

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

March 9, 2010

The Design Review Committee held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 9, 2010, in the Second Floor Conference Room in City Hall at 8:30 AM.

Present at the meeting were Duene Cowan, Jennifer Czysz, Jay Doherty, and Ron King. 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.

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 March 17, 2010, 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:

- **Breathe Esthetics Spa Services** at 53 N. Main Street (1 hanging sign)

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Members felt that, while the graphics were attractive, the light green lettering on this sign disappeared and they suggested highlighting the lettering.

Mr. Cowan also expressed the hope that they would not be making new holes in the brick to attach the sign to the building.

The Design Review Committee found the design and placement of the sign to be appropriate for the location and use proposed, and recommended approval with the suggestion that they shadow or outline the lettering so that it is more visible from a distance.

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

Mr. Woodward reported that the Design Review Committee had previously reviewed this sign proposal on a number of occasions, and recommended approval as revised with the understanding that the applicant would submit revised sign permits to Code Administration for the three proposed signs.

He reported that the Planning Board had expressed some confusion regarding the number and size of the proposed signs and concern about the text on the signs, and tabled action on February 17, 2010, on this proposal in order to receive verification from the Zoning Administrator that the signage complies with the size limitations of the Zoning Ordinance; and to allow the applicant the opportunity to revise the design of the front sign so that it only has the logo and the street address, to provide only the logo and the telephone number on the sign for the side and that it be proportionate in size to the front sign and, further, that the applicant submit a complete application package including application for all of the signs, and specific dimensions for all signs.

James Roy was present as applicant to answer questions from the Committee. He explained that for many years there has been a sign at this location showing the telephone number. He now wants to update the sign as part of an overall renovation. This is mostly a take-out and delivery business so advertising the telephone number is important to him.

Mr. Henninger explained that the Design Review Committee could comment on the aesthetics of the sign but not on the content. The organization of the elements of the sign is important as it concerns the aesthetics but the Committee cannot tell the applicant that they can only use certain content on the sign.

Mr. Cowan suggested that the designs of the side panel and the front panel might be more appropriately reversed. He also felt that the telephone number is difficult to read as shown. Mr. King suggested that the applicant use a more delicate font to make the telephone number more visible and easier to read without overpowering the rest of the message.

Mr. Roy explained that there will be three panels wrapping the signage around the structure over the stoop at the entrance to the business. All the panels will be the same height. There will be black edging around each panel.

Mr. Henninger reminded the applicant that he needed to submit a complete sign package with a clear picture of each sign proposed.

Mr. Cowan suggested that the signs be narrower, and then allow the logo to break the panel edges above and below the front panel sign. Mr. Henninger suggested that a raised trim be added around the edge of the signs to make the sign appear to be incorporated into the building design.

Mr. Roy indicated he would consider the Committee's suggestions, consult with his sign company, and return with new designs for consideration next month.

- **Labor Ready** at 122 Loudon Road (renovations to existing free standing sign)

Glenn Schadlick from Ne-Op-Co Signs was present on behalf of the applicant and explained they are refurbishing an existing freestanding sign for a new occupant of the building.

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

- **Northeast Electrical Distributors** at the Ralph Pill Building at 22 Bridge Street (1 hanging sign)

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Henninger explained this proposal for a replacement sign. It will be the same shape with just an upgrade in materials.

Mr. Cowan noted that the proposed yellow color disappears into the white background and suggested that they add a blue border around the lightening bolt to make it visible from a distance.

The Design Review Committee found the design and placement of the sign to be appropriate for the location and use proposed, and recommended approval with the suggestion that they add blue border around the lightening bolt to make it visible from a distance.

- **Rath Young & Pignatelli** at One Capital Plaza (1 affixed sign and a projected image on the storefront window)

Mr. Henninger reported that the Planning Board had expressed concern about the Zoning Administrator's ruling that the image of Mt. Washington proposed to be projected on a storefront window was not part of the sign and asked for a further clarification of the zoning ruling. Mr. Walker reported he was still conducting research to answer the question. The applicant requested consideration of this application be deferred until April.

- **Salon K** at 18 Pleasant Street (1 hanging sign)

Rob McIntyre from New England Signs and Awnings was present on behalf of the applicant.

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

- **Sun Tan City** at 50 Storrs Street (2 affixed signs)

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Cowan noted that the raceway is integrated into the sign. He felt it was a little unusual but worked.

