

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

**June 8, 2010**

The Design Review Committee held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, June 8, 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, Elizabeth Hengen, 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 and Michael Santa, Code Administrator, who attended for the discussion relative to the Concord School District buildings.

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 16, 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:

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

Mr. Henninger reminded the Committee that they had reviewed this application a number of times and provided suggestions. The applicants had now submitted a revised design.

Jamie Roy was present as applicant, as was Brian Mikol as a partner in the business and owner of the real estate.

Mr. Mikol presented revised signage designs with a toned down background color and two color choices for the telephone number on the panels. Mr. Roy noted that the beige background color will match the color of the building's siding.

Mr. Walker noted the Committee's earlier concern relative to the placement of the signage within the existing structure of the small gable and asked for clarification relative to the Committee's current recommendation about the placement. Members agreed that the panels could be placed as shown provided they add white trim around the panels to simulate an inset sign.

The Design Review Committee found the design and the placement of the proposed signage to be appropriate for the location and use, and recommended approval of the revised signage with the beige background and black lettering for the telephone number, and with an applied white border to match the building trim.

- **Northway Bank** for one affixed sign at **66 N. Main Street.**

Tim Sullivan was present from Barlo Signs on behalf of the applicant and explained that they propose a slightly different approach to illuminated signage. Since the individual letters were intended to be blue, which tends to wash out at night, they propose internally lighted LED lettering with wash lighting against the wall.

The Committee discussed the proposed LED lighting and noted that the blue lighting is subdued and that this was not a traditional internally lit sign. The Committee was of the opinion that this lighting style could be acceptable in a downtown location.

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.

- **Prudential Verani Realty** for one affixed sign at **143 N. Main Street.**

Mike Leary from Sundance Signs was present on behalf of the applicant and reported that there is no sign at the proposed location now. This is a new sign for a new tenant in the existing building.

The Committee discussed the proposed placement of the signage on the building, including whether or not this affixed sign should be balanced against The TD Bank sign on the north end of the building. The Committee considered placement of the sign further north on the North Main Street façade and the location of existing trees in front of the building and determined that the location proposed is acceptable, noting that other tenants may desire additional signage on this frontage.

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.

- **Sunshine Oriental Restaurant** for one affixed sign and one free standing sign at **121 Loudon Road.**

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Henninger reported that the proposed freestanding sign is a replacement panel and the affixed sign is a new sign. The existing sign box reuses the bottom portion of the previous tenant's affixed sign.

Ms. Hengen noted that there were a lot of words listing the types of cuisine offered and noted that they would not be readily readable from a car travelling along Loudon Road.

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.

- **Ft. Eddy Road Reprocessing Center** for a free standing sign at **10 Intervale Road**.

Mr. Walker brought up a sign that was not on the agenda but was ready for review. He explained this proposal for a freestanding sign for a facility owned by the City but leased to a private contractor.

The Committee was of the opinion that with the prominence of this location, and the construction of an attractive new building next door, this location warrants an attractive sign.

Members felt the changeable copy portion of the sign should be removed or relocated down Intervale Road to the entrance to the facility. They also felt the sign should be placed on attractive posts. Members noted that a lot of the text on the sign seemed extraneous and contained too much information to be effective.

The Design Review Committee recommended that the changeable message panel be removed, some of the extraneous text be removed and the remaining text increased in font size, and a base and attractive posts provided for the sign.

**Addition of rooftop screening and provision of lighting on the gables for Friendly Ice Cream Corporation, on behalf of O Ice LLC, at 147 Loudon Road.**

Mr. Henninger explained that when City staff conducted the final inspections on the new restaurant building, two issues were observed. The mechanical equipment is visible well above the current screening on the roof. The approved plans showed appropriate screening for lower mechanical equipment. The applicants propose to add a white lattice to screen the intrusion.

Also, the gables on the east and west ends were constructed with up-lighting. Company representatives explained that the lights come on an hour before opening and remain on for an hour after closing. They have been doing this for as long as they have been at that location and there have been no complaints.

The Design Review Committee noted that these revisions are not particularly innocuous and recommended approval as revised.

**Site and building plans related to an application by Johnny Prescott & Son Oil Company, Inc. at 122 Airport Road. (#2010-21)**

Mr. Henninger explained the applicants recently received approval to build a shed to house a Concord Coach and that is now under construction. Behind that site on the same parcel there is an existing stone filled storm water retention area on top of which they propose to place two propane tank on piers. The improvements include a 30' x 85' paved parking area inside a new chain link fence. The Committee noted that the tanks will largely be screened from Airport Road and Terrill park Drive by the existing buildings on site.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval as submitted.

