

**City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
March 10, 2015**

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regularly monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2015 in the Second Floor Conference Room in City Hall at 41 Green Street.

Present at the meeting were members Jennifer Czysz, Elizabeth Hengen, Ron King and Jay Doherty. Craig Walker of the Code Administration Division and Nancy Larson, Heather Shank and Patricia Murray of the City Planning Division were also present.

The ADRC 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 18, 2015, and which are subject to the provisions of the City of Concord's Zoning Ordinance in respect to Architectural Design Review.

Agenda Items

1. Consideration of the following applications under the provisions of Section 28-9-4(f), Architectural Design Review, of the Zoning Ordinance.

- a. Application by Latchis Properties LLC, on behalf of Willow Mauck, requesting Architectural Design Review Approval for one (1) new 4 sq. ft. non-illuminated affixed sign, at 55 South Main Street, within the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. MBLU: 34-5-2**

Willow Mauck was present to speak to the application. She confirmed that the sign will be affixed flat to the wall of the building and will not hang over the sidewalk. Ms. Mauck had a picture of the building on her cell phone which she showed to Ms. Larson. Ms. Larson requested a physical picture of the entire building, and a picture depicting the placement of the sign on the building for the ARDC members and for the Planning Board meeting on March 18, 2015. Ms. Mauck emailed the picture she had to Mr. Walker so he could print it for the ADRC, though the email was not received. Ms. Mauck left the meeting with the intent to return with an image.

The ADRC made no motion, since additional materials had not been presented and the applicant did not return. Ms. Larson will recommend that the Planning Board table the application until April to allow the applicant to return to ADRC for a recommendation.

- b. Application by Fred Potter dba 125 NNS LLC, requesting Architectural Design Review Approval for one (1) new 20 sq. ft. externally illuminated freestanding sign, at 125 North State Street, within the Neighborhood Residential (RN) District. MBLU: 60-2-2**

Russ Aubertin, Advantage Signs, was present to speak to the application. He stated there is no sign at the location at this time. Mr. Walker stated the sign, at the roundabout, does not obstruct the sight lines.

Mr. King recommended Design Review approval for the application by Fred Potter dba 125 NNS LLC, requesting Architectural Design Review Approval for one (1) new 20 sq. ft. externally illuminated freestanding sign, at 125 North State Street, within the Neighborhood Residential (RN) District, MBLU: 60-2-2, as submitted. Ms. Czysz seconded the recommendation. The recommendation passed unanimously.

c. Application by GTY MA/NH Leasing Inc., on behalf of Colbea Enterprises, LLC, requesting Architectural Design Review for one (1) replacement 127 sq. ft. internally illuminated freestanding sign, at 24 Loudon Road, within the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. MBLU: 114-2-1

A representative was present to speak to the application. He stated the sign is freestanding and is being refaced as shown in the diagrams in white to replace the blue/gray to reflect the new corporate branding. Mr. King stated the new sign is less attractive than the existing sign and visually more confusing. The other members agreed. The representative stated the original intent was for the pricing portion to be LED but the regulations don't allow for that. Mr. King suggested removing the box around "Food Mart". Ms. Hengen suggested removing the word "accepted" next to the credit card image because the word "accepted" is redundant as it is implied by the picture and there is so much wording it would be more effective with less going on. She stated the sign is harder to read with less contrast. The representative stated the card is for a points system offered by the company. Ms. Hengen reiterated if the picture is on the sign, the message that it is accepted is being sent without the word "Accepted". She stated it is one way to clean the sign up and make it more visually coherent. Ms. Czysz stated that the existing sign is uniform and aligned and is sleek and easy to read; the design is simple and clear. She stated the new sign has lots of different colors and the information is scattered and differently sized; there are no unified rules to the design which makes it unorganized. She said the existing sign is esthetically much better and easier to comprehend. Ms. Hengen stated from a corporate perspective, it is more effective to have the company logo somewhat visually separate other than incorporated into the sign where it gets lost. She stated it is a very confusing vertical column. Mr. King asked what prompted the change. The representative stated it is the new corporate image in terms of freestanding signs. He said he hears the trepidation with the committee and isn't sure what agreements he can make with the company. He said the company has installed several of the new signs. Ms. Hengen stated that corporate design decisions still have to be tailored to meet local design review guidelines. He concurred and stated he would take back any ADRC recommendations to corporate. Mr. Doherty stated it would be helpful to see a photo of one of the new signs installed. The representative noted that the application states Colbea Enterprises, LLC as the sign owner and the actual sign owner is Nouria Energy; he will email the change to Mr. Walker.

