. Members agreed that would be appropriate. The applicant indicated they would return with the requested information.

Ms. Savage made a motion to not recommend ADR approval at this time, and have the applicant return with more information. Mr. King seconded. Motion passed.

10. Stephens-Marquis Assoc. Inc, on behalf of Mike Chiverton, requests ADR approval for construction of an exterior sign wall, trellis and shade system at 333 Loudon Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. In conjunction with this application, NH Signs, Inc, on behalf of Nouria Energy,

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requests ADR approval for new internally illuminated panels in an existing pylon sign, and a new 21.2 sf internally illuminated wall sign.

Michael Chiverton (Nouria) and Grant Michael (NH Signs) presented the application.

The applicants stated that Nouria is rebranding their signage. They are painting the vinyl the maroon color. At night it will be halo lit. The brown material is faux wood; only the logo is lit.

Mr. Proctor made a motion to approve the ADR application as submitted. Mr. King seconded. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Co-Chair Hengen made a motion to approve the sign as submitted. Mr. King seconded. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

11. Stephens-Marquis Assoc. Inc, on behalf of Mike Chiverton, requests ADR approval for construction of an exterior sign wall, trellis and shade system at 24 Loudon Road located in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. In conjunction with this application, NH Signs, Inc, on behalf of Nouria Energy, requests ADR approval for a new 233 sf internally illuminated panel in an existing pylon sign.

Michael Chiverton (Nouria) and Grant Michael (NH Signs) presented the application.

This application is the same as the last, but for a different location.

Ms. Hengen made a motion to approve the ADR application as submitted. Ms. Savage seconded. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Hengen made a motion to approve the sign as submitted. Mr. Simonis seconded. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Conditional Use Permit Applications

12. Victoria Poland, ADR approval for a Conditional Use Permit to place a new 57.2 sf internally illuminated blade sign between rows of windows, above the top row of windows, or at a height in excess of 25 feet at 45 South Main Street, in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. In conjunction with this application, they are requesting ADR approval to install a Concord Coach Exhibit onto the sidewalk in front of 45 South Main Street. (2023-127)

Concord Coach

Co-Chair Hengen recused herself from the conversation due to a potential conflict of interest.

Stephen Duprey and Victoria Poland presented the application. Mr. Duprey stated that he wants to create an exhibit to remind people of Concord's history and industrial past. The coach is a replica, they intend to provide interpretive panels inside the glass structure and lighting. They will need to install heating and cooling to keep the temperature and humidity controlled. The installation will be tempered glass, similar to what is used on the Main Street clock, which will help deter vandalism.

Members thought it was a great idea. They suggested changing the white band and frame elements to a black color for aesthetic reasons and to avoid the appearance of dirt. Mr. Duprey liked the suggestions.

Mr. Simonis suggested the style was too modern looking. Mr. Proctor noted the enclosure might need to be a bit taller, it looks a bit squat, and more height would improve relationship with the carriage display. Mr. Gentilhomme suggested removing the scupper and providing internal drainage.

Mr. Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend ADR approval as submitted with the condition that darker colors are used for the framing, internal roof drains are placed, and the columns are beefed up in size as necessary for both the structure and to allow for the roof drains. Additionally, suggest that the Applicant reconsider the height of the case and make it taller so it looks more proportional to the carriage. Ms. Savage seconded. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

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Blade sign

Mr. Duprey stated that they need to provide the blade sign to secure Gibson's support for the installation of the Concord Coach in front of their store. They want to ensure that their sign is visible from the north and south.

Ms. Hengen doesn't feel the sign is needed; she stated that views will not be hindered from either direction. Mr. Proctor noted that the style doesn't match the existing wall signage. He suggested they redesign it to better match the existing signage. Members also suggested not using a blade sign, but putting a vertical wall sign of a similar size on the south side building.

