

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
June 3, 2025 Minutes

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on June 3, 2025, in Council Chambers, at 37 Green St, Concord, NH.

Attendees: Co-Chair Jay Doherty, Member Claude Gentilhomme, Member Douglas Proctor, Member Merle Thorpe, and Alternate Member Amanda Savage

Absent: Co-Chair Elizabeth Durfee Hengen and Member Ron King

Staff: AnneMarie Skinner, City Planner; Alec Bass, Assistant City Planner – Community Planning; Brian Tremblay, Planning and Zoning Inspector; and Krista Tremblay, Administrative Technician III

1. Call to Order

Co-Chair Doherty called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

2. Minutes – Approve minutes from May 6, 2025

Alternate Member Savage moved, seconded by Member Gentilhomme, to approve the meeting minutes from May 6, 2025, as written. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Staff Memorandum

4. Sign Applications

- 4.1 Carolyn A. Parker Consulting and New England Signs & Awnings, on behalf of Langdon H. Wait, trustee of the trust under the will of Alice E. Ward and Sherwin Williams, requests an architectural design review recommendation for an 81.27-square-foot internally illuminated freestanding sign (SP-0520-2025) to reface an existing freestanding sign, and a 53.47-square-foot internally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0551-2025) to replace an existing building wall sign at 149 Loudon Rd in the General Commercial (CG) District. (2025-041) (PL-ADR-2025-0086)

Rob McIntire (315 Derry Rd, Hudson) is present to represent this application. Mr. McIntire stated they are proposing a reface on an existing freestanding sign. They will remove the old wall sign and install their updated logo with the blue background.

Alternate Member Savage asked about the mounted sign on the building if that will be eliminated.

Mr. McIntire stated the letters will be. The channel letters will be mounted on a blue background that will house all of the electrical components inside.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if the letters are raised.

Mr. McIntire stated the letters are raised. Right now, there is a set of channel letters that are on a raceway. Mr. McIntire noted the Sherman Williams new blue with logo is a background behind the letter set with the trademark.

Alternate Member Savage asked if it is smaller.

Mr. McIntire stated it is smaller than the existing sign.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend approval as submitted. Alternate Member Savage seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.2 Spirit Halloween, on behalf of Albertsons, requests an architectural design review recommendation for a new 75-square-foot non-illuminated building wall sign (SP-0547-2025) at 24 Fort Eddy Rd in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. (2025-058) (PL-ADR-2025-0098)

No one is present to represent this application.

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Alternate Member Savage stated it seems the same as last year in that it is seasonal and temporary.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend approval as submitted. Alternate Member Savage seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.3 Batten Bros Signs Inc, on behalf of Gallagher and 45 Constitution LLC, requests an architectural design review recommendation for a 77.25-square-foot internally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0549-2025) to replace an existing building wall sign, and a 10.3-square-foot non-illuminated monument sign (SP-0550-2025), to replace an existing monument sign at 45 Constitution Ave in the Opportunity Corridor Performance (OCP) District. (2025-051) (PL-ADR-2025-0092)

Jeff Sarra (45 Constitution Ave, Concord) is present to represent this application. Mr. Sarra stated the goal is to remove the channel letters that are 150 square feet on the front of the building and replace with a 77-square-foot set of channel letters, as well as to replace the non-illuminated acrylic letters on the monument sign with something similar in nature and scale. In the picture is the existing Rowley Agency sign that is 3-foot by 50-foot raceway mounted channel letters. The proposed Gallagher letters are raceway mounted channel letters that are 77 square feet.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend approval as submitted. Alternate Member Savage seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.4 Sousa Signs, LLC, on behalf of Swenson Stone Works and Swenson Granite Company, LLC, requests an architectural design review recommendation for a new 37.8-square-foot internally illuminated freestanding sign (SP-0571-2025) at 375 N State St in the Industrial (IN) District. (2025-027) (PL-ADR-2025-0093)

Jason Gagnon (255 E Industrial Park Dr, Manchester) is present to represent this application. Mr. Gagnon stated Swenson Granite has a double lot. There is a freestanding structure set back about 30 feet from the road. They are looking to remove the existing sign and install a new granite sign with an illuminated sign cabinet section. The setback will be 20 feet from the roadside. They are looking to remove one sign and install a sign.

Alternate Member Savage asked about the base of the planter and the change in color.

Mr. Gagnon noted it would be granite block.

Co-Chair Doherty stated it would help the base of the sign if the blocks were a different color of granite, noting that as just a suggestion.

Mr. Gagnon stated he will bring it up to the applicant.

