

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

April 13, 2010

The Design Review Committee held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 13, 2010, in the Second Floor Conference Room in City Hall at 8:30 AM.

Present at the meeting were Jennifer Czysz, Jay Doherty, Claude Gentilhomme, Elizabeth Hengen, Ron King and Frederick Richards. 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 April 14, 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:

- **Capital Valley Counseling Associates, Inc.** for a free standing sign at **8 Centre Street**.

Mr. Henninger explained this was a replacement sign for a new business using the existing sign post.

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

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.

- **Chaos Martial Arts** for an affixed sign and a replacement panel in an existing free standing sign at **89 Fort Eddy Road**.

Mr. Henninger explained these are replacement signs for a new tenant in the existing building.

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

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.

- **Checkmate Pizza** for three affixed signs at **41 Washington Street**.

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant and Mr. Henninger reported that no new information had been received regarding this signage.

Mr. Walker reported he would contact the applicant to learn his plans.

The Design Review Committee recommended postponement until next month.

- **FedEx Office** for two affixed signs and a replacement panel in an existing free standing sign at **10 Fort Eddy Road**.

Mr. Henninger explained this signage was a result of the change in the company's branding.

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

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

- **Friendly's** for revisions to an approved free standing sign at **147 Loudon Road**.

Mr. Henninger explained that when the site plan was approved for the replacement of the burned building, the applicants proposed a reconstructed freestanding sign that was much more elaborate. They now propose to replace the pole cover and to use a more modest sign panel.

Jay Cohn, from The Sign Center, was present on behalf of the applicant and explained that the change in design is the result of the existing overhead utilities being too near the sign. OSHA regulations require a 10 foot separation and the sign as placed is only four feet away. Once they realized that, they decided to clean up the existing sign and put a new post cover on it.

There was a discussion about the text of the sign. Members preferred the existing sign text because it identifies this as a restaurant.

The Design Review Committee recommended that the existing sign panel be cleaned up and retained and the pole covered as requested by the applicant.

- **Here We Grow Again** for an affixed sign and a replacement panel in an existing free standing sign at **89 Fort Eddy Road**.

Mr. Henninger explained these are replacement signs for a new tenant in the existing building.

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Committee members suggested that the applicant rethink the graphics from a visibility standpoint in regard to the panel in the free standing sign. Members indicated that this is not an aesthetic issue but that a simpler sign and larger font would make it easier to read and to pick out from the menu of signs on the freestanding 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 with the suggestion that the applicant consider a simpler sign for the panel in the existing free standing sign, with a larger font to make it more visible.

Revisions to the Master Signage Plan related to an application by Fox Brook Holdings, LLC at 16, 18, and 20 Foundry Street. (#2010-06)

Mr. Henninger explained this proposal to revise signage for the addition of Hesser College to the site of this business park. This package includes affixed signage in addition to a panel in the monument sign. He explained Hesser College had obtained a variance for the affixed sign.

Rachel Goldwasser from Orr & Reno was present on behalf of the applicant and explained that the affixed signage would be channel lettering in keeping with other signs in the complex. The panel in the freestanding sign will have a purple background with white lettering.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval of the master signage plan as submitted and recommended approval of the four (4) new signs.

A Master Signage Plan related to an application by 81 Hall Street, LLC, and Capitol Hotel Company III, LLC at 81 and 91 Hall Street. (#2010-14)

Mr. Henninger explained this proposal for signage for the Residence Inn currently under construction as well as the two-story office building on the site. The master sign plan includes a freestanding sign at the I-93 frontage, a freestanding sign on the Hall Street frontage, an affixed sign on the Residence Inn, and two affixed signs on the office building. He reported that the freestanding sign at the I-93 frontage is consistent with the other hotel signs in that area. Mr. Henninger noted that the proposed freestanding sign for the Hall Street frontage for the Residence Inn is not consistent with other signs along this section of Hall Street. Mr. Henninger showed the committee pictures of the monument signs in place for other businesses along Hall Street including the Best Western and Comfort Inn next door to this project.

Rachel Goldwasser from Orr & Reno was present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Richards was of the opinion that the freestanding sign on Hall Street would not be particularly noticeable in the thickly settled, commercial area and he would support a recommendation of approval.

