

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES
August 19, 2013

The Albemarle County Architectural Review Board met on Tuesday, August 19, 2013, 1:00 p.m., Room 241, Second Floor, County Office Building, Charlottesville, Virginia. Those members present were Charles T. Lebo, Vice Chair; John Quale, Bruce Wardell, Marcia Joseph, and Fred Missel, Chair. Mr. Wardell arrived at 1:05 p.m. Mr. Lebo left at 2:25 p.m. Mr. Quale left at 3:20 p.m. Staff members present were Margaret Maliszewski, Brent Nelson and Sharon Taylor.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Missel called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and established a quorum.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Missel invited public comment. There being none, the meeting proceeded.

REGULAR ITEMS

ARB-2013-98: Village Green Comprehensive Sign Plan – Comprehensive Sign Criteria
(Tax Map 61W, Section 3, Parcel 21A)

Proposal: To amend existing comprehensive sign criteria to allow for channel letter wall signs on the south (rear) elevations.

Staff Presentation:

Brent Nelson summarized the staff report and recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. Proposed addition of the channel letter sign type
2. Proposed channel letter locations
3. Proposed channel letter and graphic colors

Since the reports were mailed, staff has realized there is a significant variation in the sizes of both existing wall and hanging panel signs. Existing sign criteria do not indicate an approved panel sign size. Should the ARB desire to amend existing criteria to include panel sign sizes, staff has the following recommendations:

- The 21" x 8' panel size has an appropriate appearance for hanging panel signs in both facades. The Bellair House of Silver sign in the front elevation and the Glad Rags sign in the rear elevations are examples.
- The 24" x 8' wall panel sign is an appropriate size for wall panel signs over business entrances in the front elevation facing Commonwealth Drive.
- The wall panel size in the rear elevation facing Stonefield should be evaluated against sign guidelines on a case by case basis. For example, the sign should be proportional to the wall area and not cover up decorative brick.

In a separate matter, only 2 of 13 existing signs have permits and ARB approval. Of those without permits, some meet the criteria; others are close while others are not at all close to meeting the criteria. Zoning has notified the property owner of the signs that will need permits. Staff would like some direction from the ARB on how they think each sign should be handled as the permit applications come in.

Staff recommends approval of Option 1 or Option 2 for amended Comprehensive Sign Criteria as outlined in the staff report.

Applicant Presentation:

Jan Shifflett, leasing agent, said she was shocked to learn that the tenants had not gotten their sign permits since she made them aware of the need for a sign permit. In the future she would require a copy of the sign permit from tenants. She asked that the existing signs be allowed to stay and be grandfathered in since it was so close to meeting the sign criteria.

Board Discussion:

The ARB discussed the proposal with staff and the applicant and provided comments and suggestions. The ARB noted concerns with the following issues:

- Setting a precedent,
- Need for cohesiveness,
- Supported Option 2 in each case,
- Wall panel sign size (24” x 8’) **or** hanging panel size (21” x 8’) appropriateness, and
- Moving forward to clear up signage.

Motion: Mr. Quale moved for approval of ARB-2013-98, Village Green Comprehensive Sign Plan as outlined in the table in the staff report and as amended during the meeting, as follows:

SIGN FEATURE	Approved Criteria
SIGN TYPE	Wall panel or hanging panel Channel letter
LETTER FACE COLOR	Panel: Forest Green Channel Letter: White
TRIM CAP COLOR/ RETURN COLOR	Panel: N/A Channel letter: Bronze
RACEWAY COLOR	Panel: N/A Channel letter: To match color of wall to which it is attached
PANEL/CABINET FACE COLORS	Ivory
SIZE LIMITATIONS	21”-24” x 8’ for hanging panel or wall panel signs
LOCATION(S)	Wall Panel: Centered on the wall above the business entrance in both the front and rear elevations - not permitted on the wall under the colonnade. Hanging Panel: Centered between the colonnade columns in both the front and rear elevations.

	Channel letter: In the approved sign bands as shown on the photo-rendering
LOGO/GRAPHICS DETAILS	Panel: Forest green border Channel letter: No limit to graphic colors as long as total number per sign is limited to three and they contribute to a coordinated appearance.
ILLUMINATION DETAILS	Panel: No internal illumination; existing wall fixtures may be reused Channel letter: may be internally illuminated
TEXT	No limits other than standard guidelines
LETTER TYPE/FONT	No limits other than standard guidelines
MATERIALS	No limits other than standard guidelines

Mr. Lebo seconded the motion.

The motion carried by a vote of 5:0.

