ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	**ARB-2020-87: 1680 Seminole Trail Auto Dealership**
Review Type	Final Site Development Plan
Parcel Identification	06100-00-00-120T0
Location	1680 Seminole Trail
Zoned	Highway Commercial (HC) / Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	BNE Restaurant Group IV LLC c/o W. Craig Worthy / Collins Engineering (Scott Collins)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	To renovate the property to accommodate an automobile dealership.
Context	This parcel is located at a primary intersection in the County with commercial development surrounding it.
Visibility	This site is clearly visible from both the Rt. 29 and Rio Road Entrance Corridors.
ARB Meeting Date	March 1, 2021
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

The ARB completed an advisory review (ARB-2020-87) of a request for a Special Use Permit for outdoor sales, storage and display at this property on September 8, 2020 and recommended approval with conditions. The Board of Supervisors reviewed and approved the proposal (SP-2020-14), with conditions addressing the ARB's concerns, on January 6, 2021.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	9/8/2020 RECOMMENDATION	CURRENT ISSUE	CURRENT RECOMMENDATION
	GENERAL GUIDELINES			
	Purpose; Compatibility with significant historic sites:			
1	The goal of the regulation of the design of development within the designated Entrance Corridors is to insure that new development within the corridors reflects the traditional architecture of the area. Therefore, it is the purpose of ARB review and of these Guidelines, that proposed development within the designated Entrance Corridors reflect elements of design characteristic of the significant historical landmarks, buildings, and structures of the Charlottesville and Albemarle area, and to promote orderly and attractive development within these corridors. Applicants should note that replication of historic structures is neither required nor desired.	See recommendations, below.	The existing restaurant building was constructed prior to the establishment of the Entrance Corridors. It does not reflect the traditions of local historic architecture and the proposed changes to the site will not alter that condition. Orderly and attractive development will be promoted with the landscaping that is proposed and with updated lighting and signage that meet ordinance and guidelines requirements.	See recommendations, below.
2	Visitors to the significant historical sites in the Charlottesville and Albemarle area experience these sites as ensembles of buildings, land, and vegetation. In order to accomplish the integration of buildings, land, and vegetation characteristic of these sites, the Guidelines require attention to four primary factors: compatibility with significant historic sites in the area; the character of the Entrance Corridor; site development and layout; and landscaping.			
3	New structures and substantial additions to existing structures should respect the traditions of the architecture of historically significant buildings in the Charlottesville and Albemarle area. Photographs of historic buildings in the area, as well as drawings of architectural features, which provide important examples of this tradition are contained in Appendix A.	See #9, below.	The existing restaurant building was constructed prior to the establishment of the Entrance Corridors. It does not reflect the traditions of local historic architecture and the proposed changes to the site will not alter that condition.	See #9.
4	The examples contained in Appendix A should be used as a guide for building design: the standard of compatibility with the area's historic structures is not intended to impose a rigid design solution for new development. Replication of the design of the important historic sites in the area is neither intended nor desired. The Guideline's standard of compatibility can be met through building scale, materials, and forms which may be embodied in architecture which is contemporary as well as traditional. The Guidelines allow individuality in design to accommodate varying tastes as well as special functional requirements.			
	Compatibility with the character of the Entrance Corridor			
5	It is also an important objective of the Guidelines to establish a pattern of compatible architectural characteristics throughout the Entrance Corridor in order to achieve unity and coherence. Building designs should demonstrate sensitivity to	See recommendations, below.	With this proposal, the drive-thru structure and the utility structure at the back (west) of the restaurant building	See #9.

