

**City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee**

June 10, 2008

The Design Review Committee held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, June 10, 2008, in the Second Floor Conference Room in City Hall at 8:30 AM.

Present at the meeting were Duene Cowan, Jay Doherty, Claude Gentilhomme, and Elizabeth Hengen. Messrs. Woodward and Henninger, Ms. Hebert and Ms. Osgood of the City Planning Division were also present, as was Mr. Walker, the City's Zoning Compliance Officer.

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 June 18, 2008, 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:

- **Anderson & Cloues** at 13 Green Street

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

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

- **FairPoint Communications** at 12 South Street

Richard Torpey was present on behalf of the applicant and explained that the proposed sign is a reflection of the re-branding from Verizon. The new sign will be reduced in size from the existing signage to comply with the current Zoning Ordinance. It will not be internally illuminated but will have the indirect lighting that is being used now.

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

- **Granite State Naturals** at 58 North Main Street

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Members felt the proposed sign needed to be centered and lowered so the entire sign fits within the existing blue panel. Members suggested they consider a different background color inasmuch as the proposed background color does not provide enough contrast to be effective.

The Design Review Committee found the proposed design and placement of the sign to be appropriate for the location and use, and recommended approval provided the sign is lowered and centered so the entire sign fits in the blue panel. The Committee further suggested that the applicant consider a different background color to create more contrast from the blue panel.

- **Honey Dew** at 374 Loudon Road (2 signs)

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Henninger explained these applications for a new panel in the existing freestanding sign and an affixed sign in the sign band at the newly constructed retail building.

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

- **St. John International University** at 35A Pleasant Street

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Members felt the sign was small and could get lost but that it served to identify the use for visitors.

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

Site and building plans related to an application by **125 North State Street LLC** at **125 North State Street**.

Mr. Henninger introduced this proposal and explained that the applicants propose to replace a garage on this property that collapsed this winter. He explained they had also requested revisions to the previously approved Conditional Use Permit to not construct the required number of parking spaces. He noted that the revisions to the CUP would adversely impact the existing vegetation on the site.

Jonathan Halle from Warrenstreet Architects was present on behalf of the applicants, as was Attorney Richard Uchida.

Mr. Uchida explained that if they needed to use the parking provided by the Conditional Use Permit they would propose to use one of the options available in the Zoning Ordinance for buffering residential properties abutting non-residential uses. He expected that would probably be a combination of fence and vegetation but he has not worked that out with Planning staff yet.

Mr. Halle explained the addition was intended to be one large conference room with a new entrance on the westerly elevation. In order to construct the addition, they will remove the existing porch.

Ms. Hengen expressed concern that the proposed addition adds a curved feature that is out of character with the building. She felt it could look very odd and impede on the architectural significance of the building. She asked if it could be a rectangle instead of curved.

Mr. Gentilhomme liked the approach taken because the addition distinguishes itself from the existing building. It does not compete with the existing building.

Mr. Cowan liked the playfulness of the curve. He did not think it would be apparent as a curved feature from North State Street.

Mr. Halle also noted that they are doing a tremendous amount of landscaping on the property.

The Design Review Committee, with one non-concurring vote, recommended approval of the building elevations as submitted.

Mr. Halle reported that a landscape plan would be submitted in a day or so.

Site and building plans related to an application by Concord Christian Academy at 37 Regional Drive.

Mr. Henninger explained this proposal to construct a 50,975 square foot addition to the existing building for classrooms, teacher offices, a stage and a 45-foot tall gymnasium.

Cindy Lewis from Architectural Link was present on behalf of the applicant and described changes made to the building elevations as a result of the Committee's comments last month. She also pointed out that, as a result of budget considerations, the originally proposed vinyl siding will now be split face block and EZ brick in grey to match as closely as possible the existing building. She reported the north and east elevations are well screened with existing mature vegetation. Members felt they needed to supplement that vegetation with understory plantings to provide better screening.

Mr. Gentilhomme suggested providing some distinction at the top to provide an end to the building, something to cap the building. Ms. Lewis agreed.

Mr. Gentilhomme also asked if Ms. Lewis had considered using the architecture of the main entrance for the entrance proposed at the southeast corner of the gymnasium rather than the architecture of the former pool building. Ms. Lewis responded that she could do that.