Ms. Hengen recommended continuing the application by GTY MA/NH Leasing Inc., on behalf of Colbea Enterprises, LLC, requesting Architectural Design Review for one (1) replacement 127 sq. ft. internally illuminated freestanding sign, at 24 Loudon Road, within the Gateway Performance (GWP) District, MBLU: 114-2-1, requesting a resubmittal including a photo of one of the new signs installed elsewhere and a revised sketch of the proposed sign considering a more simplified design and color palate (at a minimum, grouping together "Food Mart" with "Car Wash", removing the box around "Food Mart" and removing "Accepted" after the credit card logo) which is more consistent with the crisp, clean design on the existing sign. Mr. King seconded the recommendation. The recommendation passed unanimously.

d. Application by Estate of Jacob S Ciborowski, on behalf of Kathy Sheehy, requesting Architectural Design Review for one (1) replacement 4.4 sq. ft. non-illuminated window sign, one (1) replacement 7.5 sq. ft. retractable awning, and one (1) replacement 16 sq. ft. non-illuminated affixed sign at 3 North Main Street, within the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. MBLU: 35-4-1

Glen Schadlick, NEOPCO Signs, and Mr. Sheehy, Owner, were present to speak to the application. Mr. Schadlick confirmed that the salon is named Salon 3 North Main. He also stated the phone number displayed in the application photo is not the correct phone number as it had not been acquired before

application. Mr. Sheehy stated the awning will be new; the original was green in color and is being replaced with a black awning which will tie in to the neighboring business' awning which is also black.

Mr. King recommended Design Review approval for the application by the Estate of Jacob S Ciborowski, on behalf of Kathy Sheehy, requesting Architectural Design Review for one (1) replacement 4.4 sq. ft. non-illuminated window sign, one (1) replacement 7.5 sq. ft. retractable awning, and one (1) replacement 16 sq. ft. non-illuminated affixed sign at 3 North Main Street, within the Central Business Performance (CBP) District, MBLU: 35-4-1, as submitted. Mr. Doherty seconded the recommendation. The recommendation passed unanimously.

e. Application by NHH Invest, LLC, on behalf of Substyle Vapors, LLC, requesting Architectural Design Review for one (1) new 6 sq. ft. externally illuminated freestanding sign, and one (1) new 12 sq. ft. externally illuminated affixed sign at 6 North Main Street, within the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. MBLU: 35-3-2

The applicant was not present. Mr. Walker stated the company is an electronic cigarette business. Mr. Walker confirmed the address is the former Flagwork's location which is moving to the downstairs location at Kennedy Avenue. A discussion ensued as to the size of the proposed sign and its fit onto the building. There was concern that the proposed affixed sign may not fit the intended space and may protrude above the second story windowsill which is not allowed by ordinance. Ms. Hengen stated that graphically the hanging sign looks fine but the question is whether it's fine dimensionally. Ms. Hengen noted the sign offers visual drama. After some deliberation and calculation, Mr. King stated his best guess is that there is plenty of room for the proposed affixed sign to fit.