Mr. King suggested that on the sign proposed for the rear of the building they make all the words line up.

The Design Review Committee found the design and placement of the signage to be appropriate for the location and use proposed, and recommended approval with the recommendation that all three words on the sign for the rear of the building be consistent in width.

Site and building plans related to an application by DEW Construction Corporation, on behalf of the City of Concord, at 4 Crescent Street and 0 East Street. (#2010-05)

Ms. Hebert explained this proposal to construct a 14,800 square foot medical office building with 9,412 square feet in the first phase. She reported that last month there was a discussion relative to providing for pedestrian traffic from the street, and they have provided pedestrian connections to the street.

She reported that other revisions included that dumpsters have been pushed back. Street trees will be included as part of the off-site improvements to be constructed by the City. The south elevation gable has increased in size. The east elevation gable has been redesigned. The main entrance to the building was redesigned and centered. Colors have been toned down. A kiosk sign has been added near the corner of the building and a design proposed for a small brick patio area.

Steve Yaw from DEW Construction Corporation explained the revisions to the site and building plans in response to Design Review Committee comments last month. He reported that they have added a sign band on the east elevation over the staff entrance to the building, but had not finalized the design for the sign. The main entrance was redesigned and centered. A sign kiosk was added at the southwest corner of the site and a walkway added from the employee entrance. The screen around the dumpsters will be the same materials as the building. They have also replaced the turquoise accent color originally proposed with a dark green accent.

He reported that they had discussed pedestrian access with the staff at Penacook Family Physicians and learned that more than 97% of their patients arrive in vehicles. Since they have virtually no foot traffic, they plan to address pedestrian access when the second phase is constructed and they know the tenant and use.

Mr. Yaw noted that they had increased the size of the gable on the south façade but not as large as the committee had originally requested. They did add more design detail along the south façade rather than increasing the mass of the roof gable. The reason for a smaller gable was due to the rigid placement of the windows due to the spacing of patient rooms along that wall, and partially to emphasize the additional design details which would be more visible from ground level by passing pedestrians and motorists.

Ms. Czysz suggested providing a defined pathway from the physician's entrance to the parking since it is human nature to take the shortest path possible. Mr. Yaw suggested that might be a good place for some stepping stones.

The committee discussed with Mr. Yaw the provision of a direct pedestrian access to the lobby from Crescent Street. A temporary walkway is being provided in Phase 1 to wrap around the building. After discussion the applicant said they would consider a direct entrance once the tenant for the second phase is determined.

Committee members recommended adding additional foundation planting (including low growing shrubs and perennials) along the East Street façade and wrapping these plantings around the southeast corner of the building. The committee felt the treatment should be similar to the corner treatment at Crescent and East Street in order to strength the streetscape appearance. It was noted by Ms. Hebert that the proposed evergreen trees to be planted at the southeast corner of the building would block the proposed affixed sign and she recommended that lower growing plantings be used in this area.

Mr. King commented that they could have created a more attractive pedestrian access from East Street. It was discussed that a more curvilinear path be created and incorporated into the expanded planting bed at the southeast corner of the building.

Mr. Yaw concurred with the committee's suggestions.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval subject to revisions to the landscaping and walkways recommended by the committee.

Site and building plans related to an application by St. Paul's School on Dunbarton Road. (#2003-59)

Mr. Henninger introduced this proposal and explained that in 2004 St. Paul's School obtained site plan approval for construction of 13 new residences. They have received approval for 11 so far and have constructed 10 units. Saint Paul's School is now requesting architectural design review for two new duplex units with connecting garages. This will be a white building with green doors and a gray roof.

Ted Kupper from Provan and Lorber was present and explained they propose to add five trees to the site; one will be a street tree and four will be shade trees for the patios and parking spaces.

Mr. Kupper introduced Jim Lauser from UK Architects, PC who described the elevations.

Mr. Cowan suggested that centering an ornamental tree between the two units would provide the appearance of separation between the two units. Mr. Kupper concurred.

Mr. Doherty noted that this building seemed to be set back a little more from the street than the two other residential buildings nearby. Mr. Kupper responded that the placement was intentional as this is a little larger building than the other two.

Mr. King asked if they could do something a little more creative with the front sidewalks and Mr. Kupper indicated that they could.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval subject to adding an ornamental tree in the front of the building, and relaxing the sidewalk design.

There was no further business to come before the Board and the meeting adjourned at 9:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen L. Henninger
Assistant City Planner

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