Members suggested placing additional shade trees in front of the proposed play area to shade that area.

Members also suggested continuing the roof line of the existing building to create a band in the large mass of the gymnasium building.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval with the modifications discussed, including the addition of a stronger band at the cap to the classroom addition, using a flat thick canopy for the gymnasium building entrance, and adding shade trees just south of the play area or within it. They further recommended adding a band at the level of the existing rooftop to break up the mass of the gymnasium building. Ms. Lewis agreed and would be providing new elevations for the Planning Board to consider.

Site and building plans related to an application by **2 Pillsbury Street LLC at 30 Pillsbury Street.**

Mr. Doherty stepped down from the Committee and presented for the applicant.

Ms. Hebert explained this proposal to demolish an existing single-story building and to construct a new 15,000 square foot three-story office building as well as to reconfigure the existing parking lot. She explained that the Committee had reviewed the plans last month and provided comments. Revised building elevations have now been provided.

Mr. Doherty explained the changes made to the building. He reported that the base is now a split face block. He reported that they had tried to keep it vertical in some spaces and then break it up horizontally near the top. They will continue to use spandrel panels to match the existing buildings at 1 and 2 Pillsbury Street. They have also strengthened the top cornice and entrance canopy.

Ron Bourcier from The HL Turner Group was also present on behalf of the applicant.

Members felt this was a remarkable improvement over last month's design and recommended approval as revised.

Site and building plans related to an application by **Washington Street Estates at 45-47 Washington Street in Penacook.**

Ms. Hebert explained this proposal to convert the former Hoyt Electric warehouse and home to eight residential units and to construct a four-car garage and a three-car garage. She explained that the Committee had reviewed photo simulations last month, provided comments, and requested that building elevations be submitted. Building elevations have now been provided.

Timothy Bernier from TF Bernier Inc. and Alan Johns, applicant, were present to answer questions from the Committee.

Mr. Johns explained that they propose to replace the existing windows with similar windows, replace the existing siding with white vinyl siding with red shutters. They also plan to keep the existing doorways. The buildings will have red doors and some of the buildings will have a red standing seam roof and some will have a shingle roof. The older house will have a patio off the existing porch. He reported there will be no changes to the size or location of windows on the main house but there will be some changes to the windows in the existing rear additions to the building.

There was a suggestion that shutters not be used on all the windows on the Washington Street frontage as they may add clutter, particularly to the street façade. Mr. Johns agreed.

Mr. Gentilhomme commented about the main entrances to Units 47-2, 47-3, and 47-4 and suggested strengthening the doorways, perhaps making the canopies wider. Mr. Johns agreed and explained they planned to use six-inch columns and will extend and thicken the shed roofs over the entrances.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval with the modifications to the entrances to Units 47-2, 47-3, and 47-4 as well as elimination of shutters on the front facades.

Ms. Hebert explained the landscape plan for the project and reported it is a tight site with courtyard spaces and opportunities for unit owners to do some landscaping themselves. The existing landscaping is pretty extensive already.

Site and building plans related to an application by Woodside School, Inc. and William O. and Diane J. Pratt, Jr. at 126 South Fruit Street.

Mr. Henninger introduced this proposal to convert an existing single family house to a preschool classroom, along with revisions to the parking lot.

(Mr. Gentilhomme left the meeting at 10:15 AM.)

Doug Proctor, from Warrenstreet Architects, and Will Walter, contractor, were present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Proctor explained that they are essentially gutting the interior of the building and constructing a large classroom in the space. The main access will be from the proposed handicapped access ramp at the rear of the building. He reported that all of the siding will be removed and will be replaced with cementitious siding in grey to match the abutting existing building. The roof will also be replaced in a similar color to make the two buildings appear as a campus. They also propose to remove the existing front door.

The committee suggested that the front door be replaced with a window. Mr. Proctor concurred with that suggestion and advised that the revised elevations would be provided for the Planning Board's consideration.

Mr. Henninger then discussed the site landscaping and noted that there are a number of existing trees on the site that provide good canopy.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval of the site and building plans as submitted.

There was no further business to come before the Committee and the meeting adjourned at 10:25 AM.

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Respectfully submitted,

Stephen L. Henninger
Assistant City Planner

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