Regarding the existing non-conforming signs without permits, Mr. Lebo made the following motion:

Due to the minor variations of the existing signs on the buildings, all of the non-conforming existing signage can remain as is. All new and/or modified signs will be required to meet the currently approved comprehensive sign criteria.

Mr. Wardell seconded the motion.

The motion carried by a vote of 5:0.

ARB-20-90: Chick-Fil-A Pantops - Preliminary Site Development Plan and Special Use Permit (Tax Map/Parcel 078000000055A2)

Proposal: To construct a restaurant with drive-through lanes and associated site improvements.

Staff Presentation:

Margaret Maliszewski summarized the staff report, noting the following items as primary points for discussion:

1. Drive-thru lanes: location, layout, quantity, visual impact on EC
2. Drive-thru canopies, green screens, menu boards, pick-up window
3. Retaining wall: height, material, railing design, need for terracing
4. Landscaping: at retaining wall, along entrance drive, general character
5. Building design: brick color, brick detailing, mechanical room and meter doors, window sizes, green screens

Two actions need to be taken on the following:

1. Recommendation to the Planning Commission on the special use permit, and
2. Comments for the work session on the preliminary site plan.

Mr. Quale noted the ARB was only officially discussing the drive-thru.

Ms. Maliszewski replied that was correct because the site plan would have to follow the normal site plan process. Staff's recommendation regarding the special use permit for the drive-thru lanes and the preliminary site and architectural designs are as listed in the staff report.

Applicant Presentation:

Paul Greshal, Architect on the Chick-Fil-A Design Team, presented a PowerPoint presentation to cover the history and design issues. They really want to hear a lot more on what works and what does not and how can they make this work. The technical questions would be answered by Gregory Dodd, PE. They are looking at this as a work session because they want to come back with something that works.

Gregory Dodd, Civil Engineer with Horton & Dodd, PC, said it was a very challenging site due to the topography and existing 15' telephone easement in the front. They have incorporated a lot of staff's comments from the staff report. He explained the drive thru setup noting they eliminated the bypass lane and have dual lanes for pick-up. They have a 7' to 8' area of landscaping immediately at the tangent point of the curb. The right-of-way line is really way back and then they are encumbered by another 15' easement beyond that. There will be a wall behind the trees. They are adding about 24' of landscaped area. There will be another 15' of grass area and then they will have the plantings. They can mitigate the height of the wall, which has gotten down to 8', and continue some landscaping along the face of the wall. He suggested moving the sidewalk in order to have a green area to plant. Natural cast stone or precast stone with a stone appearance is proposed for the retaining wall and samples will be provided.

Board Discussion:

The ARB discussed the proposal and noted concerns with the following issues:

1. Drive-thru lanes: location, layout, quantity, visual impact on EC – The mitigating factors were the distance from the Entrance Corridor; the slope differential and looking up to the site; view from both directions needs to be determined by photographs to be provided in the future; and questioned if removal of the bypass lane has been approved by county engineer;
2. Applicant to provide a simple section from the two approach angles to ensure the rooftop equipment would not be visible from the Entrance Corridor.
3. Regarding the special use permit, the ARB suggested referencing the revised plan to send a message to the Engineering Department that they support that.
4. The applicant needs to come back with details on how to achieve what the ARB conveyed.

(Mr. Lebo left at 2:25 p.m.)

Regarding the Special Use Permit for the drive-thru lanes:

Motion: Ms. Joseph made a motion to forward the following recommendation to the Planning

Commission regarding the special use permit request for ARB-2013-90, Chick-Fil-A Pantops.

The ARB has no objection to the drive-thru use given the revised plan presented on 8/19/13 showing two drive-through lanes and no bypass lane. The benefit of this configuration is that the visual impact of the site retaining wall is minimized and a continuous 7' minimum utility-free and easement-free planting area is created between the retaining wall and the EC. Size and quantity of landscaping will likely be required to exceed EC Guideline minimums to mitigate visual impacts of the use and related features of the development.

Mr. Quale seconded the motion.

The motion carried by a vote of 4:0. (Lebo absent)

Regarding the preliminary site and architectural designs:

The ARB offers the following comments on the preliminary site plan and architectural design:

1. Develop further detailing, consistent with the established design language, at the top of the wall and roof edge.
2. Provide details on the drive-thru canopies, their green-screen end supports, and the plants intended to grow on the green screens.
3. Provide a treatment for the mechanical, meter and service doors to eliminate the “back of building” appearance.
4. Include the equipment visibility note on the site and architectural drawings: “Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated.”
5. Provide a dumpster enclosure detail on the plan.
6. Provide the reflectance value of the window glass. Indicate on the drawings where the frosted glass is proposed.