	other nearby structures within the Entrance Corridor. Where a designated corridor is substantially developed, these Guidelines require striking a careful balance between harmonizing new development with the existing character of the corridor and achieving compatibility with the significant historic sites in the area.		would be removed to establish additional parking areas. Removal of these structures would improve appearances on site, which would minimally increase unity and coherence along the corridors. Unity and coherence are more substantially improved by with proposed upgrades in lighting, landscaping and signage.	
	Structure design			
9	Building forms and features, including roofs, windows, doors, materials, colors and textures should be compatible with the forms and features of the significant historic buildings in the area, exemplified by (but not limited to) the buildings described in Appendix A [of the design guidelines]. The standard of compatibility can be met through scale, materials, and forms which may be embodied in architecture which is contemporary as well as traditional. The replication of important historic sites in Albemarle County is not the objective of these guidelines.	Indicate on the plans how the building will be treated to achieve an appropriate appearance in the areas where building elements are being removed.	A note on the plan states that the building will be repaired to match existing building finishes in the area of the drive-thru structure. (The utility structure is freestanding.)	None.
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.	None.	The proposal would not change the existing relationship of the building to the surrounding context of buildings.	None.
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	None.	The scale of the building would not change with this proposal.	None.
12	Architecture proposed within the Entrance Corridor should use forms, shapes, scale, and materials to create a cohesive whole.	None.	The proposal would not change the building form, scale or materials.	None.
13	Any appearance of “blankness” resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.	None.	The rear (west) elevation of the building is mostly blank. Removal of the utility structure will make the blank elevation more visible, but a clean and simple blank wall will likely have a more appropriate appearance than the current utility structure.	See #9.
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	None.	The site includes a single building so connecting devices are not necessary.	None.
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	See recommendations, below.	The building is an older version of a trademark design. With no changes proposed to the architectural design, the trademark character will linger even with	See #9 and other recommendations below.

			a different business in place. Improved landscaping will help offset impacts, as will signage and site lighting that meet ordinance and guidelines requirements.	
16	Window glass in the Entrance Corridors should not be highly tinted or highly reflective. Window glass in the Entrance Corridors should meet the following criteria: *Visible light transmittance (VLT) shall not drop below 40%. Visible light reflectance (VLR) shall not exceed 30%. Specifications on the proposed window glass should be submitted with the application for final review.*	None.	No window changes are proposed.	None.
	Accessory structures and equipment			
17	Accessory structures and equipment should be integrated into the overall plan of development and shall, to the extent possible, be compatible with the building designs used on the site.	Revise the existing conditions plan to show both sheds at the southwest corner of the property. If one is to be eliminated, coordinate the plans accordingly. Revise the notes on the plan to indicate that trash receptacles will only be located within the dumpster enclosure shown at the west corner of the property. Indicate if any rooftop equipment can and/or will be removed. Note that if replacement equipment will be proposed, the new equipment must not be visible from the EC streets.	Accessory structures and equipment exist on the property. The drive-thru structure (and related signage) on the south side of the building and the utility structure on the west side of the building would be removed to create additional parking areas. The proposed plan shows a dumpster only at the southwest corner of the property. The existing shed in that area is to be demolished. There is currently a considerable amount of mechanical equipment on the roof. A fake mansard roof screens most of the equipment from view at street level. A note on the plan states that existing equipment shall remain, but replacement equipment shall not be visible from the street. The standard equipment visibility note is on sheet 3, but it conflicts with the plan for maintaining existing rooftop equipment.	None.
18	The following should be located to eliminate visibility from the Entrance Corridor street. If, after appropriate siting, these features will still have a negative visual impact on the Entrance Corridor street, screening should be provided to eliminate visibility. a. Loading areas, b. Service areas, c. Refuse areas, d. Storage areas, e. Mechanical equipment, f. Above-ground utilities, and g. Chain link fence, barbed wire, razor wire, and similar security fencing devices.			
19	Screening devices should be compatible with the design of the buildings and surrounding natural vegetation and may consist of: a. Walls, b. Plantings, and c. Fencing.			
21	The following note should be added to the site plan and the architectural plan: "Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated."	None.		
20	Surface runoff structures and detention ponds should be designed to fit into the natural topography to avoid the need for screening. When visible from the Entrance Corridor street, these features must be fully integrated into the landscape. They should not have the appearance of engineered features.	None.	No above-ground stormwater facilities are proposed. The proposal would reduce the amount of pavement and impervious areas on site.	None.

