

**City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
September 30, 2025 Minutes**

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on September 30, 2025, in Council Chambers, at 37 Green St, Concord, NH.

Attendees: Co-Chair Jay Doherty, Member Claude Gentilhomme, Member Ron King, and Member Douglas Proctor

Absent: Co-Chair Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Member Merle Thorpe, and Alternate Member Amanda Savage

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 8:30 a.m.

Ms. Skinner noticed the Committee that she has to leave at 9:30 a.m. for a site visit and this will be her last Architectural Design Review Committee meeting. Ms. Skinner expressed how wonderful it was getting to know all of you and working with all of you.

Member King stated they will miss you.

Co-Chair Doherty asked for the meeting minutes to reflect a thank you to Ms. Skinner and all she has done to help out the Committee.

Ms. Skinner thanked the Committee and stated she appreciates it.

2. Minutes – Approve minutes from September 2, 2025

Member Gentilhomme moved, seconded by Member King, to approve the meeting minutes from September 2, 2025, as written. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously. Co-Chair Doherty abstained because he was not present at the meeting.

3. Staff Memorandum

4. Sign Applications

- 4.1 First Sign & Corporate Image, Inc, on behalf of Stickney Avenue, LLC, requests an architectural design review recommendation for a new 72.93-square-foot internally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0634-2025) at 11 Stickney Avenue (2025-108/PL-ADR-2025-0125) (PL-CUP-2025-0098)

Scott Aubertin (107 Hollis St, Manchester) is present to represent this application.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if the sign is over the entry or the front of this building.

Mr. Aubertin responded correct.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if one sign with white letters that are internally illuminated.

Mr. Aubertin answered correct.

Member King asked if there is a limit on the brightness because it can be blindingly bright.

Mr. Aubertin stated they are standard internally illuminated channel letter and has not had this come up before. What they try to avoid is having a bright white background with lettering over it.

Member Gentilhomme stated the city also discourages white internally illuminated backgrounds.

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Mr. Aubertin stated this is a classier way to address it with the visibility from Stickney Ave and the highway. Mr. Aubertin noted if letters get too bright it makes it hard to read.

Member Gentilhomme stated especially the words “The Lofts At” and if they are too bright that is a blur.

Mr. Aubertin noted they do not have to be bright to be visible and these have a stainless-steel return.

Member Gentilhomme stated he has no objections to the sign.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if there are other building lights.

Mr. Aubertin noted on the fascia of the building is a black fixture that lights up and down of the architecture of the building. There are also parking lights that are in the antique style that are shielded down.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted, seconded by Member King.

Discussion:

Member Proctor asked what does the “93 north” reference.

Mr. Aubertin believes it is in reference to the highway.

Member Proctor stated it is on the south side.

Mr. Aubertin responded it is.

Co-Chair Doherty noted it is a big sign.

All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.2 Advantage Signs, on behalf of Eagle Square Associates, Lee Marden, and Land Vest, requests an architectural design review recommendation to replace an existing building wall sign with a new 26.75-square-foot non-illuminated building wall sign (SP-0638-2025) at 3 Eagle Square in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. (2025-111/PL-ADR-2025-0127)

Josh Messinger (128 Hall St, Concord) is present to represent this application. Mr. Messinger showed what was existing Bank of New Hampshire Wealth Management and what is proposed is removing the logo, cleaning and installing a smaller sign with Land Vest logo. It is an aluminum pan sign with acrylic letters.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if the letters are raised on this sign.

Mr. Messinger stated the letters are raised a half inch thick off the panel.

Member King made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted, seconded by Member Gentilhomme.

Discussion:

Co-Chair Doherty noted there is no border and asked if that is intentional.

Mr. Messinger stated it is intentional because that is what the client wanted and the way the building is constructed there is a sort of a natural boarder.

Member Proctor asked if there are other signs.

Mr. Messinger stated not that he knows of.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if everyone else is up on the ribbon above.

Mr. Messinger stated as far as he knows everything is right there.

All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

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- 4.3 Advantage Signs, on behalf of Ledyard Financial Group Inc, requests architectural design review recommendations to reface an existing freestanding sign with a new 24.83-square-foot internally illuminated free standing sign (SP-0639-2025) with added pole covering, and to replace two existing building wall signs with a new 11.5-square-foot non-illuminated building wall sign (SP-0640-2025) and a 30.33 square-foot externally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0641-2025) at 74 S Main St in the Urban Commercial (UC) District. (2025-112/PL-ADR-2025-0128)

Josh Messinger (128 Hall St, Concord) is present to represent this application. Mr. Messinger there are existing signs being replaced as a rebranding effort. They will put a full cover on the freestanding sign and a new sign cabinet with new letters.

