

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee

September 7, 2004

The Design Review Committee held its regular meeting on Tuesday, September 7, 2004, in the Second Floor Conference Room at City Hall at 8:30 AM.

Present at the meeting were Duene Cowan, Claude Gentilhomme, Elizabeth Hengen, Susanne Meyer, and Hamilton Rice. Messrs. Woodward, Henninger, and Pollock, and Ms. Osgood from the Planning Division were also present.

The Design Review Committee met in order to review the proposed design of certain sites, buildings, building alterations and signs that are on the Planning Board's regular agenda for September 15, 2004, and which are subject to the provisions of the City of Concord's Zoning Ordinance in respect to Architectural Design Review. Comments on and criticisms of the items were made.

The following proposals were evaluated.

Agenda Items

Consideration of proposed placement and design of signs:

- **130 Pembroke Road Business Center**

Members noted that this is a new freestanding sign in the same location as the previous sign on the lot.

The Design Review Committee found the proposed design and placement of the sign to be appropriate for the location proposed, and recommended approval as submitted.

- **Burlington Coat Factory** at Capitol Shopping Center, Storrs Street

Attorney Mark Puffer was present on behalf of the applicant and explained this was the standard corporate logo. It will be individual red/burnt orange letters with white relief. Ms. Hengen suggested looking at the contrast of the lettering color with the background as she thought the lettering might disappear into the dark red background of the building.

Mr. Puffer reported that at this time they are only requesting approval of the large sign on the Storrs Street frontage.

The Design Review Committee found the proposed design and placement of the sign to be appropriate for the location proposed, and recommended approval as submitted.

- **Capitol Auto Repair** at 59 Pleasant Street (2 signs)

April Dunn and Gelson Corren were present as applicants.

Ms. Dunn explained that the upper panel on the building had recently been repainted a cream color and they were just changing the lettering to reflect a change in business name. The affixed signage will consist of individual green letters the same size as the letters for the last business. These will be 18 inch letters placed on the existing band above the garage doors. The intent is to only replace the letters to reflect the change in business name.

The Committee suggested matching the background of the freestanding sign to the color of the building, and that the colors on the freestanding sign should be the same as the affixed signs. They further suggested that the phone number be in black and the lettering in green. Members also suggested removing the area code from the telephone number to make it a little less crowded.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval of the affixed signs as submitted and approval of the freestanding sign subject to matching the background of the freestanding sign to the background of the affixed signs, deleting the area code from the phone number, and change the lettering to green to match the affixed sign with the phone number a contrasting black.

Ms. Dunn concurred with the recommendations and indicated they would submit revised drawings in time for review by the Planning Board.

- **Concord City Auditorium** at 2 Prince Street

Joe Andrews, from the City's General Services Department, was present and explained the design for this carved wood affixed sign on the auditorium entrance facing Green Street at the Prince Street entrance. He reported they proposed a black and white sign but members noted a color version of the drawing and expressed a preference for the yellow and blue graphics. Members also suggested that the yellow circles be either concave or convex to give the sign depth.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval as submitted with the understanding that the sign would be in blue and yellow.

- **Long John Silver** at 321 Loudon Road

Mr. Henninger explained that the Design Review Committee had reviewed and the Planning Board approved sign graphics depicting a large fish and small lettering. They now propose revisions which would make the lettering the larger element with a small fish. There would be no change to the Taco Bell sign on the same building.

The Committee discussed the proportionality of the two signs and agreed that the front reads like two separate store fronts and noted that the sign change reinforced this.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval as submitted.

- **Sign A Rama** at 190 Manchester Street

There was no information available indicating the height of the freestanding sign and the Code Administrator advised that it could be no higher than the current sign and no more than twenty feet.

Members noted it appeared that they were proposing a variable message board and expressed the opinion that the variable message element should be eliminated.

Members suggested that the affixed signs be moved closer to the entrance with a border edge to the signs.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval subject to moving the affixed signs closer to the entrance with a border edge to the signs and the elimination of the variable message board from the freestanding sign.

- **Swope & Nicolosi** at 210 Rumford Street

The Design Review Committee found the proposed design and placement of the sign to be appropriate for the location proposed, and recommended approval as submitted.

Site and building plans related to an application by **E. Douglas Ryan at 234 Loudon Road.**

Mr. Woodward updated the Committee and reported that no revised plans had been submitted for the building or signage at this time.

Site and building plans related to renovations by **Sulloway & Hollis at 25 School Street.**

(Ms. Meyer recused herself.)

Anthony Mento, architect from Sheerr McCrystal Palson, was present on behalf of the applicant and explained that this had started out as a site plan application but, due to budget considerations, the proposed vestibule had been eliminated. The major component at this time was the addition of a light well to the westerly side of the building, painted to match the existing building.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval as submitted.

Revisions to previously approved building plans for **Demoulas Supermarkets at Gully Hill Road.**

Mr. Pollock introduced this proposal to revise the rooftop screening previously reviewed by the Committee and approved by the Planning Board. He explained the approved plans included rooftop screening around the mechanical equipment on all sides of the building. The applicant now proposes to eliminate the screening along the

rear and easterly elevations and to place screening on the westerly elevation and in selected spots on the north elevation.

In visiting the site, Mr. Pollock noted that the entrance structures helped to screen the rooftop structures from the west. However, from the east the structures are visible.

Michael Oratovsky, architect for the applicant, explained that the new construction is about three feet lower than the existing building and the rooftop units are four to five feet tall. Looking from the street, he felt the equipment will not be visible.

Members felt the small individual pieces of screening as proposed called attention to the mechanical structures.