	Lighting			
	General Guidelines; Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting			
22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets;	Revise exterior lighting to meet ordinance and guidelines requirements.	In some locations, footcandle readings do not extend to the property line and some suggest that spillover exceeds .5 footcandles at the property line.	Revise the photometric plan to extend footcandle readings out to the property line. Show that spillover at the property line does not exceed .5 fc at the street.
23	Light should be shielded, recessed or flush-mounted to eliminate glare. All fixtures with lamps emitting 3000 lumens or more must be full cutoff fixtures.		The proposed site light fixtures are full cutoff fixtures.	None.
24	Light levels exceeding 30 footcandles are not appropriate for display lots in the Entrance Corridors. Lower light levels will apply to most other uses in the Entrance Corridors.		Maximum proposed footcandles is 19.8.	None.
25	Light should have the appearance of white light with a warm soft glow; however, a consistent appearance throughout a site or development is required. Consequently, if existing lamps that emit non-white light are to remain, new lamps may be required to match them.		The fixtures are proposed with lamps that have a color temperature of 3000K, which is considered a warm white.	None.
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.		Bronze is the standard color for the proposed fixture.	Note on the lighting plan that the color of the fixtures and poles will be bronze.
27	The height and scale of freestanding, pole-mounted light fixtures should be compatible with the height and scale of the buildings and the sites they are illuminating, and with the use of the site. Typically, the height of freestanding pole-mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors should not exceed 20 feet, including the base. Fixtures that exceed 20 feet in height will typically require additional screening to achieve an appropriate appearance from the Entrance Corridor.		Pole height is not indicated on the plan.	Indicate on the lighting plan that maximum pole light height, including any bases, will be 20’.
28	In determining the appropriateness of lighting fixtures for the Entrance Corridors, the individual context of the site will be taken into consideration on a case by case basis.		New site lights are proposed to replace existing non-conforming lights.	None.
29	The following note should be included on the lighting plan: “Each outdoor luminaire equipped with a lamp that emits 3,000 or more initial lumens shall be a full cutoff luminaire and shall be arranged or shielded to reflect light away from adjoining residential districts and away from adjacent roads. The spillover of lighting from luminaires onto public roads and property in residential or rural areas zoning districts shall not exceed one half footcandle.”		The note appears on the plan.	None.

30-31	Decorative Lighting		No decorative lighting is proposed.	None.
	Landscaping			
7	The requirements of the Guidelines regarding landscaping are intended to reflect the landscaping characteristic of many of the area's significant historic sites which is characterized by large shade trees and lawns. Landscaping should promote visual order within the Entrance Corridor and help to integrate buildings into the existing environment of the corridor.	Revise the plan to bring the landscaping closer to meeting the guidelines for trees along the EC street frontages. The addition of a planting island and the shifting of some proposed trees may facilitate this. Note that a Site Plan Amendment will be needed for this proposal (if the SP is approved). A complete landscape plan should be provided with the first submittal of that amendment.	There are currently no trees along either the Rt. 29 or Rio Road Entrance Corridors. The planting area along the corridors would be expanded with this proposal, though not consistently. At the northeast corner of the site, planting area is increased less to accommodate the travelway and parking spaces. Five large trees are proposed along the EC frontages in areas where the planting bed size can accommodate the trees. A row of shrubs, 24" at planting, is provided along both corridors. The planting is supplemented with ornamental trees for a total of 10 trees along the frontage. This exceeds the nine trees required to meet the 35' EC frontage tree spacing. (The note on the site plan cover sheet incorrectly notes a 40' spacing requirement.) The atypical frontage tree sizes and locations are acceptable in this case because the proposal is significantly improving a non-conforming existing condition.	None.
8	Continuity within the Entrance Corridor should be obtained by planting different types of plant materials that share similar characteristics. Such common elements allow for more flexibility in the design of structures because common landscape features will help to harmonize the appearance of development as seen from the street upon which the Corridor is centered.			
32	Landscaping along the frontage of Entrance Corridor streets should include the following: a. Large shade trees should be planted parallel to the Entrance Corridor Street. Such trees should be at least 3½ inches caliper (measured 6 inches above the ground) and should be of a plant species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 35 feet on center. b. Flowering ornamental trees of a species common to the area should be interspersed among the trees required by the preceding paragraph. The ornamental trees need not alternate one for one with the large shade trees. They may be planted among the large shade trees in a less regular spacing pattern. c. In situations where appropriate, a three or four board fence or low stone wall, typical of the area, should align the frontage of the Entrance Corridor street. d. An area of sufficient width to accommodate the foregoing plantings and fencing should be reserved parallel to the Entrance Corridor street, and exclusive of road right-of-way and utility easements.			
33	Landscaping along interior roads: a. Large trees should be planted parallel to all interior roads. Such trees should be at least 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground) and should be of a plant species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 40 feet on center.	None.	There are no interior roads, but there is an existing access easement on the west side of the property. It opens directly onto travelways and proposed parking.	None.
34	Landscaping along interior pedestrian ways: a. Medium trees should be planted parallel to all interior pedestrian ways. Such trees should be at least 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground) and should be of a species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 25 feet on center.	Revise the plan to show landscaping in the planting island on the south side of the building.	There are sidewalks around the building. Landscaping has been added along the south side of the building, including 3 Yoshino cherry trees and sweetspire shrubs. There appears to be a conflict	Resolve the tree/light pole conflict on the south side of the building without reducing plant quantities.