Ms. Hengen disagreed, feeling that Hall Street has a mix of architectural designs and scale that should be respected. She also noted that the other signs in the area are grounded and the proposed sign is much less bulky.

Ms. Goldwasser responded that of the four lots in the immediate area three are hospitality uses so this signage will be in character with its neighborhood.

Mr. King noted that the top and bottom panels of the proposed freestanding sign are not integrated. The two elements are battling each other. He felt that they needed to integrate all of the signs, which may mean reducing the size of the Residence Inn portion and increasing the size of the other panels and tying the colors of each panel together. The freestanding sign should also be a monument style to coordinate with other signs in the area. Committee members agreed that the graphics are appropriate if they can be integrated into a single monument style sign. The sign as proposed reads as two separate signs mounted on a single pole, the lower sign presents like a reader board. The Committee noted that the other tenant signs should appear to be independent of the Residence Inn.

Committee members found the freestanding sign for the I-93 frontage to be appropriate as submitted.

Members then discussed the affixed sign on the gable end of the Residence Inn. Ms. Goldwasser explained this sign was necessary in order for the Inn to be seen by southbound traffic. The freestanding sign is visible only to northbound traffic.

Members expressed concern that the affixed sign was placed symmetrically within the gable end, but this gable end was not symmetrical due to the window opening next to the sign. The Committee expressed concern that the placement of the sign would look odd both at night and during the day with the window. Mr. Richards noted that there is a guest room at that gable and a lighted sign might be too bright for guests in that room.

The Committee had no comments on the proposed affixed signs for the office building at 81 Hall Street and recommended approval as submitted.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval of the freestanding sign for the I-93 frontage as submitted. The Committee recommended that the freestanding sign on Hall Street be converted to a monument sign with integrated signage and complementary colors to the Residence Inn. The Committee further recommended that the applicant consider revising the size of the graphics of the affixed sign for the Residence Inn to make it better fit in the gable. They should try to adjust the lettering for the Marriott sign so that it takes into account the window in the gable.

Ms. Goldwasser advised the Committee that there was a time constraint in regard to the Residence Inn signs. The Committee indicated that if the changes were made to the affixed and the Hall Street freestanding sign as recommended, then the Design Review Committee is recommending that the Planning Board act favorably on these two signs.

(Mr. Gentilhomme left at 9:35 AM.)

Site and building plans related to an application by the City of Concord at 77 Old Turnpike Road. (#2010-13)

Ms. Hebert introduced this proposal for a fire training facility at the City's former landfill. She explained it is proposed to be at the perimeter of what would be considered the cap of the landfill. A number of the pine trees from the existing pine stand will be preserved along Old Turnpike Road and along the east side of the property. They also propose to plant more trees to screen the property at the southwest corner of the site.

Ed Roberge, City Engineer, and Timothy McGinley, Deputy Fire Chief, were present to answer questions from the Committee.

Mr. Roberge explained they propose to construct a charcoal metal building with sandstone trim. The boundaries of the site will continue to be fenced as they are today.

In answer to concerns expressed by the Committee, Mr. McGinley explained that the building is designed so that flames are not likely to be visible from the outside of the building. The intent of this facility is to train for fighting interior events, mostly smoky rooms and collapsing floors or walls.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval as submitted.

Non-Agenda Item

Carolyn Amrol was present on behalf of **The Prescription Center at 125 North Main Street** and explained that they had placed a generator on the site in a location visible to North Main Street and Centre Street. After discussion with City staff, they have found a place for the generator on the roof of the newest addition to the building over the elevator shaft and maintenance room.

Members suggested that with appropriate screening, the original location might be a better alternative. The Committee noted that the screening needed to integrate into the building's architecture. However, the Committee noted that the opportunity exists to be more creative with the screening and make it more "playful". The Design Review Committee advised that a typical wood or vinyl fence would not be appropriate at this location.

Ms. Amrol indicated she would confer with the property owner and submit an application for action next month.

There was no further business to come before the Committee and the meeting adjourned at 10:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen L. Henninger
Assistant City Planner

o