**Site and building plans related to an application by the New Hampshire Community Loan Fund at 7 Wall Street. (#2010-23)**

Mr. Henninger explained the history of this building as two individual residential buildings that were connected a number of years ago and made into one office building. He explained they now propose a complete interior renovation with resulting changes to the façade. He explained the proposal to add a second story over the connecting building, expand the porch to provide better access to the building, simplify the maze of doors on the rear façade, and eliminate both chimneys.

Greg Coates and Steve Atherton from Cobb Hill Construction were present on behalf of the applicant and explained that there will be an all new roof but everything will be in the same style as the original. The building will be in a black and white color scheme. They propose a cementitious siding to replace the vinyl siding and solid PVC trim boards.

Mr. Richards suggested eliminating the existing palladium window in the connecting section but was told that the property owner insisted that it remain.

Ms. Hengen suggested keeping the original roof pitches. These were two different buildings and it would be nice to keep that appearance. Mr. Coates, in discussion with the Committee, concurred with this suggestion.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval with the condition that they keep the original roof pitches as well as the two windows in the southerly gable. The Committee also expressed a preference for the removal of the palladium window.

Ms. Hengen also recommended that the proposed trim should be made proportionate to what it was on the original buildings and is common to the architecture of the period.

The Design Review Committee recommends approval of the modifications to the buildings and site subject to the following conditions.

1. The existing roof pitches on the front of the two original houses will remain as they are currently. This will create a differential roof height between the two existing wings and the connecting second floor addition linking the two original buildings.
2. The Committee recommends the new trim be wider than existing and reflect the historical width of trim boards found in the neighborhood.

**Site and building plans related to an application by **Painefully Sweet Enterprises** at **286 Pleasant Street. (#2010-22)****

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Henninger introduced this proposal to construct a single-story addition to the rear of the main building and to make the building handicapped accessible. He reported they also propose to demolish an existing single story wood shed. They are building the new addition mostly into the side of the hill. Most of it will be below grade.

The Board noted that the site changes will not be visible from Pleasant Street and not readily visible from any abutting property.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval as submitted.

**Site and building plans related to a submittal by the **Concord School District** pursuant to RSA 674:54 for **three new elementary schools****

Mr. Henninger introduced this proposal to construct three new elementary schools at existing school sites.

Matt Cashman from Concord School District, Erin Reardon from Nobis Engineering, and Philip Lewis and Tina Stanislaski from HMFH Architects were present to discuss the designs for new Conant, Dame/Eastman and Kimball Schools.

**Dame - Eastman School at **123 Portsmouth Street****

Mr. Lewis described the consolidation of Dame and Eastman Schools which will be constructed adjacent to Broken Ground School. The existing parking will be completely reconfigured to accommodate the additional school building. They will be establishing a new traffic circulation pattern through the site for both school buses and passenger vehicles.

(Mr. Santa arrived at 9:35 AM.)

Mr. Lewis explained they also propose to construct a wood chip plant to power the entire facility. The project has been designed to disturb as little of the site as possible.

Mr. Henninger noted that staff had expressed concern about the plan to discharge students from passenger vehicles across the driveway from the new building. Mr. Lewis responded that at this point the students will be pre-kindergarten and kindergarten age who will be exiting from the rear of vehicles.

Mr. Cowan asked if they were aware of the Eagle Scout fitness area recently constructed in the area and Mr. Lewis indicated he would look into it.

Mr. Lewis then described the building elevations. He reported that the intention was to create a separate entity from the Broken Ground School. It will be a two-story, brick and concrete masonry block building. Most of the building will be flat roof accentuated with pitched roofs and metal accents. There will be fiberglass windows with an aluminum curtain wall.

Mr. Woodward asked about the A-frame structures shown on roof of the kindergarten building and Mr. Lewis responded that they were intended to allow daylight into that wing. However, he expected that for budgetary reasons those structures would probably be replaced with a bank of skylights.

Mr. Cowan noted that the post and beam details in the entrance gables had no relation to anything else on the buildings. He felt there were other architectural features that might be more appropriate in those gables. Mr. Henninger pointed out potential issues with pigeons. Mr. Lewis noted that they were asked to provide an overhang for wheelchair passengers to load and disembark under cover. For all these reasons Mr. Lewis advised that they would reconsider this entrance gable.