			between a cherry tree and the pole light in this area.	
35	Landscaping of parking areas: a. Large trees should align the perimeter of parking areas, located 40 feet on center. Trees should be planted in the interior of parking areas at the rate of one tree for every 10 parking spaces provided and should be evenly distributed throughout the interior of the parking area. b. Trees required by the preceding paragraph should measure 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground); should be evenly spaced; and should be of a species common to the area. Such trees should be planted in planters or medians sufficiently large to maintain the health of the tree and shall be protected by curbing. c. Shrubs should be provided as necessary to minimize the parking area's impact on Entrance Corridor streets. Shrubs should measure 24 inches in height.	Provide a complete landscape plan with the first site plan submittal.	Frontage trees double as perimeter parking trees along the north and east sides of the property. There is insufficient planting area to add trees on the south side, but trees are immediately adjacent on the neighboring property. On the west, existing utilities run through the planting area that is adjacent to the building. Shrubs are shown with a mix of trees along the street frontages. 43 parking spaces are proposed. 4 interior trees are required. 4 large trees are proposed at the required size and one existing mature tree is to remain.	None.
36	Landscaping of buildings and other structures: a. Trees or other vegetation should be planted along the front of long buildings as necessary to soften the appearance of exterior walls. The spacing, size, and type of such trees or vegetation should be determined by the length, height, and blankness of such walls. b. Shrubs should be used to integrate the site, buildings, and other structures; dumpsters, accessory buildings and structures; "drive thru" windows; service areas; and signs. Shrubs should measure at least 24 inches in height.	Revise the plan to show landscaping in the planting island on the south side of the building.	Landscaping has been added along the south side of the building.	None.
37	Plant species: a. Plant species required should be as approved by the Staff based upon but not limited to the *Generic Landscape Plan Recommended Species List* and *Native Plants for Virginia Landscapes (Appendix D)*.	Provide a complete landscape plan with the first site plan submittal.	A plant schedule has been provided. Proposed species are included in the various lists.	None.
38	Plant health: The following note should be added 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."	Include the plant health note on the landscape plan in the first site plan submittal.	The note appears on sheet 5.	None.
	Site development and layout			
6	Site development should be sensitive to the existing natural landscape and should contribute to the creation of an organized development plan. This may be accomplished, to the extent practical, by preserving the trees and rolling terrain typical of the area; planting new trees along streets and pedestrian ways and choosing species that reflect native forest elements; insuring that any grading will	Coordinate the color used to designate proposed display parking in the legend and the plan.	The conditions of Special Use Permit approval are listed on the cover sheet of the site plan, including those regarding parking of vehicles in areas indicated on the plan, parking in striped spaces, and	None.

