

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

**November 10, 2009**

The Design Review Committee held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, November 10, 2009, in the Second Floor Conference Room in City Hall at 8:30 AM.

Present at the meeting were Duene Cowan, Jay Doherty (who arrived at 9:10 AM), 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 Administrator and Michael Santa, Code Administrator.

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 November 18, 2009, 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:

- **Big Al's Brew** at 58 North Main Street (1 hanging sign)

Russ Aubertine from Advantage Signs was present on behalf of the applicant and explained this was a replacement sign for a new business.

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

- **Checkmate Pizza** at 41 Washington Street (2 affixed signs)

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Walker reported that these signs were erected without benefit of permit and were now being brought into compliance.

Mr. Woodward asked whether the awning was over public property and Mr. Walker responded that it is placed over the stairs which he believes are private property but he indicated he will review the location to be certain.

Committee members felt the sign was inappropriate and did not blend in with the architecture of the building and the neighborhood. The telephone number is

disproportionate to any other text and needs to be scaled down. Members felt that it would be difficult for someone passing by to read the name of the business. There are too many elements to the sign and the color scheme in general is jarring. It is too busy. The sign is too big for its location on the building and looks temporary.

The Committee was of the opinion that the sign needs to be reduced in size and integrated better into the building.

The Design Review Committee recommended that the Planning not approve this sign at this time and encourage the applicant to revise the design to reduce its size and integrate the design more appropriately into the building and neighborhood.

- **Danais Realty** at 48 Pleasant Street (free standing sign)

Rob McIntyre was present on behalf of the applicant and explained this is a completely new sign for three prospective tenants of the building.

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

- **Exit 1st Realty** at 2 South State Street (freestanding sign)

Russ Aubertine from Advantage Signs was present on behalf of the applicant and explained this is a new sign.

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

- **Irving Oil** at 414 South Main Street (replacement panel in freestanding sign)

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Henninger explained this is a replacement panel consistent with the Circle K signage approved for their other locations in the city.

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

- **Parable Bible Bookstore** at 85 Manchester Street (free standing sign)

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Members felt the proposed sign looked like the signage for all of the car dealerships along that strip.

Mr. Walker explained that the size of the sign was permitted under the prior Zoning Ordinance so they are allowed to continue the non-compliant size. The applicant is replacing the existing panel in the sign.

The Committee found the appearance of the sign to be acceptable but suggested that there be fewer words on the sign. If the applicant was selective about what they highlighted on the sign, they could then increase the font size for the remaining words. Members felt they were missing out on an opportunity to properly promote the business because much of the lettering at the top and bottom of the sign will not be legible.

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

- **Wok Inn Buffet** at 94 Fort Eddy Road (affixed sign)

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Henninger explained this is a replacement for some of the existing words on the panel in the same style as existing. The letters spelling "Buffet" will remain and "Wok Inn" will replace the other existing words in the current style.

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

Site and building plans related to an application by **Duprey Acquisitions, LLC, on behalf of the City of Concord**, for expansion of an existing parking lot at **6 Theatre Street**.

Mr. Henninger introduced this proposal to clear cut the site along Storrs Street and to construct a surface parking lot. The proposal would eliminate all of the vegetation that currently screens the backs of all of the existing buildings along South Main Street. There is no interior parking lot landscaping proposed.

He reported that City staff has suggested that the applicants construct fewer parking spaces along the westerly side of the lot. That would allow for the retention of the screening vegetation and eliminate the need for the proposed retaining walls.

Ms. Hengen recalled that all of the past downtown plans and the Opportunity Corridor Plan have called for further development along Storrs Street and creation of a streetscape. She felt this would eliminate any opportunity to implement those long-standing plans.

Mr. Cowan felt the need to keep some form of tree line behind the South Main Street buildings.

It was the opinion of the Committee that this design as proposed will take the City back a step.

Mr. Cowan also questioned whether the rear of the South Main Street buildings would become visible from the interstate.

The Design Review Committee expressed concern about exposing the view of the backs of the abutting South Main Street buildings and felt that it would be worth reducing the number of parking spaces to create an area to continue to screen the upper level to South Main Street. The parking lot as proposed does not support the Master Plan for that area. Members also suggested that the applicants hire a registered landscape architect to revise the site plan because with modifications it may be more palatable.

Site and building plans related to an application by **Scandia Hall LLC on behalf of the City of Concord**, for a redevelopment of an existing non-residential building into four dwelling units at **14 Knight Street**.

John Jordan, architect and a partner in this development, was present on behalf of the applicants.

Mr. Henninger pointed out that the City is selling this property to the applicants for this development.

Ms. Hebert introduced this proposal to convert an existing building to four residential units with parking off Knight Street.

