

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
October 31, 2023 Minutes

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on October 31, 2023 in Large Second Floor Conference Room, in City Hall, at 41 Green Street.

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

Absent:

Staff: Alec Bass, Senior Planner
Krista Tremblay, Administrative Specialist
Brian Tremblay, Code Inspector

Call to Order

1. Co-Chair Hengen called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

2. On a motion made by Co-Chair Hengen, seconded by Members Simonis, the committee voted to approve the minutes from the October 3, 2023 meeting. All in favor. The motion passed. Co-Chair Elizabeth Durfee Hengen and Claude Gentilhomme abstained due to not being present at October 3, 2023 meeting.

Sign Applications

3. Green Bear Signs and Graphics, LLC, requests ADR approval for a new 25 sf internally illuminated wall sign and a new 27 sf internally illuminated pylon tenant panel at 8 Loudon Road, Building 1 in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District.

No one present to represent the application

Mr. Bass explained this is in the parking lot next to the Buffalo Wild Wings near the urgent care. It is a building sign and a tenant panel sign.

Co-Chair Doherty questioned if there is a raceway at the location?

It was noted the committee does not know the answer based on the information that was provided by the applicant.

Mr. Simonis asked if this was replacing an existing sign?

Mr. Bass stated to the committee staff is not sure.

Co-Chair Doherty made a motion to approve as submitted with the understanding if there is a raceway it will be painted to match the façade and the wiring connection should be as minimal as possible. Mr. Gentilhomme seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Sousa Signs, LLC, on behalf of Tice Hamblet, requests ADR approval for a new 25.6 sf internally illuminated wall sign at 72 Storrs Street in the Opportunity Corridor Performance (OCP) District. (ZBA-0094-2023)

Jason Gagnon with Sousa Signs, LLC represented the application.

Mr. Gagnon explained this sign will be identical to the sign on the Storrs Street frontage and is going to be mounted on the rear entrance so people in the parking lot can locate the store.

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Mr. King wanted to know why one is gray and the other is white?

Mr. Gagnon explained the white sign was taken of the store on Storrs Street. The sign appearing as grey is the same sign just not turned on.

Co-Chair Doherty made a motion to approve as submitted, seconded by Mr. King. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Building Permits in Performance Districts

5. 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)

Joe Kasper (Delta Dental), Jonathon Halle (Warren Street Architects) and Jeff Paquin (The New England Holiday Light Company) presented the application.

Mr. Kasper explained there are two buildings being presented today. The application is to have LED lighting along the facia of both buildings. The second component of the application is they are looking to add up lighting to the building and the landscaping.

Co-Chair Hengen asked the applicant if the up lighting for the trees is permanent or seasonal. Mr. Kasper explained this is permanent.

Mr. Simonis asked for clarification, and the Applicant confirmed that the lighting will go around the trees, building and roof.

Ms. Savage asked, and the Applicant confirmed that all of the lights are RGB which can change colors.

Co-Chair Hengen finds the soft up lighting in white on the building itself to be lovely and adds warmth. Co-Chair Doherty agreed with Co-Chair Hengen, and also added the white light on the tree's also looks sharp.

Co-Chair Hengen stated that the cornice lighting has a whole separate feel. She further stated it is not necessary to find the building at night as the building could be closed.

Mr. King stated that with the overhang those up lights are already lighting the cornice. He felt there is no need for redundancy of the cornice lights.

Mr. Gentilhomme has a hard time with the cornice lighting. Would like to see the lighting limited to holidays, and curious what the duration is for a Holiday lighting display.

Ms. Savage explained that the cornice lighting is indictive of the building being in hospitality as you are drawing attention to the building. This is an office building. This type of lighting is often attracting people to a destination or hospitality.

