

City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
July 12, 2011

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 12, 2011, in the Second Floor Conference Room in City Hall at 8:30 a.m.

Present at the meeting were James P. Doherty, II, Duene Cowan, Jennifer Czysz, Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, and Claude Gentilhomme (who arrived at 8:45 a.m.). Messrs. Woodward and Henninger and Ms. Hebert and Ms. Muir of the City Planning Division were also present, as were Mike Santa, Code Administrator, and Craig Walker, Zoning Officer (who arrived at 9:00 a.m.).

The ADRC met in order to review the proposed design of certain sites, building, building alterations, and signs that are on the Planning Board's regular agenda for July 20, 2011, and which are subject to the provisions of the City of Concord's Zoning Ordinance in respect to architectural design review.

Agenda Items

- **City of Concord for one new freestanding sign with the message
Welcome to Historic Penacook Village at 4 Crescent Street.**

Mr. Henninger stated that the sign would have four removable panels at the bottom of the sign to be used as announcements of events within the community, such as the Farmers' Market and Tree Lighting.

Peter Poanessa from Keene Signworx was present on behalf of the applicant to answer questions from the ADRC.

Questions regarding the material for and location of the sign were discussed. It was also discussed as to whether the sign would have writing on the back. The sign will be angled so that the back is not visible and would have landscaping behind the sign. Mr. Henninger stated that this sign will be used as a model for the replacement of the existing Penacook Village entry signs.

The ADRC found the proposed sign to be appropriate for the location and use and recommended approval as submitted.

- **Sam's Club for one replacement freestanding sign at 304 Sheep Davis Road.**

Mr. Henninger explained that this sign was to replace the existing freestanding sign to a new location near the northern entrance to the store near the gas pumps.

Mr. Brian Lorenz from WD Partners was present on behalf of the applicant to answer questions from the Committee.

Mr. Lorenz stated that the existing sign needed to be replaced as it was located over the gas line. The face of the sign would remain the same, but would now be a pylon sign, replacing the original monument type sign, which blew down in a recent windstorm.

The ADRC found the proposed sign to be appropriate for the location and use and recommended approval as submitted.

- **Banks Chevrolet-Buick-GMC-Cadillac for a master sign plan consisting of five new affixed signs and one new freestanding sign, together with removal of one existing freestanding sign at 137 Manchester Street.**

Mr. Henninger reported that the applicant had received a variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment to have five affixed signs and one freestanding sign totaling less than 400 square footage of signage. One existing freestanding sign will be removed.

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

The ADRC recommended approval of the master sign plan and the graphics for the signs.

- **OutFITters Thrift Store for one new hanging sign at 32 North Main Street.**

Mr. Henninger stated that the application was for one new hanging sign.

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

The ADRC discussed that the store was moving from their current location at Bicentennial Square to 32 North Main Street, next door to the Christian Science Reading Room. The applicants are proposing to relocate their existing sign.

The ADRC found the proposed sign to be appropriate for the location and use and recommended approval as submitted.

- **The Friends Program for one new freestanding sign at 202 North State Street.**

Mr. Henninger explained that the new freestanding sign was for their new location at 202 North State Street just south of Cobb Hill Builders.

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

The ADRC discussed that the dark background behind the phone number detracts from the sign. It was suggested that the name of the program should be bolder in order to stand out more and the telephone number should either be removed or the font size decreased. The street name could be removed and the street number be made larger, as most people would know they were on North State Street.

The ADRC recommended approval of the sign with the following recommendations to improve the graphics of the sign:

1. Delete or minimize the phone number and remove the black background.
2. Remove the street name from the sign and make the street number larger.
3. Lower and enlarge the organization's logo.

- **Site plan by David and Deborah Newell on behalf of Dr. Serdar Ayah at 125 Fisherville Road.**

Mr. Henninger reported that the building, which was originally a house, was converted in the early 1990's to an office, and is now being converted to a restaurant. The Newell's are the former owners of Summer

Freeze, a local ice cream shop on Fisherville Road. There will be a small amount of paving added to provide for the minimum number of parking spaces required. Currently, the property has a number of mature trees, so only a few new ones will need to be added to conform to the zoning ordinance. The Planning Division has not yet received the landscaping plan, the architectural elevations for the addition, and the proposed sign application. The Planning Board is scheduled to review the site plan at their meeting on July 20th. Design review will be deferred for the addition, landscaping, and signage.

The ADRC discussed the single parking space in the front of the building and how it detracts from the appearance. It was suggested that the applicant apply for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to defer construction or remove the one parking space in the front of the proposed addition. The ADRC noted that the elimination of this paved area in front of the building would allow for foundation plantings that would enhance the appearance of the site and building from Fisherville Road. The ADRC suggested that the application for the CUP for deferred parking could be considered simultaneously with the architectural elevations, landscaping, and signage.

[Ms. Hebert left the meeting at 9:00 a.m.]

- **Architectural Design Review Informational Brochure.**

Mr. Woodward provided the ADRC with an overview of the origination of the informational brochure for architectural design review. He stated that during the Planning Board's discussions of the site plan review process, there were some criticisms of the design review process. The Planning Board thought it would be appropriate to have a handout for developers and property owners to explain the process and outline the requirements of the design review process. Mr. Woodward noted that the informational brochure was an early draft and the Planning Division staff was looking for feedback from both the ADRC and the Planning Board. He also stated that the informational brochure was culled from a larger document outlining the architectural design review process, as well as information about the structure and development of the ADRC. The following represents the ADRC's comments and suggestions on the informational brochure:

1. Signs – need to ensure that the signs are readable for both drivers and pedestrians and to include essential information on the sign.
2. Signs – the section on signs should be removed from the “process” section and a separate section should be created for signs.
3. Process section – include a link for the Architectural Design Review Guidelines, which are on the City's website.
4. Punctuation and grammar – there were some punctuation and grammar items that were noted and need to be corrected.
5. Headings – each of the headings should be standardized.
6. Under the “objectives” heading in the first bulleted paragraph, the word “possible” should be added prior to “the negative effects”.
7. Under the “objectives” heading in the first bulleted paragraph, landscaping should be added at the end of the sentence.
8. Front cover – the black font for “City of Concord, NH” should be changed to a white font.
9. Front cover – the font for the phone and fax numbers and the email address needs to be larger. The City seal should also be larger.
10. Design guidelines section – this information should be checked against the City's design review guidelines.
11. A review of the informational brochure needs to be done to ensure that the document is written in layman's language.

12. A section should be included to state that the Committee is made up of professionals from various design and architectural fields.

Other Business

- **Zoning Ordinance Changes.**

Questions regarding the Zoning Ordinance change regarding for buildings of less than 1,000 square feet being exempted from site plan review were discussed. Mr. Walker stated that the change to the ordinance was for the new construction of additions and any renovations in any of the performance districts. Prior to the change, all additions and renovations within a performance district triggered a major site plan review. With the change, these renovations and additions would still be subject to architectural design review, but not major site plan review.

- **Changes to the Endicott Building.**

Mr. Henninger reported that the dormers and fake pediments were going to be removed from the Endicott Building. There was discussion of the improvement that these changes would make. It was also discussed that before and after pictures should be taken, as this would be a good example for the design review guidelines.

- **City Planner's Retirement.**

Mr. Henninger stated that this would be the final ADRC meeting at which the City Planner, Mr. Woodward, would be in attendance, as he is retiring at the end of July. The ADRC congratulated him on his retirement.

There was no further business to come before the Committee, and the meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen L. Henninger
Assistant City Planner

SLH / djm