Ms. Hengen recommended Design Review approval for the application by NHH Invest, LLC, on behalf of Substyle Vapors, LLC, requesting Architectural Design Review for one (1) new 6 sq. ft. externally illuminated freestanding sign, and one (1) new 12 sq. ft. externally illuminated affixed sign at 6 North Main Street, within the Central Business Performance (CBP) District, MBLU: 35-3-2, as submitted with the recommendation that staff approve the dimensions to ensure proper fit for both proposed signs. Mr. King seconded the recommendation. The recommendation passed unanimously.

f. Application by Seman Enterprises, LLC, on behalf of The Cloud Lounge, LLC c/o Alex Moody, requesting Architectural Design Review for one (1) new 16 sq. ft. externally illuminated affixed sign, at 328 Village Street, Penacook, within the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. MBLU: 1412P-59

The applicant was not present. Mr. Walker confirmed this is proposed as a hookah lounge. Ms. Larson provided a street view of the location using google maps at the request of the Committee since the graphic provided did not show the entire façade of the building.

Ms. Hengen recommended Design Review approval for the application by Seman Enterprises, LLC, on behalf of The Cloud Lounge, LLC c/o Alex Moody, requesting Architectural Design Review for one (1) new 16 sq. ft. externally illuminated affixed sign, at 328 Village Street, Penacook, within the Central Business Performance (CBP) District, MBLU: 1412P-59, as submitted with the recommendation that the sign will not obscure any part of the arch constructed on top of the entry and the sign location is a minimum of 1 brick course above the arch, 1 brick course below the windowsill above and is centered over the arch. Mr. Doherty seconded the recommendation. The recommendation passed unanimously.

g. Application by 31 South Main Acquisition, LLC, on behalf of Laurie J Sanborn Revocable Trust requesting Architectural Design Review for one (1) replacement front

**door at 27 South Main Street, within the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.
MBLU: 35-1-1**

Glen Schadlick, NEOPCO Signs, was present to speak to the sign application to which Mr. Walker confirmed was not finalized since payment had not been received and thus was not forwarded to Planning for placement on the ADRC agenda. Mr. Schadlick will notify the applicant.

Ms. Shank informed the Committee that the applicant has not paid for the ADR application for the replacement door. She stated she has left a message with the applicant requesting the fee, a larger graphic with materials proposed and a better photo of the site.

Ms. Czysz recommended tabling the application by 31 South Main Acquisition, LLC, on behalf of Laurie J Sanborn Revocable Trust requesting Architectural Design Review for one (1) replacement front door at 27 South Main Street, within the Central Business Performance (CBP) District, MBLU: 35-1-1, until April 7, 2015 at 8:30 am, 41 Green St, 2nd Floor Conference Room.. Mr. King seconded the recommendation. The recommendation passed unanimously.

h. Request by the State of NH Liquor Commission under RSA 674:54 to restore the front door to original condition at 50 Storrs Street in the Opportunity Performance (OCP) District. Map/Block/Lot: 35A-1-2

Craig Bulkley, Director of the NH Liquor Commission, was present to speak to the project. Mr. Bulkley provided the Committee with an artist's rendering of the building when it was built. He stated the building was built in 1964 and in 1971 there was an accident out front where a car was driven up against the building which smashed the front door. It was decided, at that time, for safety's sake, a vestibule would be added to the entryway. This project will remove the vestibule; there will be no other changes/additions.

Ms. Hengen thanked Mr. Bulkley for the courtesy presentation and stated that the building is one of the State's best examples of mid-century architecture and she applauds the design change to return to its original appearance. The Committee concurred.

2. Application by Terrain Planning and Design LLC on behalf of Todd Hayward/Phenix Mutual Fire Insurance Co., requesting Major Site Plan approval for the demolition of an existing building, construction of a new parking lot, and reconstruction of an existing parking lot at 42 Pleasant Street and 11 Blake Street, within the Civic Performance (CVP) District. Map/Block/Lot: 36-5-10 & 36-5-4 (2015-0006)

Ms. Shank summarized the application noting the packet information which includes photographs of the existing site, grading plan and proposed lighting. She also handed out copies of the revised site plan, landscape plan and sketched models of the site.