Member King noted it is a nice-looking sign.

Mr. Messinger stated there will be flat aluminum letters that will go on the building. They will remove the existing ones. There is a pan sign that is going on the gable end of the building. It is a sleeker logo update.

Member King made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted, seconded by Member Gentilhomme.

Discussion:

Member Proctor stated when you fill in the bottom panel of the tall sign to ask that it does not block any traffic views.

Mr. Messinger does not think so because it is beyond the sidewalk.

All in favor. The motion passed unanimously

- 4.4 Sousa Signs, on behalf of Thomas Cusano and the Stove Barn, requests architectural design review recommendations to replace two existing building wall signs with a new 50.2-square-foot internally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0646-2025) and a 24-square-foot internally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0647-2025) at 249 Loudon Rd in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. (2025-113/PL-ADR-2025-0129)

Jason Gagnon (225 East Industrial Park Dr, Manchester) is present to represent this application. Mr. Gagnon noted on the building there are two wall sign cabinets that are internally illuminated. They are looking to reface the sign as it is, add an opaque background to it. They will pull one face out and add a new face. The second sign is facing Loudon Rd.

Member King asked if both signs meet code.

Mr. Tremblay responded they do.

Co-Chair Doherty stated he has no objections. However, noted the first sign feels elongated and the second sign feels like the right portions.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted, seconded by Member King. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously

- 4.5 Ethos Signs Co, on behalf Automotive Supply Assoc Inc, requests an architectural design review recommendation for approval of alterations made to a 128-square-foot nonilluminated freestanding sign (SP-0401-2024) which differ from the architectural design review approval granted on December 18, 2024 by the Planning Board at 263 S Main St in the Urban Transitional (UT) and Opportunity Corridor Performance (OCP) Districts. (2024-076/PL-ADR-2024-0048)

Andrew Yuars (263 South Main St, Concord) is present to represent this application. Mr. Yuars stated he was in here a few months ago and provided a mockup of what they thought was the tenants in the plaza. Mr. Yuars stated he was not aware of how many tenants there were. They unstacked the Sanel Business Park and went all the way down with all of the units Sanel has and a few are blank because they were

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unoccupied at the time. There are ten additional slots that Mr. Yuars was not aware of and presented what they have done for changes to the skirting at the bottom. Mr. Yuars stated it will be the same exact dimensions. Mr. Yuars stated they are changing the aesthetics to fit the tenants.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if this is internally illuminated.

Mr. Yuars responded no, it is a vinyl reface.

Co-Chair Doherty stated it feels very messy and there is a lot going on with the size of the fonts and the black bar between the white.

Mr. Yuars responded that was an issue and they looked at this a lot of different ways. Mr. Yuars noted there are so many tenants and it is hard to make it look uniform. Mr. Yuars stated without the black bars in the middle it looks like a newspaper. Mr. Yuars noted the black bars give it more uniformity. Mr. Yuars does see the point in addressing the larger and smaller fonts. Mr. Yuars pointed out the length of some of the tenant names which the landlord wanted to fill the space so people can see it. Mr. Yuars agrees with keeping all the same size however, people with smaller names will be real tiny and people with big names will fill up the whole thing.

Member Proctor suggested to set a maximum font and a minimum font and just use the two instead of trying to fill the space.

Co-Chair Doherty noted the previously approved sign is readable, whereas this new sign is much harder to read the tenant panel text.

Member Proctor asked if the black cabinet is the same size.

Mr. Yuars stated the cabinet does not change.

Member Gentilhomme stated when he looks at the proposed sign the larger letters seem to overpower the smaller names in such a manner that you are not able to easily read the smaller letters.

Mr. Yuars agrees with that.

Member Gentilhomme noted if you can make those the sizes of the letters a little more uniform instead of filling the box.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if they looked at Sanel and then business park to stack business and park.

Mr. Yuars stated they did and it felt real squeezed.

Co-Chair Doherty noted it doesn't feel balanced.

Member Gentilhomme stated his concern is the way the individual tenants are reading.

Co-Chair Doherty stated it feels unbalanced.

Member Gentilhomme strongly recommended that they increase the size of the property address "263" so you can see it.

Co-Chair Doherty does not think this matches what was approved.

Ms. Skinner stated it doesn't and that is why they are at the meeting.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to approve the sign as submitted with a strong recommendation that the letter heights be more uniform and the number "263" be enlarged.

