

**City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
September 13, 2011**

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 13, 2011, in the Second Floor Conference Room in City Hall at 8:30 a.m.

Present at the meeting were Jennifer Czysz, Claude Gentilhomme, Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Frederick Richards, Jay Doherty, III. Mr. Henninger, Ms. Hebert, and Ms. Muir of the City Planning Division were also present, as was Craig Walker, Zoning Administrator.

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 September 21, 2011, and which are subject to the provisions of the City of Concord's Zoning Ordinance in respect to architectural design review.

Agenda Items

- **Bekdash Temple for one freestanding sign at 189 Pembroke Road**

Mr. Henninger stated that the application was for one freestanding sign at 189 Pembroke Road.

Dave Hazen from Sign-A-Rama was present on behalf of the applicant to answer questions from the ADRC.

Mr. Walker stated that the sign needs to be placed five feet back from the right-of-way, and that a manual changing sign with internal illumination was acceptable.

Mr. Gentilhomme suggested the sign have landscaping around the base and that the post be painted black.

Ms. Czysz suggested that the permanent portion "BEKTASH TEMPLE" of the sign be clear and legible.

Mr. Hazen stated that he would provide better graphics to the Planning Division by Tuesday, to be presented at the Planning Board meeting.

The ADRC recommended approval of the sign with the following recommendations:

1. The metal post be painted black;
2. The lettering for the permanent portion of the sign be clear and legible; and,
3. Landscaping to be provided at the base of the sign.

- **Concord Christian Academy for revisions to an existing freestanding sign at 37 Regional Drive**

Mr. Henninger explained that the application was for revisions to an existing freestanding sign at 37 Regional Drive. A top panel would be set on top of the existing sign.

Dave Hazen from Sign-A-Rama was present on behalf of the applicant to answer questions from the ADRC.

Mr. Hazen stated that the sign located on Pembroke Road would be brought to the Regional Drive entrance and set to form a "V" with the other sign. Both signs would be identical, with top panels on both signs and the muted yellow band. Neither of the signs would be illuminated.

Mr. Walker stated that the separation between the signs cannot be greater than 42 inches. Mr. Henninger stated that the application did not reflect the moving of the sign on Pembroke Road and requested that clearer renderings should be provided to the Planning Division by Tuesday for presentation to the Planning Board.

The ADRC recommended approval of the sign as submitted.

- **iParty Halloween Store for one freestanding sign and one affixed sign at 196 Loudon Road.**

Mr. Henninger reported that the application was for one freestanding sign and one affixed sign at 196 Loudon Road.

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Walker stated that the sign is identical to the one from last year, and because the sign will be up for more than the 45 days allowed for a temporary sign, the applicant must apply for a permanent sign.

Mr. Henninger stated that when the freestanding sign was lighted last year, it created a nuisance by blinding the vehicles driving west on Loudon Road. The signs were lit from the ground up with unshielded lights.

The ADRC recommends approval of the graphics as submitted, but stated that any lighting must be fully shielded.

- **Manchester Street Pizza & Deli for a replacement panel in an existing freestanding sign at 15 Manchester Street.**

Mr. Henninger reported that the application was for a replacement panel in an existing freestanding sign. He stated that the top panel is the one being replaced.

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant.

Ms. Czsyz stated that the graphics are readable, but would suggest that the applicant clean up the rust on the pole.

The ADRC recommends approval of the sign as submitted, and suggests the rust on the pole be cleaned up.

- **Subway for one affixed sign at Wal-Mart at 34 Loudon Road.**

Mr. Henninger stated that the applicant is requesting an affixed sign on the exterior of the building.

Don Reed from Barlo Signs was present on behalf of the applicant to answer questions from the ADRC.

Mr. Reed stated that the restaurant is located in the interior of the Wal-Mart and request external signage on the building.

The ADRC approved the application as submitted.

- **TD Wealth for one replacement affixed sign at 143 North Main Street.**

Mr. Walker stated that the overall sign package had previously been approved, and that the applicant was back before the Committee due to an alteration of the original sign package. He stated that this application is to replace one small sign over a doorway.

There was no one was present to represent the applicant.

The ADRC approved the application as submitted.

- **Building plans and signage for renovations at Applebee's at 260 Loudon Road (2011-0036)**

Mr. Henninger reported that the applicant requested postponement of this application until the November 8th ADRC meeting.

- **Site and building plans for Bindery Redevelopment, LLC, at 43 & 45 South Main Street (2011-0034)**

Ms. Hebert stated that the application was determined complete at the August Planning Board meeting and is set for a public hearing at the September 21, 2011, Planning Board meeting. The applicant proposes to demolish both the Bindery and Aderio buildings and build a multi-tenant office building. The new building is located in the CBP district, which requires the building be built to the right-of-way line; the applicant has applied for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to have the building set back and have a widened sidewalk.

Jason Blais from Opechee Construction was present to on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Blais stated that the building would have three main entrances, and the storefront windows would be aluminum, mimicking the Smile Building.

The Committee found the overall design acceptable but had a number of comments.

Mr. Gentilhomme suggested that the windows on the first floor be brought down to the ground in order to make it seem more pedestrian, and the Committee discussed adding another storefront entrance.

The Committee commented that the building should have a stronger and more detailed cornice line to reflect its location in downtown.

Ms. Hengen suggested that the building should mimic the massing of other downtown buildings which are vertical not horizontal and that some relief should be provided to create vertical shadow lines. She stated that in previous conversations with Steve Duprey, he agreed to break up the massing of the front of the building and carry that around to the north side and back of the building.

Ms. Hengen also stated that in a walk-through of the building with the Demolition Delay Committee, the Committee suggested saving the northern section of the building adjacent to the street and preserving the tie with the historical streetscape.