Landscaping

7. Provide a complete plant schedule for review.
8. Revise the plant symbols for greater clarity.
9. Provide large shade trees 3½” caliper at planting, 35’ on center, along the EC frontage, outside of utilities and easements.
10. Provide interspersed ornamental trees along the EC frontage, outside of utilities and easements.
11. Increase the variety of shrubs provided, particularly along the retaining wall. Limit the number of proposed plants for any one species to 25% of the total proposed for that plant type (tree or shrub).
12. Eliminate one of the drive-thru lanes or the bypass lanes to increase planting area.
13. Increase the landscaping to offset the impacts of the size and prominence of the retaining wall.
14. Provide plants and sufficient planting area at the base of the retaining wall in the area east of the proposed building.
15. Plant trees, 2½” caliper at planting, at least 40’ on center, along the east side of the entrance drive and on the west side of the entrance drive at its north end. Show evidence of grading and planting easements.

16. Ensure that the perimeter parking lot tree spacing and size requirements are met with on-site trees.
17. Add the following note to the landscape plan: "All site plantings of trees and shrubs shall be allowed to reach, and be maintained at, mature height; the topping of trees is prohibited. Shrubs and trees shall be pruned minimally and only to support the overall health of the plant."

Retaining Walls

18. Revise the site design to significantly reduce the height of the on-site retaining wall and to provide sufficient utility-free planting area to meet the EC Guidelines and to offset negative visual impacts, or terrace the wall and provide trees and shrubs at the base and terraces.
19. Provide plants and sufficient planting area at the base of the retaining wall in the area east of the building.
20. Provide top of wall and bottom of wall elevations for both retaining walls.
21. Provide details and indicate the material and color of the retaining walls and railings and provide samples.

Signs

22. Note that separate applications are required for signs and the freestanding sign location can't be approved with the site plan; it can only be approved with the sign application.

Corvin Flynn, the property owner, was present and asked for a copy of the staff report.

The ARB recessed at 2:44 p.m. and the meeting reconvened at 2:48 p.m.

ARB-2013-92: Cole's Imports Specialists- Initial Site Plan and Preliminary ARB review (Tax Map/Parcel 045000000100B0)

Proposal: To construct a building for auto maintenance and repair, with associated site improvements.

Staff Presentation:

Margaret Maliszewski summarized the staff report, noting the following items as the primary points of discussion:

1. Appropriateness of the metal siding
2. Appropriateness of the utilitarian appearance of the building
3. Blankness of the front and side elevations
4. Size, proportion, and location of windows
5. Proportion and general appearance of the storefront
6. Landscaping – quantity, general character

There are two actions that need to be taken:

1. Action on the initial site plan, and
2. Preliminary comments on the architectural and site drawings

Staff outlined the points of discussion on the initial site plan.

Mr. Missel invited questions for staff.

Ms. Joseph asked what will happen with the building behind since there is nothing that says to be demolished or removed.

Ms. Maliszewski replied that she assumed the building was to be removed. However, it does not say that and it is not clear.

Mr. Missel noted that was a question for the applicant.

Applicant Presentation:

Katurah Roell was present on behalf of the applicant, Randy Ralston, for Cole's Imports. He pointed out the existing old house is intended to remain. There are no immediate plans to repair it, but just to make it safe and secure. Also, there are no immediate intentions to use the old house. However, it may be used in the future for expanded office space for the repair shop. Landscaping will be added to the front. It is a narrow site, and therefore will be difficult to get much in there. They will barely get a travel way down along the side of the building. It is impractical with the grades to the rear to access the rear of the building. Secondly, VDOT marginally approved a commercial entrance and will not permit entrances either adjoining the property to the east or west. They have to provide cross access easements through the front parking lot to access those properties to the east and west. Because of grade and front access VDOT will not grant commercial access to the two properties to the east and west. He agreed they would modify the plan to meet the guidelines discussed to screen the front and travel way. He agreed they could also address the architecture there.

Board Discussion:

The ARB discussed the proposal with the applicant and staff and provided comments and suggestions. The ARB noted the following issues/concerns:

- Setting a precedent for this area
- What kind of street edge is appropriate
- Constraints of the site – consider change in massing and configuration
- Suggested that the building was too big for the site because there is no room for landscaping/vegetation. Need more vegetation and less asphalt.
- Visibility of the garage from the EC

The ARB offers the following comments on the preliminary site plan proposal:

1. Revise the window size and placement to achieve proportions that are more compatible with the overall building and to relieve blankness.
2. Revise the storefront to achieve proportions that are more compatible with the overall building and to relieve blankness.
3. Provide the left side elevation for review. Clarify the window and door placement on the left elevation.
4. Coordinate the materials schedule on the building elevation sheets with the submitted material samples.
5. Include the standard equipment visibility, landscaping and lighting notes on the plans.