With no second, the motion failed.

Member King asked if the motion covers what was discussed during the committee's discussion.

Member Gentilhomme asked roughly how tall is "vintage's customs" letters.

Mr. Yuars two and a half to three inches.

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Member Gentilhomme asked about “Dark Site Custom.”

Mr. Yuars answered two to four.

Member Proctor suggested a maximum of four inches and minimum of two inches.

Member King stated they still have the problem of if being different all around.

Member Proctor noted you need to pick four and two and a half.

Mr. Yuars noted some cannot be four inches tall.

Member Gentilhomme stated letter sized needs to be between two and a half inches and four inches.

Member King does not see how you can do that.

Co-Chair Doherty agrees with Member King they all should be three inches standard and do not have different sizes.

Mr. Yuars agrees on keeping them the same size.

Member Gentilhomme asked what size.

Mr. Yuars thinks three inches.

Co-Chair Doherty made a motion starting at the bottom the 263 should be doubled in size, the names of all the businesses and tenants should be a uniform size with three inches and a suggestion that you look at the balancing of Sanel and business park at the top of the sign. Seconded by Member Gentilhomme.

Discussion:

Member King asked if Co-Chair Doherty is not concerned with it running off the bottom.

Co-Chair Doherty stated to Member King’s point if there is a way to get more black space under the lowest one by shrinking the white boxes slightly to get more border all around.

Mr. Yuars stated there is no gap turning that line and there is plenty of black underneath and it will not look awkward.

Member King stated he is worried that the three inches letters for vintage custom cabinetry would not fit because these are two and a half inches.

Mr. Yuars suggested to have the variance of the two and a half to three because you will not be able to distinguish height. Mr. Yuars noted every single one was slightly varied based on the length of the name there would not be an off balance aesthetically. Mr. Yuars does agree that the three inches cannot be the standard because some would not fit or look good.

Co-Chair Doherty thinks they should all be the same. Even with a slight variation it will look weird if they all start stacking together.

Mr. Yuars stated for the minimum you would have to do the math of the length of the box is “x” and what is the longest name and how tall is the longest name. That would be the minimum.

Member Proctor noted if you do have a size variation are you able to group the largers and the smaller together.

Mr. Yuars responded no, they stack from tenant number.

Co-Chair Doherty amended the motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted with the following conditions in accordance with Section 5.4(D) *Coordination* of the Architectural Design Guidelines: the overall size of all the tenant panel lettering font shall be made to be uniform and be 2.5-inches in height; the property address “263” shall be enlarged to be double the proposed size; a suggestion that the “Sanel” and “Business Park” could be revamped for greater visual

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balance; and a suggestion to try to increase the black border at the bottom of the sign.
instead of three inches change to two and a half inches. Member King seconded.

Discussion

Mr. Bass asked to clarify that all tenant panel lettering is two and a half inches.

Co-Chair Doherty stated all of the tenant lettering is two and a half inches.

All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.6 Heather Dudko, sign permit consultant, and American Sign Inc, on behalf of Interchange Development, LLC, and Marshalls, requests architectural design review recommendations for two new internally illuminated building walls signs of 186.5-square-feet (SP-0642-2025) and 129.6-square-feet (SP-0643-2025), a new 2.5-square-foot internally illuminated hanging projecting sign (SP-0644-2025), and a new 5.12-square-foot internally illuminated tenant panel sign (SP-0645-2025) to be placed in an existing free standing sign at 14 Merchants Way in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. (2025-110/PL-ADR-2025-0126)

Heather Dudko (27 Old Meetinghouse Road Auburn, MA) is present to represent this application. Ms. Dudko stated this will be a new tenant. They are proposing two wall signs. The under-canopy sign and the reface of the tenant panel. They believe the signs do not meet code so they will apply for Zoning Board of Adjustment for the wall signage. They understand three wall signs are allowed per frontage and they would only be allowed 137 square feet of frontage and they are proposing 321.7. The front wall sign that is proposed 189.7 square foot with a six-foot letter. The side wall sign is a five-foot letter and that is proposed at 129.5 square feet. The under-canopy sign is 2.5 square feet. The reface of the existing tenant panel.

Member Proctor asked where does the under-canopy sign go.

Ms. Dudko at the front elevation.

Co-Chair Doherty stated it does not appear to be centered and asked is there a reason why it is not centered on the door frame.

Ms. Dudko stated she does not know and if they need to move the location that would be fine.