Co-Chair Hengen made a motion to not recommend ADR approval based on the fact that the blade sign is not appropriate for the building, and the graphics don't relate to existing primary signage on the building. They encouraged Mr. Duprey to return with recommendations. Mr. King seconded. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

13. Victoria Poland, on behalf of Stephen Duprey, requests ADR approval for a Conditional Use Permit for 2 signs proposed above the top row of windows, or on the wall at a height in excess of 25 feet, including a new 41.8 sf internally illuminated wall sign and a new 69.02 sf internally illuminated wall sign at 70 Constitution Ave in the Opportunity Corridor Performance (OCP) District. In conjunction with this application, the applicant is requesting ADR approval for a 12 sf internally illuminated monument sign. (2023-117)

Stephen Duprey and Victoria Poland presented the application. The application consists of rebranding from a red and green color scheme to a black and white color scheme. They are replacing a sign on the east facade facing 93, and on the south side also replacing, Mr. Simonis asked questions clarifying how the signs will be lit.

Mr. King made a motion to approve as submitted. Mr. Proctor seconded. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Site Plan & Subdivision Applications

14. Morrill Mill Pond, LLC, requests an ADR amendment to their previously approved Major Site Plan to allow revisions to the elevations for the proposed restaurant at 8-10 Whitney Road in the Industrial (IN) District. (2022-54)

David Rauseo and Laurie Rauseo (Morrill Mill Pond, LLC) presented the application. They stated that Starbucks wants to updated their architectural model to the most current. The Committee reviewed the previous approved building type and site layout. MR. Rauseo explained the architectural changes.

Co-Chair Hengen made a motion to approve as submitted. Ms. Savage seconded. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

15. Wilcox & Barton, Inc, on behalf of First Church Holdings, LLC, request ADR approval as part of a Major Site Plan approval for the conversion of a church into 30 residential units and related site improvements at 177 North Main Street in the Urban Commercial (CU) District. (2023-122)

Jon Chorlian presented the application. Mr. Chorlian reviewed the existing architecture and proposed site plan. He noted that new doors and windows are the only changes to the facades.

The stained glass will be removed as required by the church, and replaced with aluminum windows. The size of window openings will remain. The second floor windows will be single pane glazed and will not open. Members discussed alternatives such as using a casement that opens.

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The group discussed proposed doors. Mr. Proctor suggested they go with the door to one side, with one sidelight, versus centering the door with two skinnier sidelights. They discussed the material of the arched opening and suggested alternatives.

The group discussed the east facing entrance with the new patio area. Mr. Chorlian indicted that the material was a trex type board. Alternative materials for the deck enclosure were discussed. Members suggested Mr. Chorlian take another look at the material used to create the patio areas.

Mr. Chorlian noted that slate on the roof will be replaced with shingles. Ms. Hengen recommended removing the grills from the 5 vertical windows to emphasize the vertical character and not introduce a horizontal element on the southern elevation.

Co-Chair Hengen made a motion to recommend ADR approval with the condition that the Applicant return to ADR to present further developed treatments of the East entry, including doorways, patio and stairs, as well as details of how the wall gets handled in the tower entrance where the stairs are proposed to be removed; and of the sash for the five pointed -arch windows in the south elevation so that their verticality is enhanced. Additionally, the committee supports the CUP request to defer construction of the seven parking spaces. Seconded by Member King. All were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

16. Warren Street Architects, on behalf of Concord Coalition to End Homelessness, requests an ADR amendment to their previously approved Major Site Plan for architectural changes to the existing buildings at 120 Pleasant Street in the Institutional (IS) District. (2022-33)

Scott Donovan (Warren Street Architects), Mark Fagan (Concord Coalition to End Homelessness) and Karen Jantzen (Concord Coalition to End Homelessness) presented the application.

The applicants explained the changes and the reasons why they were asking for the changes. Co-Chair Hengen noted that while the current situation is unfortunate, and should not have occurred, replicating the removed historic architectural features would be extremely expensive, and replacing them with non-replicas would not look right. It was noted that the window casing treatment was not presented.

Most members regretfully accepted the loss of the cupola and chimneys, as well as some other architectural features, as reflected in the application presented. Ms. Savage was not in support. The Committee made a general comment to the applicant that on future projects, the Applicant should ensure there is clear communication between it and the various boards and committees involved in the permitting process prior to onset of any demolition or new construction.

Co-Chair Hengen motioned to approve revisions as presented with the condition that the Applicant return to ADR with a revised window treatment proposal, with measured, to scale drawings. Mr. King seconded. The vote was passed with 5 in favor, 1 opposed.

Adjournment

Member King made a motion, seconded by Member Simonis, to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 p.m. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Alec Bass

The next meeting will be held on October 3, 2023