Co-Chair Doherty made a motion to recommend approval as submitted with the condition that the sign meets the requirements of the road setback and the suggestion that the granite for the planter box be a different color. Alternate Member Savage seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.5 Spectrum Signs & Graphics, on behalf of Hermanos and T&A Holdings, LLC, requests an architectural design review recommendation for two 29-square-foot internally illuminated building wall signs (SP-0572-2025 and SP-0573-2025) to replace two existing building wall signs, and an 8.7-square-foot internally illuminated hanging blade sign (SP-0574-2025) to replace an existing hanging blade sign at 11 Hills Ave in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. (2025-053) (PL-ADR-2025-0094)

Michael Gallagher (97 Eddy Rd, Concord) is present to represent this application. They are proposing to remove and install an internally illuminated sign. There is a 5-inch-deep backer that will be opaque with translucent lettering and logo. They are using indirect lighting on the inside that will shoot back towards the middle to create a soft glow. The same would be done for the sign closest to Hills Ave. Mr. Gallagher noted they have decreased the square footage on the front side facing Storrs St. though they did increase the square footage on the rear one. Mr. Gallagher noted they are 3.3 square feet under the maximum allowed for signs. They are proposing to install an internally illuminated blade sign with an opaque

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background and translucent lettering.

Co-Chair Doherty stated it seems pretty straightforward.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend approval as submitted. Alternate Member Savage seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.6 Advantage Signs, on behalf of 80 Main LLC, requests an architectural design review recommendation for two new 37-square-foot internally illuminated building wall signs (SP-0575-2025 and SP-0576-2025) at 80 S Main St in the Urban Commercial (CU) District. (2025-054) (PL-ADR-2025-0095)

Josh Messinger (128 Hall St, Concord) is present to represent this application. This is the old Aubuchon on 80 South Main Street. Mr. Messinger stated the property has been redeveloped and they are adding a sign cabinet with flat panel aluminum letters reading 80 South Main. They broke up the building to be five tenants. Mr. Messinger noted they are working with the developer for this sign.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if this is internally illuminated.

Mr. Messinger answered yes.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if they looked at the inverse with black background with white letters.

Alternate Member Savage noted that is what ADRC usually prefers.

Mr. Messinger stated they will make the letters illuminated and the background will be opaque.

Co-Chair Doherty said if Pet Lovers was a black background with white text it would pop.

Mr. Messinger stated they do not have the art work from the customer and those are place holders for now.

Member Gentilhomme asked if the ADRC is approving the sign box.

Mr. Messinger stated the sign cabinet and the letters above.

Member Gentilhomme noted they are not approving the sign panels.

Mr. Messinger stated they are approving the 80 South Main and the sign cabinet.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if they receive a real Pet Lovers logo they will come back to ADRC.

Mr. Messinger noted the Pet Lovers is essentially the same as they see it right now. The only change is there is a heart in the middle.

Member Savage stated she would prefer black background with white lettering.

Co-Chair Doherty has no objection to the 80 South Main and the cabinet. The panels should match the standards.

Mr. Bass stated 5.4(c) of the design guidelines states: *"Illumination of signs should be from an indirect light source to reduce glare and ensure attention is focused on the sign. The light should be contained within the design frame and not spill over to the other portions of the building."*

Mr. Bass stated 5.4(b) of the design guidelines states: *"Sign materials should harmonize with the building's design. A simple and direct message, with upper and lower case letters, is most effect. A limited number of colors should be used with bright colored letters placed on a matte, dark background which reduces reflected glare."*

Co-Chair Doherty stated they can state both of those if people agree.

Member Gentilhomme noted he would like to see the 80 South Main as the top panel.

Member Proctor noted they could change the box trim color.

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Co-Chair Doherty stated he thinks they want it to be black. Co-Chair Doherty noted there are two ways to look at it. One is to have all the white opaque and the letters translucent, or they can invert to have a black background with white letters.

Member Proctor noted it is hard to read the sign on the wall.

Co-Chair Doherty stated to just go with the black background with white letters.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted with the following condition: the color scheme of the panels shall be inverted, with black background and white lettering in accordance with Section 5.4(B) of the Architectural Design Guidelines. Alternate Member Savage seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.7 Father – Daughter Customs LLC requests an architectural design review recommendation for an existing, non-permitted 21-square-foot non-illuminated window sign (SP-0542-2025) at 154 N Main St in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District.

No one is present to represent this application.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if this is in place.

Mr. Tremblay stated it is in place, and it is an existing non-permitted sign.

Member Gentilhomme noted the name of the company does not tell you what it does and that is why there is a description down below.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if the sign really states the whole thing.

Mr. Tremblay stated it does.

Member Savage asked why it cannot just say custom screen printing.

Member Gentilhomme asked how they determined the area of the sign.

Mr. Tremblay stated from top to bottom it encompasses everything in that square.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if they are over on the square footage.

Mr. Tremblay stated no.