The ADRC finds the building appropriate, but would like alterations to have it fit in better with the downtown, including stronger cornice lines, providing more vertical reveal to the brick on the upper floors, including mechanical screening and name plate on the revised drawings, and breaking up the distance between the storefront entrances to make it more pedestrian oriented. The ADRC also asked to review any alterations at a later time.

Mr. Duprey arrived at 10:00 a.m. and discussion then continued. Mr. Duprey was advised of the Committee's comments and indicated he would look to address them. He also commented that the east elevation was rather bland, and he would be exploring concepts and would be bringing back revisions for consideration. Mr. Duprey expected to be back with changes several times until a final design was selected.

Mr. Duprey noted that the design of the south façade would be changing at the lower level to address the placement of a Concord Coach exhibit in the plaza between this building and the Smile Building, and the desire of a potential tenant to have basement windows on the south side.

- **Revised building elevations for Concord Housing Authority at 23 Green Street (2010-0048)**

Ms. Hebert stated that the project was previously approved with the color green on the exterior of the building and that what was constructed was tan with white trim.

John Hoyt from the Concord Housing Authority was present to respond to questions from the ADRC.

Mr. Hoyt stated that the original design was to have Hardi Plank siding, but because of costs, the building is now covered in vinyl siding. They were unable to match the green color using the vinyl siding, and selected the tan color with white trim. He also said that the stained glass window and the porch details would be constructed per the previously approved plan.

The ADRC recommends approval of the revision as submitted.

- **Revised site plan and new building plans for Concord Nissan at 175 Manchester Street (2010-0048)**

Mr. Henninger reported that the new Nissan car dealership was currently under construction, and the Manchester Street realignment project would soon be underway. He explained that a portion of the existing body shop is being kept and a new addition will be built to house offices and utilities. The Planning Board approved the site plan in August, but the architectural design review was tabled to allow the applicant to revise the design.

Architect Jason LeCombe was present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Lecombe stated that they had revised the drawings. He stated that they would be painting the front side of the building to match the Nissan building in color, using vertical siding on the gable ends, and putting a fresh coat of paint on the back side of the building. Mr. Lecombe stated that the new addition will be in split-face blocks. The three overhead doors in the front will be replaced, and the three overhead doors in the rear will be painted to match gray of the Nissan building. The affixed sign proposed would be ten inch red letters matching the Nissan red and would not be illuminated.

The ADRC recommends approval of the revisions as submitted.

- **Site and building plans for Havenwood Heritage Heights at 33 Christian Avenue (2011-0039)**

Mr. Henninger reported that the application was for a modest change to the entry way facing Hazen Drive. He stated that the existing walkway is uncovered and the applicant proposes to cover the walkway.

Ann Andrus from Cobb Hill Builders was present on behalf of the applicant.

The ADRC approved the changes as submitted.

- **Preliminary consultation for signage at 49 South Main Street (2009-0034).**

Mr. Henninger explained that the applicant was looking for feedback regarding the signage at 49 South Main Street.

Russ Aubertin from Advantage Signs was present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Aubertin stated that the original design for the directory sign was revised to include a new design for the top of the directory, including more color. He provided the ADRC with a variety of designs and colors for the new design.

Mr. Gentilhomme said that he wouldn't want to call attention to the directory as there are no other directories on Main Street. Mr. Henninger suggested that this would set a precedent for freestanding directory signs. The directory sign would not be legible from cars driving by and should be more pedestrian oriented.

Mr. Gentilhomme stated that he didn't care for the base of the sign, but liked the sign. Mr. Henninger suggested that the base for the sign be granite and the Committee concurred.

Mr. Aubertin said that the applicant is thinking of having banners for the Visitor Center, the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen, and the Center for Health Promotion, connected to the light poles. Mr. Walker stated that the City Council would have to license the banners.

Ms. Czysz said she would prefer to have bracket signs similar to all the other signs along Main Street. She feels that the directory sign should be used to orient someone once they are at the building, while the address sign should be more prominent.

Ms. Hebert asked if the directory could be mounted to the building.

Mr. Walker stated that at 16 feet is too high, as the maximum height allowed is 10 feet.

Mr. Duprey stated that some of the challenges with the signage for the building included the mature street trees in the front of the building which were chosen specifically because the branches begin eight to ten feet up from the ground. Another challenge is the set back of the building; while providing a wider plaza it makes it difficult for signage that won't impede pedestrians. The pop-out in the front of the building also creates difficulties in placing signs. Mr. Duprey feels that the best approach is a freestanding sign at the north end of the site. He also stated that as it stands, one half of the sign base needs licensing, while the other half requires a variance.

Mr. Walker explained that if the effect of the directory sign was more for drivers than pedestrians, then he felt that the banners would be more visible and effective. He suggested the address sign be freestanding with the directory on the building.

Mr. Henninger suggested that the top six to ten feet of the sign be for the building address, and the bottom four feet be utilized as the directory for pedestrians.

Ms. Hebert suggested the sign be a triangle shape with the two sides facing Main Street used as building signage visible from the street, and the third side be used for postings of community events. She also suggested that a seat wall be incorporated into the design for the base.

Mr. Duprey stated that he would appreciate a recommendation from the ADRC to the City Council regarding the license agreement.

The ADRC suggested that it would be more meaningful to provide comments if they could see the signage in context with the Concord Coach, the Moose, the banners, lampposts, and the directory sign. Mr. Duprey agreed to provide the ADRC with conceptual drawings.

There was no further business to come before the Committee, and the meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen L. Henninger
Assistant City Planner

SLH / djm