Mr. Jordan explained that they are trying to return the building as much as possible to its original appearance. He reported there will be two new entrances on the back of the building. A lot of the windows are missing or in disrepair so they are pursuing pricing to recreate or replace the original round tops and arches. The replacement windows will be white but they are not sure yet whether it will be aluminum or wood. The mansard roof will have slate colored architectural shingles. They are repainting the arches white as the original. Transoms over the doors will be preserved.

Ms. Hengen asked if they could retain the existing window frames and Mr. Jordan responded they are not sure yet because they need to see what kind of damage there is to the existing frames. Their goal is to keep the historic nature of the building. It has an interesting history which should be preserved. The attraction was the historic property. Mr. Jordan advised that he is preparing to nominate this property for the National Historic Register.

Mr. Hengen asked about the exterior doors and Mr. Jordan responded that because these will be condominiums they will need to be maintenance free. The doors will be historic-appearing but may be metal or fiberglass.

Mr. Henninger noted that as part of the Route 3 project Knight Street will be reconstructed in the Spring.

(Mr. Doherty arrived at 9:10 AM.)

Ms. Hebert discussed the landscape plan. She explained they are adding shrubs and perennials and are working with the neighbor to the north to add trees to create a buffer. Right now there are no trees that relate to Knight Street so City staff has suggested adding a couple of trees adjacent to the parking. There is a natural vegetative buffer around the back side of the lot that will remain to screen the adjacent properties.

Members supported the staff recommendation to add trees toward the street as much as possible.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval as submitted with the recommendation that the rounded windows and transoms be preserved, or recreated, as they are critical to maintaining the historic significance of the building.

Building plans related to an application by **Friendly Ice Cream Corporation, on behalf of O Ice LLC**, is proposing to replace the existing fire-damaged restaurant at **147 Loudon Road**. Preliminary plans for signs have also been submitted for review.

Mr. Henninger introduced this proposal to replace the restaurant building recently damaged by fire. He reported they propose to rebuild within the footprint of the existing building with a slight reduction of floor area. The existing perimeter parking and landscaping will remain.

John Ineson from EDM Architects and David Panella from Friendly's were present to discuss this application.

Mr. Ineson explained that the building will be moved back to conform to the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Henninger asked for clarification of the lighting proposal. He pointed out that there are a number of lighting fixtures along the perimeter of the property shown on the plan with a note that they will not be used. Mr. Panella responded that the proposal is to retain the lighting the way it is today. The poles and fixtures being used were not damaged in the fire. The perimeter lighting was existing when Friendly's bought the property years ago and they have not been used by Friendly's and are not intended to be used now. They do not intend to remove the poles and fixtures. The perimeter lights are pretty much covered by the vegetation that has grown up around them. In response to questioning by the committee, Mr. Panella advised the committee that the existing lighting fixtures were of 'shoebox' design.

Mr. Henninger reported that City staff recommended providing two additional ornamental trees along the Loudon Road frontage. Mr. Ineson advised that the plan has been revised accordingly.

Mr. Ineson responded to staff's earlier comment about the refrigerator/cooler structure at the rear of the building. It will be painted to match the lap siding on the building and explained that landscaping has been added on the west side of the cooler. The existing perimeter fence and building will screen both the cooler and the loading area. All the roof top mechanical units will be screened from view by a fence and the peaked roofs.

Mr. Gentilhomme found the design to be very comfortable but felt it would enhance the design if they provided architectural details on the west elevation to break up the long prominent wall. Mr. Ineson suggested treatment elements such as the columns used along with windows on the east side to provide a little reveal. Members agreed with this suggestion.

Mr. Ineson explained it will be a brick veneer building with white trim and vinyl siding in the soffits.

Jay Come from The Sign Center noted that they had pre-existing non-conforming signage. The existing freestanding sign is a pylon sign with a reader board. The proposed free standing sign will be in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance. He reported they have withdrawn their application package for signage for the time being while they resolve signage issues related to compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Cowan felt the art deco front door did not match the colonial building architecture. Members suggested exploring options for the design of the red vinyl in the door. The shape of the applied vinyl on the glass of the front door is not consistent with the colonial revival architectural style.

Mr. Cowan felt the arched sign element over the front door did not fit well with the design of the building. After discussion with the applicant, it was agreed to reduce the width of the arch to expose the vertical quoins on either side of the front entrance up to the cornice line.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval as submitted with the stipulation that they add an architectural element on the west elevation and that they reduce the width of the arched eyebrow over the front door. The Committee further suggested exploring other geometric shapes for the vinyl in the front entrance door.

There was no further business to come before the Committee and the meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen L. Henninger  
Assistant City Planner