Mr. Cowen commented that the stair tower facing Curtisville Road should not be at the same height as the second story parapet. As a distinctive element it should be either higher or lower than the main parapet. Mr. Lewis indicated that they would consider this suggestion.

### **Kimball School at 17 North Spring Street**

Mr. Lewis then explained the plan to demolish the existing Kimball School and Morrill School administrative building as well as four residential buildings, and to construct a new two-story building for kindergarten through grade 5 on that site.

He explained buses will queue on school property adjacent to Rumford Street and parent vehicles will access from South Spring Street and exit onto Pleasant Street. Gates will block the parent access drive during and after the school day in order to maximize play space.

He explained that a brick pattern with low arched windows and parapet walls will be reminders of the current Kimball School. The exterior wall of the gymnasium will also

reflect the architectural details of the current Kimball School with metal panels between brick bays on the Spring Street façade. The scale and pacing along the Spring Street façade will be similar to the other buildings on Spring Street. They had also considered playful, colorful letters spelling the school name as columns along the entrance. Mr. Henninger expressed concern that the proposed sign was larger than a highway bill board. Mr. Lewis indicated that idea will likely be abandoned because the actual name of the school may not be named Kimball and the new name would not likely work well for this idea. They are also considering a ribbon panel with the name on it. The mechanical equipment will be located inside the building or behind a roof top panel screen.

Mr. Richards and Ms. Hengen both noted that they needed more information regarding this proposal. They needed to see elevations rather than colored renderings as well as samples of the materials proposed. Ms. Stanislaski produced elevations for review. The Committee was concerned about the type, reflectivity and colors of the metal panels proposed.

Ms. Czysz asked whether there would be separation between the play area and the drop-off area. Ms. Reardon responded that there will be a five foot fence with rail.

Mr. Henninger noted that left turns out onto Pleasant Street should be physically discouraged. Ms. Reardon responded that that was their intention, as recommended by their traffic engineer.

Mr. Richards observed that they are tearing down a pretty good building but as a memorial they are trying to evoke the original building rather than attempting to design the building from scratch. Mr. Richards expressed the opinion that this appeared to be designed by committee and did not believe the architect had the freedom to construct a new building compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The Committee expressed concerns about the use of metal panels on the east, west and south facades.

(Messrs. Richards and Walker left the meeting at 10:30 AM.)

Ms. Hengen noted that the south elevation seemed to be a large mass and suggested that they try to break up that massive brick.

### **Conant School at 144 South Street**

Mr. Lewis described the site design for the new Conant School and reported that they needed to construct the new building while the existing building is occupied. The new building will be constructed and occupied, and then the old building will be demolished. Materials will be similar to Kimball School, brick with metal panels.

He reported that they propose to recreate the cupola from the existing Conant School. Mr. Henninger asked whether the existing cupola will be preserved on the site and where it will be located. Mr. Lewis responded that they are beginning to find that design element problematic and they are struggling with the idea. Ms. Hengen felt that

the design of the cupola did not match the contemporary building architecture or the neighborhood. Mr. Doherty suggested making it a more modern rendition of a cupola instead of the traditional style. Mr. Lewis responded that they had presented a number of variations of the cupola design at public forums and found that residents preferred the more traditional style.

Members felt it made sense to construct this building closely to the street as proposed.

Mr. Henninger discussed circulation and parking on the site. He felt they would be bringing the equivalent of a city street along the back side of abutting residences and they needed to provide much more screening. Mr. Henninger suggested a low wall of 3'-3.5' feet to help prevent headlights from shining into these residences. The landscape strip should be widened between the access drive to a minimum of 10 feet in width to allow strategic clusters of trees and shrubs rather than a continuous planting screen. It was noted that there should be one way circulation on the site and Mr. Woodward suggested narrowing access and providing angled parking instead of straight head-in parking to discourage two-way traffic. Mr. Henninger noted that City staff is working on some design changes for the South Street driveway which they believe will be an overall improvement.

Mr. Henninger pointed out the limited screening proposed around the proposed loading and service area on the north side of the building. Ms. Reardon noted that a screen wall is proposed but had not yet been added when the plans were delivered to the City.

Mr. Henninger noted that the proposed "rain garden" should not be located inside the school playground fence. Rain gardens are not effective if they are subject to pedestrian traffic.

Mr. Lewis indicated they would return next month with updated plans for further review before presentation to the Planning Board in July.

There was no further business to come before the Committee and the meeting adjourned at 11:10 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen L. Henninger  
Assistant City Planner