Member Savage noted if they would have come before ADRC prior to installation that there would have been other suggestions.

Member Gentilhomme said he would like to get rid of the tumblers and everything down below.

Co-Chair Doherty noted there are different fonts.

Member Gentilhomme suggested they take the sentence just below customs llc.

Member Savage agrees and suggested to remove from “tumblers” to “license plate.” Also, what they do could be centered under the name of the business.

Member Proctor asked if ADRC redesigns the sign or do they ask the applicant to come back to ADRC.

Member Gentilhomme thinks they should do that because the sign is already up and ADRC is not stopping them from advertising.

Co-Chair Doherty agrees with Member Proctor. Co-Chair Doherty stated there are too many different kinds of font, it is too cluttered, the text is too small to read, and there is too much information.

Member Savage asked if they ask the applicant to make changes what is the number of days that they have to get back to ADRC. Member Savage asked if ADRC can ask the applicant to have them at the next ADRC meeting.

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Mr. Tremblay answered yes and will make it clear to the applicant that they need to attend the next ADRC meeting.

Member Proctor stated the sign is hard to read.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board deny the application, as the sign does not provide a simple and direct message per Section 5.4(B) of the Architectural Design Guidelines. Member Savage seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Building Permit Applications

5.1 None

6. Site Plan Applications

- 6.1 Keach-Nordstrom Associates, Inc., on behalf of Parmenter Place, requests a recommendation from the Architectural Design Review Committee for architectural design review for eight additional townhouse units at Tax Map Lot 392Z 22, addressed as 15 Parmenter Rd, in the Neighborhood Residential (RN) District. (2025-046) (PL-SPR-2025-004)

Matt Peterson (10 Commerce Park North Suite 3, Bedford), Megan Murphy (no address provided), and Julie Palmeri (23 Green St, Concord) presented the application. Mr. Peterson stated they are working with staff on the comments. There are setbacks and topographic constraints. They are proposing to add eight more units on the back. Concord Housing is working with the government on grants. The units are affordable. There are four three-bedroom units and four two-bedroom units proposed. They are matching the siding colors that are already there. They are not changing the sign.

Co-Chair Doherty asked about limiting the pavement with a one-way loop.

Mr. Petersen stated he has to do a fire turnaround at the end.

Co-Chair Doherty asked about keeping the loop and doing a one-way.

Mr. Petersen stated he did not look at that.

Member Savage asked if there was any landscaping suggested.

Mr. Petersen stated they carried the same landscaping.

Member Thorpe arrived at 9:11 a.m.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board grant architectural design review as submitted. Member Proctor seconded. All in favor with the exception of Member Thorpe who abstained. The motion passed.

- 6.2 Wilcox & Barton, Inc., on behalf of Arts Alley LLC, requests approval for an amendment to an approved site plan at Tax Map Lot 7412Z 37, addressed as 20 ½ S Main St, in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. (2022-047) (PL-AMEND-2025-0016)

Steve Duprey (81 N Main St, Concord) and Erin Lambert (2 Home Ave, Concord) are present to represent this application. Mr. Duprey stated when they designed the courtyard and it was approved there were two parcels that have since been consolidated. The Bank of New Hampshire asked if Mr. Duprey would get rid of the enclosure because it made the area feel separate from their property. They asked to make it more open to feel integrated. Mr. Duprey stated the garden includes flower beds.

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Co-Chair Doherty asked about the fence.

Mr. Duprey stated they got rid of the fence. Mr. Duprey noted they have concerns about safety, so there is a lockable gate and a high fence so people cannot jump on the roof of the co-op and then the diner. Mr. Duprey will have a lock box installed for the fire department to have access if there was an emergency.

Co-Chair Doherty asked about the arch.

Mr. Duprey stated the arch is problematic because it has to be so high to accommodate the height of the fire trucks. They thought a gate instead with the logo for Arts Alley, and they will come back for signs.

Co-Chair Doherty asked about the fence and if it is black vinyl chain link.

Mr. Duprey stated they are changing that and will not do chain link. They want to have a mural on the fence and are working on a design. Mr. Duprey stated they were going to have the asphalt painted but because of the meeting space on the second floor they changed to have musical notes.

Ms. Lambert stated the arch is not part of the approved plan set. Ms. Lambert noted at the time these were two separate properties. They now have been merged. The site is small. With the proposed fences on the other locations they can provide security without enclosing that area too much.

Member Savage asked staff about the change from annual to perennial and does that change meet design guidelines.

Ms. Skinner stated there are not any requirements for annual versus perennial. There are only requirements for street trees and parking landscaping, and neither apply for this project.

Member Thorpe asked if they considered a tree to give a ceiling to that outdoor space.

Ms. Lambert noted there is a tree in that area.