Members noted that the zoning ordinance required screening along the back because the site abuts a residential zoning district. However, the Committee felt that the existing natural screening provided screening for the back of the building.

The Design Review Committee recommended full rooftop screening along the north and west sides with the understanding that if the abutting property is further developed the rear elevation will then also need to be screened.

Revisions to previously approved building plans for Enterprise Rent a Car at 28 Manchester Street.

Mr. Pollock explained that the Design Review Committee had reviewed this plan and the Planning Board had approved it a number of months ago. They are now preparing to start construction and propose some revisions to the approved elevations. The revisions include changes to the trim color and to window details.

Members noted that the revisions are not a significant deviation from the approved elevations and recommended approval as submitted.

Clarification of previous approval of building plans for Mulberry Place.

John Lariviere was present for the applicant and explained that a few months ago they had received approval of revisions to the elevations of the previously approved townhouses, including the removal of a colored band above the garages. They came away from that meeting with the understanding that the recommendation of the Committee was to delete the band on the sides and rear as well as the front. They chose to eliminate the band because they have used it in other developments and have found that it tends to trap water behind it and create problems. However, no revised plans were submitted until after the first buildings were completed.

The Design Review Committee recommended that the band not be installed and construction proceed without further modification to the building.

Signage plans related to an application by **Capital Region Health Care Corporation at 60 Commercial Street.**

Raymond Gerbi was present from Concord Hospital and presented four signs for which they had received variances from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. He explained they had received approval for four signs versus the three signs allowed under the Zoning Ordinance, and for the combined size of the signs.

Members did not feel "at Horseshoe Pond" was a necessary element to the signage. The Committee felt that the second sign really read like a second sign and not a continuation of a total message as intended.

The Committee was of the opinion that the second sign created a disjointed and distracting message which adversely affected the appearance of the building.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval subject to the deletion of the panel with the words "at Horseshoe Pond".

Site and building plans related to an application by **Randy and Daryl Blossom at 58 South Street.**

Edward Roberge, engineer, was present on behalf of the applicant, as was Randy Blossom.

Mr. Roberge reported that they had received several variances from the Zoning Board of Adjustment, including a variance to allow a handicapped access ramp to the front entrance. However, they have decided not to construct the ramp at this time.

He reported they planned no exterior changes to the building itself but would construct a wheelchair lift inset into the rear deck entrance to the building.

There will be a freestanding sign but no affixed sign.

Ms. Meyer suggested that the rhododendrons proposed at the end of the fence were susceptible to breakage from snow removal activities and they should look at something more durable.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval of the site and signage with the substitution of a shade tree for the Bradford Pear proposed in the southwest corner as well as the substitution of a hardier species than the proposed rhododendrons at the end of the fence by the entrance drive.

Site and building plans related to an application by **Robert E. Mariano at 146 Manchester Street.**

Mr. Pollock introduced this proposal to construct an approximately 5300 square foot addition to the existing service area. He reported the addition will match the existing side elevations.

John Rokeh, from Holden Engineering & Surveying, Inc., was present on behalf of the applicant.

Ms. Meyer suggested coordinating the planting bed in the front of the property with the sidewalk that will be constructed as part of the widening project for Manchester Street.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval of the site plan only as submitted with the suggestion that the edge of the planting bed be lined up with the proposed sidewalk along Manchester Street.

Mr. Rokeh indicated they will return with photographs of the existing building and with revised elevations showing actual colors and details.

Pre-Application Discussion Items

- Signage changes for the **Eagle Square building.**

Jim Morris was present from Orr & Reno and explained they have offices at Eagle Square. He explained that while they occupy four of the six floors of the building, they have never had any visible signage and have had difficulty with people finding their way. They have worked with the building's owner to develop an overall signage plan for the building. They were now before the Committee to get input about whether they were on the right track.

He explained that much of what was originally approved years ago for signage for the building has not been implemented.

The proposal today is for signs with a white background with gold lettering for the building identification and panels for the smaller tenants. Orr & Reno would have individual brass letters on the front of the building and would need a variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment for that.

Members suggested that the rear entrance signage as shown is too high to be useful. Something nearer the door would be better.

(Mr. Gentilhomme left at 10:45 AM.)

Mr. Morris reported there would be another "One Eagle Square" sign with key tenant directory near the rear door. The Committee felt the "One Eagle Square" wall sign with three different fonts was not appropriate for the Class A office space it represents.

He was cautioned when the individual letters are attached to the building they should be attached at the joint and not drilled into the brick.

Mr. Morris was asked to provide a master sign plan for the building updating the one approved in the 1980s.

- Site and building plans related to an application by **Capital Regional Development Council on behalf of White Mountain Imaging on Chenell Drive.**

Mr. Woodward introduced this proposal to construct a 45,000 square foot manufacturing building. He reminded the Committee that members had reviewed the site and building plans last month and made some suggestions. They had revised the plans based on those comments.

Dana Adams from Opechee Construction explained that they had redefined the entryway with a wide band of masonry. The Committee noted the changed elevations were a substantial improvement.

Ms. Meyer suggested that for greatest benefit the plant material on the new road frontage should be clustered near the detention pond for screening rather than spreading it out.

Mr. Adams was advised to submit an application to Code Administration for signage.

The Design Review Committee recommended that a substantial evergreen hedge be planted at the southeast corner of the site to further screen the loading dock.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval of the elevations as submitted and recommended that they cluster the plantings proposed along the east side to screen the small loading dock and to add a substantial evergreen hedge at the southeast corner of the site to further screen the main loading dock.

There was no further business to come before the Committee and the meeting adjourned at 11:14 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen L. Henninger
Assistant City Planner

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