

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

May 10, 2011

The Design Review Committee held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 10, 2011, in the City Council Chambers in the City Hall Annex at 8:30 AM.

Present at the meeting were Duene Cowan, Jennifer Czysz, James P. Doherty, III, and Ron King. Messrs. Woodward and Henninger and Ms. Hebert and Ms. Osgood of the City Planning Division were also present, as was Craig Walker, 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 May 18, 2011, 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:

- **Dollar Store** for one new panel in an existing freestanding sign, a new affixed sign, and two internally illuminated awnings at **321 Loudon Road**

Rick Donnelly from NH Signs was present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Henninger asked what was proposed for the blank half of the freestanding sign. Mr. Donnelly responded that there was no tenant for the space yet since the other tenant space had not yet been constructed. That space was being reserved for the eventual tenant. Members suggested filling the entire space with the Dollar Tree sign until another tenant space is constructed and filled.

Mr. Henninger explained that the two internally illuminated awnings will not be face the residential neighborhood.

The Design Review Committee found the proposed signage to be appropriate for the location and use, and recommended approval subject to the entire lower panel of the freestanding sign being used for the current tenant.

- **Concord Lincoln** for one replacement panel in an existing freestanding sign at **158 Manchester Street**

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

There was a question as to the proposed colors for the sign since the colors had not been noted on the plan. It was determined that it was intended to be a black and grey sign.

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

- **Pizza Hut** for one replacement panel in an existing freestanding sign at **148 Loudon Road**

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

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

- **Saymore Trophy** for four affixed signs at **64 Old Suncook Road**

Greg Slossar was present as applicant.

Mr. Henninger pointed out that this property is located at the corner of Old Suncook Road and Airport Road and that Saymore Trophy is the only occupant of the building.

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

- **Tire Warehouse** for one replacement freestanding sign at **39 Fisherville Road**

Rick Donnelly from NH Signs was present on behalf of the applicant and noted that the new panel is actually a smaller sign than the existing sign. This will be a new sign box.

The Design Review Committee found the new sign to be an improvement over the current design and recommended approval as submitted.

- **UNH School of Law** for one affixed and two freestanding signs at **2 White Street**

Mr. Cowan stepped down from the Committee and represented the applicant. He introduced Eric Norman and Peter Husak from the UNH School of Law and Karen Fitzgerald from Nobis Engineering.

Mr. Cowan explained that the building panel is a champagne color and they propose either aluminum or bronze individual letters with halo lighting. The individual letters will be placed on the building as well as on the stone wall at the property entrance. The freestanding sign at the building entrance will be a granite cube that will be etched.

Ms. Fitzgerald presented a plan for a new front entry to the school at the corner of White and Washington Streets. In addition to the new sign on the stone wall, the improvements included the installation of concrete pavers in the sidewalks and walkways, new landscaping and seating walls, and replacement of all of the mature trees.

The Design Review Committee found the proposed signage to be appropriate for the location and use, and recommended approval as submitted using either the aluminum or the bronze for the affixed lettering.

Mr. Henninger asked for a reduced copy of the colored rendering by Thursday for distribution to the Planning Board.

Site and building plans by St. Paul's School at the corner of Dunbarton and Silk Farm Roads. (#2011-24)

Mr. Henninger introduced this proposal to construct a synthetic turf field off Silk Farm Road near the discontinued Dunbarton Road. He reported they also propose a long stretch of sidewalk onto the site and a small accessory building.

Dick Webb, architect with CHA Sports was present with Karl Lebo on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Webb explained that there will be a parking capacity of 43 spaces. The 400' x 430' synthetic turf field will allow either a game field or two practice fields. Bleachers will be available with a total capacity of 400 seats. The turf area is proposed to be lighted primarily for late afternoon practices in the Fall. There could also be a Friday evening game if the field was needed. The main purpose of the fields will be field hockey and lacrosse.

This will be completely permeable, and completely vertically draining. There will be six 90 foot tall light poles placed at the midpoints and ends of the field, with the lighting controlled so that it shines on only the field itself.

Mr. Lebo described the support building proposed to be located at the northeast corner of the field. He explained it will house rest rooms, a training room, an equipment room, and will have a covered porch. The building will have white clapboard siding with white trim and St. Paul's green doors. The only light fixtures will be a barn light over the mechanical room and a series of recessed fixtures in the porch ceiling. He explained they tried mimic the appearance of the barns on the campus.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval as submitted.

Site and building plans by **Venezia Realty Associates, LLC at 60 D'Amante Drive. (#2011-21)**

John Jordan, architect, and Matt Peterson from Hillside Design Group, Inc. were present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Henninger reminded members that last month they had informally reviewed this plan for a new building on an open pad adjacent to the existing 99 Restaurant. He explained there would be three tenants in this building. He reported comments had been made and the applicant had returned with a revised design based on those comments. He reported that this application is scheduled for Determination of Completion by the Planning Board in May with a public hearing in June.