Ms. Hengen inquired about the demolition review outcome. Mr. Walker stated it went to public hearing. Mr. King asked about treatment of the water that will run down to the river. Ms. Shank explained the proposed drainage system and stated Engineering made several comments and has been working with the applicant. Mr. King asked that the ADRC's concerns regarding the drainage system be shared with Engineering; their concerns are: controlling the water to keep it on the site, controlling the water to the point it actually goes in the drains, and having a catch basin.

Ms. Czysz expressed concerns over having seen two recent applications that are proposing demolishing existing structures for additional surface parking. She understands that the applicant is doing what is

within their rights but it is a red flag concern for future trends and she questions if this is a trend wanted in this community. She stated she would rather see the preservation of structures than more surface parking. She mentioned there are several parking garages near this location. Ms. Shank stated the applicant is anticipating an increased need for parking due to an increase in staff numbers. Ms. Czysz stated that Blake Street has a unique character with great buildings and this project would create an expanded gaping hole completely changing the character. Ms. Shank stated the required number of parking spaces is 36 and they are proposing 32 spaces. Mr. Walker stated the other two buildings on North State Street are zoned in the CBP which does not require any onsite parking. Ms. Hengen reiterated that Blake Street provides a valuable residential option very close to downtown and there is virtually nothing else like this area in Concord. Mr. Walker stated he was not involved in the demolition review and did not know about the structural soundness of the building proposed to be demolished. Ms. Hengen stated the City's Master Plan had a plan for increasing housing close to downtown. Ms. Larson responded that the Master Plan is a guide and used as a tool for changes to the ordinances and regulations. Ms. Czysz responded that as an advisory committee they have an obligation to note when regulations are not achieving a vision in the Master Plan. Ms. Shank asked for clarification on two separate lots that are not merging and the acceptable use of parking on a separate lot. Mr. Walker responded that in the CVP district a parking lot is a permitted primary use according to the Table of Principle Uses in section K-1 in the Zoning Ordinance. Ms. Shank stated that the Planning Board itself, without any legal justification, cannot deny a site plan application without a legal basis for denial even if they agree with the concerns of the ADRC.

Ms. Czysz recommended denying Design Review approval for the application by Terrain Planning and Design LLC on behalf of Todd Hayward/Phenix Mutual Fire Insurance Co., requesting Major Site Plan approval for the demolition of an existing building, construction of a new parking lot, and reconstruction of an existing parking lot at 42 Pleasant Street and 11 Blake Street, within the Civic Performance (CVP) District, Map/Block/Lot: 36-5-10 & 36-5-4, as submitted as the ADRC feels this project is inconsistent with the purpose of Section 28-1-5 of the Zoning Ordinance due to the adverse impact to the unique character of Blake Street streetscape and environment, the loss of housing in close proximity to the downtown or within the downtown, the unsettling trend towards the demolition of homes or existing structures for surface parking which together is not consistent with the vision for the City, and that this site is adjacent to a zoning district that has no required parking. Ms. Hengen seconded the recommendation. The recommendation passed unanimously.

NOTE: The ADRC noted that this application raises thoughts for regulatory changes, particularly, is this parcel within the correct zoning district? Based on the commercial character of the site on Pleasant Street, it is more in line with the CBP district rather than the CVP district. Is surface parking permitted as a primary use or should it be a special exception within the CVP? The purpose of the Zoning Ordinance is to protect neighborhoods and historical resources. The ADRC also wants to ensure, if this project is approved, that the drainage is sufficient as to not cause negative stormwater impacts for neighboring properties.

- 3. Any other business which may legally come before the Committee.**
 - a. Discussion regarding application requirements** – discussion ensued regarding the design of the application. Staff would like to initiate a checklist and will work with Code to develop and to redesign the application.
 - b. Rules of Procedures**

As there was no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:39 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Larson
City Planner