Ms. Skinner asked if they are using the approved landscape plan.

Ms. Lambert stated they made an amendment because they took out planters.

Member Thorpe asked about the trash enclosure.

Mr. Duprey stated there is not one because they are a part of a common downtown trash district. The trash will go to the dumpsters at the co-op lot.

Member Thorpe asked about the tree.

Ms. Lambert stated it is a horn beam.

Co-Chair Doherty noted everything is great with the exception of the black fence.

Co-Chair Doherty made motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted, with the condition that the black chain link fence crossing the alley shall be replaced with a decorative fence. Member Gentilhomme seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Other Business

7.1 Administrative Approval – minor alteration to the architectural design review approval at 80 Storrs St (2024-062)

Mr. Bass stated there are two administrative approvals which are minor changes in nature.

Ms. Skinner stated they wanted to get the thoughts of the ADRC as it is not going to Planning Board. It is going to be approved by the city planner as an administrative approval.

Mr. Bass noted the Boot Barn and the top elevation is the existing approved. They are looking to do

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rebranding and switching to the white. The white will match the background behind Ulta Beauty.

Ms. Skinner noted it is the façade and not the signage that is being reviewed.

Co-Chair Doherty noted it does make Boot Barn pop a little.

Member Proctor stated it makes the whole elevation more cohesive.

Member Savage stated it is an improvement.

7.2 Administrative Approval – Minor alteration to the architectural design review approval at 80 Storrs St for the Burlington Coat Factory Sign.

Member Savage stated it makes more sense to go from column to column.

Member Gentilhomme noted the red background is tight on the ends of the sign.

Member Proctor noted they are matching what the other stores are doing by going from column to column.

Co-Chair Doherty noted the black lines should continue through.

Ms. Skinner asked if Co-Chair Doherty was suggesting to continue through the red.

Member Gentilhomme noted that the black lines should frame the red.

Ms. Skinner noted all they are doing is expanding the red.

Co-Chair Doherty stated as long as it fits within the boundary of the black lines, then he is fine.

7.3 4 Bouton Street Concept

Beth Fenstermacher (41 Green St, Concord) stated they are bringing forward the plan for the police station at 4 Bouton St, Concord. They are in the schematic design phase. Ms. Fenstermacher noted they went to Heritage Commission last month to go through the materials with them. They are not in a decision-making phase and just wanted to receive feedback. They are looking to start demolition before winter, and the goal is to have the police department occupying by the end of 2027. Ms. Fenstermacher stated Harriman is the architect.

Will Gatchall (33 Jewell Court, Portsmouth) and Kelly Stanford (33 Jewell Court, Portsmouth) are co-leading this project. Mr. Gatchall stated this building was a 1958 Harriman project. It is a beautiful example of mid-century modern with signature design. Mr. Gatchall noted the lower level of the building is grounded with natural materials and stones. The level at the top was the board room and the president's office. There are natural materials, open work spaces, break out spaces, and daylighting. The fieldstone on the top right is still intact and they are trying to celebrate some of the elements that are a part of the existing building. They have to separate the critical facility from the non-critical facility. Administration and public function will be in the renovated space, and the new space will house dispatch, control, and vehicles.

Ms. Stanford noted on the left side is the category four critical facility. The existing building will be renovated to support the administrative and non-critical to utilize the existing building.

Member Gentilhomme asked if adding onto the building.

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Ms. Stanford answered yes, they are adding on.

Member Proctor noted everything in green is an addition.

Ms. Stanford noted the existing building is on piles and the new addition will be on piles.

Mr. Gatchall noted they are trying to limit the amount of fencing and walls. They will use large granite blocks so the sight line remains as open as possible. Mr. Gatchall stated they will have difference in height for the granite blocks.

Member Thorpe asked if there any trees along the property line.

Ms. Fenstermacher stated there will be, but they have not gotten to the landscape plan. Ms. Fenstermacher noted the Heritage Commission wanted to know what they are going to replace the seafoam green color with, and they are leaning towards a blue.

Member Gentilhomme noted it is an improvement and appropriate to acknowledge the blue for police.

Member Proctor noted to not have a blue color that is too heavy.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if they are changing the material at the back corner.

Mr. Gatchall answered yes.

Member Savage asked if there will be solar on the roof.

Ms. Stanford stated yes, the intention is to design for solar.

Co-Chair Doherty asked for the lower level with the glass are they using clear or tinted.

Ms. Sanford noted that is the juxtaposition of honoring the existing materials but knowing what is the function behind it.

7.4 Any other business which may legally come before the Committee.

Adjournment

Member Gentilhomme moved, seconded by Co-Chair Doherty, to adjourn the meeting at 10:17 a.m. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Krista Tremblay

Krista Tremblay

Administrative Technician III