Member Proctor asked if there is an adjacent building and it is not a standalone.

Ms. Dudko responded yes, there is an adjacent building.

Member Gentilhomme noted for the sign on the side of the building it does not need to be that big. Member Gentilhomme pointed out there is a free-standing sign that points out all of the tenants. Member Gentilhomme asked do they really need the canopy sign and if these signs need to be that large. Member Gentilhomme suggested to reduce the size of the sign.

Member Proctor noted it should be within the same scale of the other buildings and if they are way larger that there are other ways to deal with all of that space.

Co-Chair Doherty noted the Home Goods would be similar. Co-Chair Doherty asked if they only have something on the front side.

Member Proctor asked if it is based on frontage because Market Basket is bigger.

Ms. Skinner stated it is based on their frontage.

Ms. Dudko stated the front sign is 189.7 and it is the side elevation that puts them over the square footage that is allowed. Ms. Dudko will relay this discussion back to the client.

Ms. Dudko stated they will be going for their variance next month because they did not file yet.

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Co-Chair Doherty stated the balancing of the sign with all of the other facades in there seems to be appropriate and still match the character of that area. Co-Chair Doherty stated whatever size that sign is they want it to fit equally in the façade of the Marshalls front sign. The side sign will sit equally in that panel too. Co-Chair Doherty asked if other tenants have hanging signs or will they be the first.

Ms. Dudko is not sure if Home Goods has one.

Co-Chair Doherty made motion to approve as submitted with the understanding that the signs will be centered within the panel shown from the front elevation and the side elevation suggestion that they can be reduced slightly in size to match the character of the nearby buildings, recommendation to remove the hanging sign to match the character of the other buildings in the area and this is all based on approval from the Zoning Board of Adjustment because it does not meet the current zoning. Member Gentilhomme seconded.

Discussion:

Member King stated there is a coming soon yellow on the pylon sign and asked why.

Ms. Dudko stated that is a standard thing they do.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if it peels off.

Ms. Dudko stated it is a vinyl cling.

Mr. Tremblay stated they will have to apply for a temporary sign permit.

Mr. Bass ask for clarification if the intention of the motion is to make suggestions and not condition the approval on any changes.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if they want a stipulation that they want the hanging sign removed because it does not match the character of the buildings in there.

Member Gentilhomme responded no.

Co-Chair Doherty amended the motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted with the condition that the hanging sign shall be removed to match the character of the adjacent buildings within the development in accordance with Section 5.4(D) Coordination of the Architectural Design Guidelines; a suggestion that the size of the signs could be reduced in size to match the signage of adjacent buildings; and, an understanding that the signs will be centered within the panels shown for the front and side elevations. Seconded by Member King.

All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Building Permit Applications

5.1 None

6. Site Plan Applications

6.1 Northpoint Engineering, LLC, Skuffy's LLC, and Enterprise Mobility request an architectural design review recommendation for the addition of a 760-square-foot two-bay garage, at Tax Map Lot 781Z 31, addressed as 28 Manchester St, in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. (2025-104/PL-SPM-2025-0026) (2025-107/PL-ADR-2025-0124)

Ian McGregor (119 Storrs St, Concord) and Bill Fridlington (142 Hillcrest Dr, Laconia) are present to represent this application. Mr. McGregor stated it is 764 square foot of building space that was added and the old garage will be removed and replaced with a two-bay garage. The proposed roof is a shed style to go along with the office space. The proposed conditions the two bay doors and it is 34 feet wide and moved forward about five feet. The gable end is also rotated. Mr. McGregor stated they are asking for several waivers on this project to not have to provide a landscaping plan, retain the existing driveway

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width as well as the interconnecting parking lot. The property fronts both Black Hill Rd and Manchester St. Black Hill Rd was acting as the accessory drive that will be connecting all of that development behind that property. Mr. McGregor stated the building fits the residential aesthetic that appears to be what the city is moving towards. St. Mary's bank that went next door has a residential cape cod style building. The proposed renderings mirror that and does not look like a standard rental car facility. They have gone to the Zoning Board of Adjustment and received three different variances for frontage because they front two roads. They were able to maintain frontages on both roads as existing non-confirming. They are a continued non-permitted use because the structure is the Gateway Performance District. They have an expanded non-confirming use. They will be encroaching into the side yard setbacks and they received a variance from that as well.

Member King asked why are they seeking an exemption from the landscaping.

Mr. McGregor stated it is an existing approved landscaping plan from 2003 and they are removing two trees from the plan. They are asking that the removal of the landscape is permitted and a licensed New Hampshire landscape architect does not have to recreate a landscape plan.