	blend into the surrounding topography thereby creating a continuous landscape; preserving, to the extent practical, existing significant river and stream valleys which may be located on the site and integrating these features into the design of surrounding development; and limiting the building mass and height to a scale that does not overpower the natural settings of the site, or the Entrance Corridor.	Standard conditions of approval for outdoor display are recommended: Vehicles must be displayed or stored only in areas indicated for display or storage on the Concept Plan. Vehicles must be parked in striped parking spaces. Vehicles must not be elevated anywhere outside of a building on site.	no elevated vehicles. The various parking space types are now accurately rendered with different line styles instead of different colors.	
39	The relationship of buildings and other structures to the Entrance Corridor street and to other development within the corridor should be as follows: a. An organized pattern of roads, service lanes, bike paths, and pedestrian walks should guide the layout of the site. b. In general, buildings fronting the Entrance Corridor street should be parallel to the street. Building groupings should be arranged to parallel the Entrance Corridor street. c. Provisions should be made for connections to adjacent pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems. d. Open spaces should be tied into surrounding areas to provide continuity within the Entrance Corridor. e. If significant natural features exist on the site (including creek valleys, steep slopes, significant trees or rock outcroppings), to the extent practical, then such natural features should be reflected in the site layout. If the provisions of Section 32.5.2.n of the *Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance* apply, then improvements required by that section should be located so as to maximize the use of existing features in screening such improvements from Entrance Corridor streets. f. The placement of structures on the site should respect existing views and vistas on and around the site.			
	Site Grading			
40	Site grading should maintain the basic relationship of the site to surrounding conditions by limiting the use of retaining walls and by shaping the terrain through the use of smooth, rounded land forms that blend with the existing terrain. Steep cut or fill sections are generally unacceptable. Proposed contours on the grading plan shall be rounded with a ten foot minimum radius where they meet the adjacent condition. Final grading should achieve a natural, rather than engineered, appearance. Retaining walls 6 feet in height and taller, when necessary, shall be terraced and planted to blend with the landscape.	Provide more detail on the removal of portions of the retaining wall. Indicate the extent of retaining wall removal and provide detail about the treatment of the remaining wall.	The current plan includes notes on sheet 4 that state that 40 linear feet of the existing concrete retaining wall and handrail will be removed, and that eight linear feet will be rebuilt to tie into new grades. No information on construction type, material, or appearance is provided. The demolition is not noted on the demolition sheet.	Add details and/or notes to the plan indicating the construction type and material of the rebuilt retaining wall and describing an appropriate, coordinated appearance. Revise the demolition plan to address the partial removal of the retaining wall.
41	No grading, trenching, or tunneling should occur within the drip line of any trees or other existing features designated for preservation in the final Certificate of	None.	No trees are identified as to remain.	None.

	Appropriateness. Adequate tree protection fencing should be shown on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping and erosion and sediment control plans.			
42	Areas designated for preservation in the final Certificate of Appropriateness should be clearly delineated and protected on the site prior to any grading activity on the site. This protection should remain in place until completion of the development of the site.			
43	Preservation areas should be protected from storage or movement of heavy equipment within this area.			
44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.	None.	No changes to existing drainage patterns are proposed.	None.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. The changes to the retaining wall along Rio Road
2. The treatment of the building in areas where building elements will be removed
3. The proposed landscaping and lighting

Staff recommends approval of the proposal with the following conditions:

1. Revise the photometric plan to extend footcandle readings out to the property line. Show that spillover at the property line does not exceed .5 fc at the street.
2. Note on the lighting plan that the color of the fixtures and poles will be bronze.
3. Indicate on the lighting plan that maximum pole light height, including any bases, will be 20’.
4. Resolve the tree/light pole conflict on the south side of the building without reducing plant quantities.
5. Add details and/or notes to the plan indicating the construction type and material of the rebuilt retaining wall and describing an appropriate, coordinated appearance.
6. Revise the demolition plan to address the partial removal of the retaining wall.

ATTACHMENTS

Attach. 1: ARB2021-12: 1680 Seminole Trail Auto Site Plan

TABLE A This report is based on the following submittal items:

Sheet #	Drawing Name	Drawing Date
1	1680 Seminole Trail Auto Dealership Final Site Plan cover sheet	1/19/21
2	Existing Conditions	
3	Site Plan	
4	Grading, Drainage, & Utility Plan	
5	Landscaping Plan	
6	Lighting Plan	
7	Note & Details	