The Applicant explained the goal of the trim lighting is to reduce the cost yearly to do seasonal holiday lighting. This is a semi-permanent product. Not being installed each year. He stated that with the Hotel Concord lighting you are not seeing the light source there is a trim piece. He stated the trim lighting with this project is muted compared to Hotel Concord. The customer wants seasonal holiday lighting and might not have on 100% of the time.

Co-Chair Hengen asked if the intent is to keep both buildings looking the same.

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Applicant responded, yes. He noted that the lighting is not only for aesthetics but for safety and security of the building's employees. He stated the RGB lights will only be on trees and not the building as the brick will not show the RGB lighting the same way due to the darkness of the brick.

Co-Chair Hengen noted there are several elements to this application in front the committee and they will vote on them separately. The changeable color of the cornice, up lighting and the trees.

Mr. Gentilhomme made a motion that the committee approve white up lighting of the buildings and the trees, seconded by Mr. King.

Mr. Simonis asked if there is a way to limit the time the lights are on as Concord after 10 or 11pm is dormant and lighting for nothing.

Applicant suggested for safety the lighting should keep in mind for people might be working.

Ms. Savage explained it might be difficult to put that limitation on the owner.

Co-Chair Hengen asked if there was any other discussion for the committee on this motion. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Co-Chair Hengen made a motion not to approve the cornice lighting of any of the buildings. Mr. King seconded.

Mr. Proctor did not know if they can limit the lighting to the small canopies on the building or do the front canopy of the building.

Applicant asked if the light was concealed and hid the light source if there is a way to flood the top floor in color of their choice.

Co-Chair Hengen explained her motion was for no lighting on the top of the building.

Mr. Gentilhomme asked if he can amend the motion to address the cornice lighting as presented due to the committee not discussing building two. Mr. Gentilhomme suggested to have a subtle glow of light on building two as it is a commercial building and the other building feels residential. He stated the light could be a part of the architecture to come back to another meeting to discuss. No amendment was made.

Co-Chair Hengen stated the applicant could come back for further discussion on cornice lighting. She discussed how the City of Concord needs to look at addressing all future buildings and how they will handle lighting. Co-Chair Doherty agreed with Co-Chair Hengen that there is one building with cornice lighting, Hotel Concord, that people use as an example. The Concord Hotel's application for such lighting is currently under review and has not been permanently approved by either ADR of Planning Board.

Co-Chair Hengen asked for the committee to vote on the motion currently on the floor. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

6. Classic Signs, Inc, on behalf of Sam's Club, requests a one (1) year extension to their November 17, 2021 ADR approval for façade modifications to the building at 304 Sheep Davis Road in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. (2021-44)

Mr. Bass informed the committee the applicant is requesting from the Planning Board a one (1) extension to their 2021 ADR approval. ADR approvals are good for two years and if the applicant does not act on them they are nullified.

Mr. Doherty moved to approve as submitted. Ms. Hengen seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

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7. Hotel Concord Lighting update.

Staff has not been contacted by the Hotel Concord to follow up on the six-month conditional approval.

Co-Chair Hengen stated the six-month probation period expired in February 2023. She asked where this needs to go next to re-visit.

Mr. Bass explained it is a matter of getting the applicant back to ADR.

Co-Chair Hengen suggested ADR and Planning Board have a further discussion regarding developing building lighting guidelines to provide consistency and direction for the City and applicants.

Otherwise, proposals similar to Hotel Concord and 1 Delta Drive will keep being brought forward and reviewed in a vacuum when each such proposal affects a far broader geographic area.

Co-Chair Hengen mentioned there were specific guidelines for downtown projects prepared as part of the Main Street redevelopment project. The committee should review them to see what is offered with regard to cornice lighting.

Mr. Bass briefly shared the ADR guidelines, issued in 1991 and said he would also share the more recent downtown guidelines. Revising these guidelines is certainly something this committee could pursue.

Adjournment

Co-Chair Hengen made a motion, seconded by Member Simonis, to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 a.m. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Krista Tremblay

The next meeting will be held on December 5, 2023