Member Proctor asked if most of the work is being completed on the drive side of the building.

Mr. McGregor responded correct.

Member King asked if they are required to replace those trees elsewhere on the property.

Mr. Bass noted in the staff report that they wanted them to show the required tree tabulations to make sure the requirements are still being met. The waiver is so they do not need a licensed landscape architect. If they need to provide additional trees based on the tabulations, they can do so on the site plan.

Mr. McGregor stated based on the 2003 site plan application the existing storm water requirements were met at that time and did not require any recharge into the ground water. Mr. McGregor stated it is a tight site with the storage of the rental vehicles as well as parking for staff and customers. They were able to treat and infiltrate all of the new impervious surfaces and that is the purpose for the removal of the trees is to create a larger depression for treatment and infiltration of the storm water.

Mr. Fridlington stated the main reason for expansion is not because of growth of the business it is more of the process of cleaning their cars since COVID. Mr. Fridlington noted the cleaning time has doubled and that bay allows them to pull cars in. The process has gone from five to ten minutes to three hours. It gets the people inside and the business contained within the walls.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if taking down a garage bay and installing a two-stall garage bay, the business stays the same and the landscape stays the way it is and the parking stays the way it is.

Mr. Fridlington stated they are adding 100 square feet of pavement to get to the second bay and the space they are removing is the current dumpster area. They are not removing or adding any parking.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted. Seconded by Member King.

Discussion:

Co-Chair Doherty asked about the elevations and likes how the ridge of the roof of the new bay hits the other one versus the architecture elevation where there is a dip in there between the garage bay. It seems there might be issue and they might want to look at.

Member Proctor asked why are the doors so tall is it a function for the cleaning inside or the vehicles.

Mr. Fridlington stated the cargo vans and no box trucks.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if they will use the same color shingle, color of siding and any trim all to match the existing.

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Mr. Fridlington responded correct.

Co-Chair Doherty suggested to extend the roof to match.

All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 6.2 TFMoran and Unitil Energy Systems, Inc. request an architectural design review for the construction of a new substation, at Tax Map Lot 494Z 44, addressed as 1-7 McGuire St, in the Industrial (IN) District. (2025-105/PL-SPR-2025-0047)

Nick Golan (48 Constitution Dr, Bedford) is present to represent this application. Mr. Golan noted this is the rebuild of the West Concord substation. Mr. Golon noted this is at the Unitil campus at 1-7 McGuire St and they have office space located along the north and westerly portion of the property. As well as a portion of their stock yard. The existing substation is behind one of their garage buildings and it measures 65 by 62. Mr. Golon noted this is a 1940's substation. They are retiring vintage equipment and installing new current technology to meet the growing electrical demand. Mr. Golon noted there is good vegetative screening to adjacent uses. There are portions of this in the UT District and the IT District.

Member King asked for the location of the proposed substation.

Mr. Golon will be located in the back corner and it will be 145-feet by 55-feet, which will hold the back corner. Looking at the site plan you can see how that fits within the fabric of the existing area. Where they are dropping the substation currently is a compact gravel yard that they are using for the purpose of poll storage. They have relocated the poll storage in new location so an oversized vehicle can come in to pick up or drop off. They are improving site circulation.

Member King asked about lighting.

Mr. Golon stated they do have compliant lighting and their lights are on when everyone else's lights are off. The lights are in the area of primary need which is the pole storage yard, circulation and it is all zeros at all of their property lines. There will be no negative influence to any of the abutters.

Co-Chair Doherty asked if the lights will be motion or always on.

Mr. Golan stated they will be on. Mr. Golon noted all of the vegetation that exists on all sides of the property is a boon to this type of development. They have industrial areas that are located to the north and to the west. Across the river is flood zone and no one will likely build. The elevation sits down 65 feet from the site. There is no sight light down into those areas. Mr. Golon stated they have requested a few waivers. One is for solid waste facility screening and they are not a solid waste facility. There are several waivers for solid waste facility screening, mechanical screening and screening about site storage. Mr. Golon is not sure if this facility falls in all of the buckets but the purpose is compliance.

Co-Chair Doherty thinks it is all industrial back there and the lights are facing the other way.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted. Member King seconded. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Other Business

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

7.2 Adjournment

Member King moved, seconded by Member Gentilhomme, to adjourn the meeting at 9:52 a.m. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Krista Tremblay

Krista Tremblay

Administrative Technician III