6. All wall and site lights shall be full cutoff fixtures. Provide a complete lighting plan for review.
7. Provide a complete plant schedule on the landscape plan for review.
8. Add a third large shade tree to the EC frontage planting.
9. Intersperse flowering ornamental trees along the EC frontage.
10. Confirm that trees and shrubs can be planted along the existing water line as currently shown. If the water line precludes the ability to plant, increase the planting area to accommodate the required trees.
11. Confirm that all utilities and easements are clearly identified on the plans.
12. Provide large trees, 2½” caliper at planting, 40’ on center, along the travelway on the east side of the parcel.
13. Provide large trees, 2½” caliper at planting, 40’ on center, along the perimeters of the parking lots.
14. Provide shrubs along the west side of the front parking lot.
15. Provide all plants without conflicting with utilities or easements.
16. Provide trees, in sufficiently large planting beds, along the building elevations to mitigate the blank wall areas.
17. Indicate on the plan the proposed materials and colors for the retaining wall, and include details for the handrail, with proposed colors and materials.
18. Show tree protection fencing on the plan.

Motion: Mr. Quale moved to forward the recommendations outlined by staff to the agent for the Site Review Committee, as follows:

- Regarding requirements to satisfy the design guidelines as per § 18-30.6.4(2), (3) and (5):
 - As per § 32.4.2.2(b)(3) and 30.6.4(c)(3) and EC Guidelines 35a and 36a, it is not clear that sufficient planting area is available along the west side of the site to accommodate shrubs and trees at 2½” caliper, 40’ on center, along the front parking lot or that sufficient planting area is available to accommodate trees and shrubs to mitigate the appearance of the east and west building elevations.
- Regarding recommendations on the plan as it relates to the guidelines:
 - None.
- Regarding recommended conditions of initial site plan approval:
 - A Certificate of Appropriateness is required prior to final site plan approval.
 - Provide utility free planting area along the west side of the site to accommodate shrubs and trees at 2½” caliper, 40’ on center, along the front parking lot or provide evidence that those trees and shrubs in this area will not conflict with or be compromised by existing or proposed utilities.
 - Provide sufficient planting area for trees and shrubs to mitigate the appearance of the east and west building elevations.
- Regarding conditions to be satisfied prior to issuance of a grading permit:
 - Provide a tree conservation plan. Show tree protection fencing along all tree lines to remain.

Ms. Joseph seconded the motion.

The motion carried by a vote of 4:0. (Lebo absent)

(Mr. Quale left at 3:20 p.m.)

OTHER BUSINESS

ARB-2011-93: Hyatt at Stonefield: Copper panels

Staff updated the ARB on the status of the appearance of the copper panels installed at the Hyatt in the Stonefield development, noting that:

- The estimated date for the request for the CO is the end of September.
- This item will be on the September 16 ARB agenda.
- Zoning has indicated that this could be handled like the Regal Cinema was handled when there were outstanding issues that couldn't be resolved before the CO.
- Zoning can issue a letter saying that the CO is issued with the conditions, including a time period and appropriate actions that would need to be taken.
- The architect and owner are working with the contractor to try some treatments on sample panels, including a vinegar wash and a power wash. They will try to get that done by the September 16 ARB meeting.
- It has been suggested that it could take 5 to 25 years for the panels to age to a consistent copper appearance. The panels look different because of the process the copper goes through in the formulation of the panels.

Northside Library Storage Facility

The ARB briefly discussed the request to hold a work session on the Northside Library/Storage Facility without the standard submittals and review period and determined that a work session could be held on September 16.

Stonefield F & G: Comp Sign Plan

The ARB briefly discussed signs for Block F and Block G in the Stonefield Town Center and determined that a Comprehensive Sign Plan would be necessary. It was suggested that it be considered an addendum to the existing Comprehensive Sign Plan.

Next ARB Meeting: Monday, September 16, 2013 (September 3 meeting cancelled)

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:37 p.m. to the next ARB meeting on Monday, September 16, 2013 in Room 241, Second Floor, County Office Building at 1:00 p.m.

Fred Missel, Chairman

(Recorded and transcribed by Sharon C. Taylor, Clerk to Planning Commission & Planning Boards)