Mr. Jordan explained they had tried to use the horizontal line of the 99 Restaurant on the proposed adjacent building. They had also used vertical elements to try to mimic the vertical lines of the 99 Restaurant. They were not trying to match the existing building but to work with it.

Mr. Henninger noted that the surrounding properties housing the big boxes typically had dryvit facades. He also recommended using dumpster screening that matched the façade.

Mr. Cowan felt they had broken up the building very well.

Members struggled with the yellow panels shown on the plans. Mr. Jordan responded that it had looked more like tan on the computer screen. He was aiming for a sand color, something that contrasted with white.

The Design Review Committee recommended approval as submitted with the primary color of the building to be tan rather than beige or the yellow shown, and that the dumpster screen match the façade of the building. The committee asked that the Planning staff review and comment on the proposed landscaping plan.

Other Business

Mr. Woodward then addressed the Committee relative to some concerns expressed to the Planning Board about the interaction of the Design Review Committee and the Planning Board.

He explained that in 2010, Concord 2020 Inc. had hired a facilitator to host a series of public forums concerning the City's land use regulations and development review

practices. Concord 2020 had prepared a report with their findings and recommendations for zoning amendments and other policy changes, and the City's Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) had prepared its own report of the Committee's views and reactions to the 2020 Report. These reports were forwarded to the City Council and referred to the Community Development Department.

The Deputy City Manager for Development has prepared an initial response to the referral from the Council and asked the Planning Board to review it. He had asked that the Board specifically consider several items in the report with regard to EDAC's recommendations that the Design Review Committee be formalized as a committee with a member of the committee serving as chairperson, and that the Board not be able to overrule the Design Review Committee except in the case of an appeal from an applicant.

Mr. Woodward indicated that the Planning Board had discussed the matter and concluded that a joint meeting with the Design Review Committee might be fruitful to share thoughts about the design review process and criticisms thereof.

Mr. Woodward explained that Design Review was adopted in the Zoning Ordinance the 1960s and was expanded in the 1970's to apply to developments that were subject to site plan review. The Design Review Committee was convened by the Board in 1978 as a panel of professionals to offer advice to the Planning Board, and to offer design advice to applicants, many of whom at that time did not retain design professionals of their own. In 1990, the Board formally included a section on the Committee in its Site Plan Regulations, and at the same time, adopted a set of Architectural Design Guidelines, which were prepared by a local architectural firm and remain in effect.

The Design Review Committee does not hold public hearings but meeting notices are posted in accordance with the Right-to-know Law. The Design Review Committee is not a creature of State statutes and not a creature of City ordinance. They exist through the Site Plan Review Regulations, and have no legal powers of their own.

Mr. Woodward indicated that he had discussed with the City Solicitor the EDAC recommendation that the Planning Board not be allowed to override the recommendation of the Design Review Committee except by appeal of an applicant. The City Solicitor had advised that there is no provision in the statutes for the Planning Board to delegate their power and authority in this situation. Therefore, EDAC's recommendation cannot be implemented because the Planning Board cannot delegate its power to them.

Mr. King asked what a joint meeting would accomplish. Mr. Walker felt that it would almost be more important to get those folks involved who had issues and concerns.

Mr. Doherty reported that he had travelled to many towns in New England to make presentations on behalf of his clients and it had been his experience that it was easier doing business in Concord. Mr. Cowan agreed.

Mr. King reported he would be more interested, before committing to a complete restructure of the existing process, in doing a survey of those people who have been

before the Design Review Committee to learn what worked and what did not work about the current process.

Mr. Cowan noted that developers who come before the Committee are more accustomed to being before a Planning Board or a Zoning Board of Adjustment who are much more formal and are not accustomed to the less formal effort of the Design Review Committee.

Members asked if copies of the various reports starting with Concord 2020, as well as EDAC, and then the Deputy Manager's report were available online. Mr. Woodward indicated that he wasn't sure but would gather those pertinent parts of the reports for distribution to Design Review Committee members.

Mr. King also felt that having additional data would be very helpful and felt that information would become available by doing a survey of people who had been before the Design Review Committee in the last five years or so. He felt a brief introduction explaining the purpose would make it more readily accepted and answered, providing there were no leading questions in the survey.

Mr. Woodward explained that he had been working to get some funding in order to hire a consultant to develop guidelines to assist the Board and Committee as well as to help applicants.

There was no further business to come before the Committee and the meeting adjourned at 9:55 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen L. Henninger
Assistant City Planner

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