ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	**ARB-2021-009: Caliber Collison Auto Body Shop Use**
Review Type	Advisory Review for a Special Use Permit
Parcel Identification	04500-00-00-10600
Location	1720 Seminole Trail
Zoned	Highway Commercial (HC) / Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	TAP Investments LLC / Cross Architects (Bret Flory)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	To establish an auto body shop use in an existing 9,200 sf building with associated site improvements on a 1.02-acre parcel.
Context	This parcel is located on the west side of Rt. 29 approximately 447' north of the Rt. 29 and Rio Road intersection. This portion of Route 29 is characterized by commercial development with nearby developments including Albemarle Square Shopping Center across Rt. 29 to the east, self-storage buildings to the north/west, and Jefferson Coin and CVS to the south (Fig. 1).
Visibility	This site is readily visible from the Rt. 29 Entrance Corridor. Some views of the rear of the site are available from the Rio Rd. Entrance Corridor.
ARB Meeting Date	March 1, 2021
Staff Contact	Khris Taggart

PROJECT HISTORY
A site plan was first approved for this site in 1973. The building was constructed in 1974, prior to the establishment of the Entrance Corridors. The ARB reviewed a sign for the site in 2006. A pre-application conference was held for the current proposal in November 2020.

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND DETAILS
A Special Use Permit is required for auto body shop use in the Highway Commercial Zoning District. The ARB's recommendations on this application will be forwarded to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors as part of the Special Use Permit request (SP-2021-03).

The proposal consists primarily of the renovation of the interior to accommodate the use, the addition of roof-mounted equipment and painting the exterior, the reuse/reconfiguration of existing parking spaces, and the addition of fencing to screen vehicles awaiting repair.

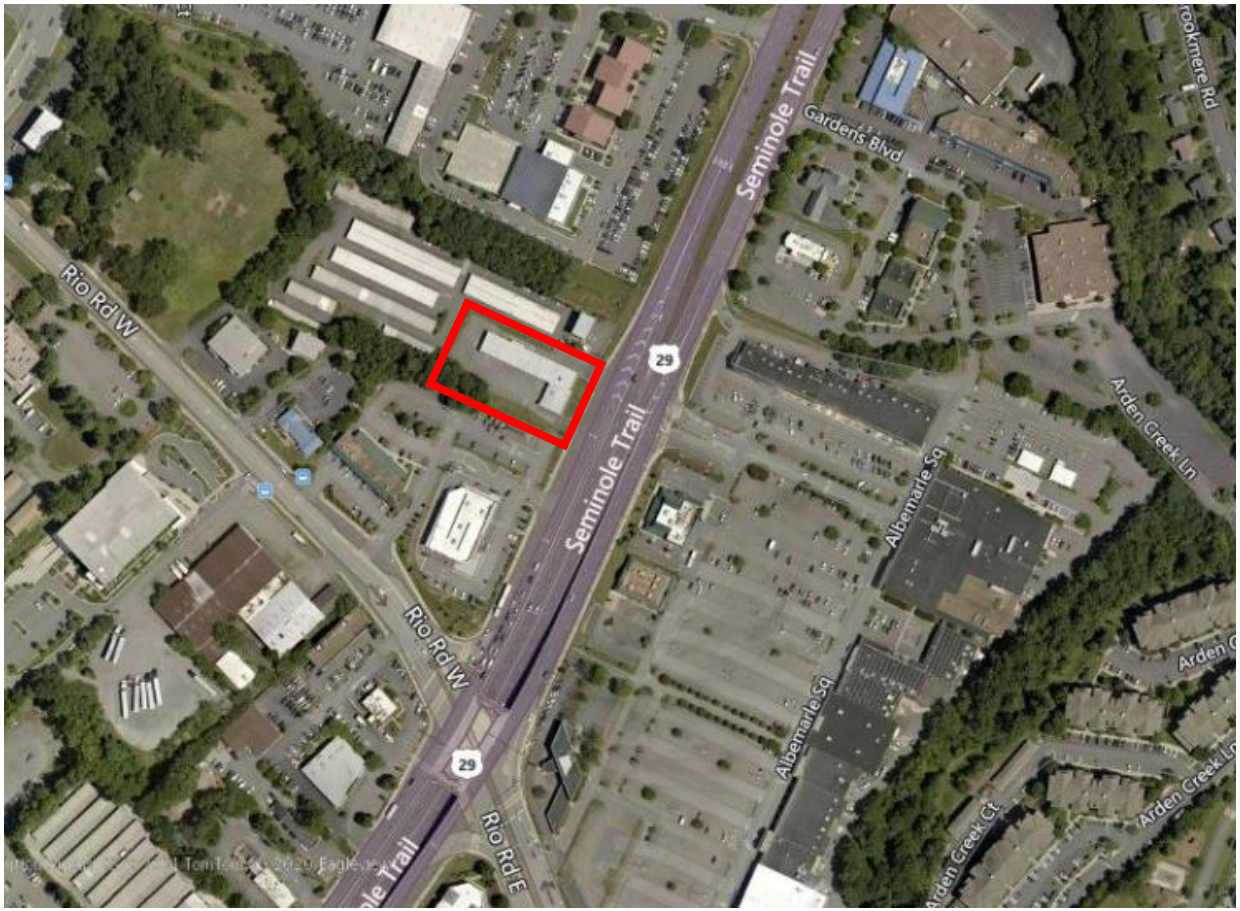

Figure 1: Pictometry image showing project area along the Rt. 29 Entrance Corridor.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	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 ensure 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	The warehouse 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 landscaping, fencing, and equipment recommendations, below.

	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.	Orderly and attractive development could be promoted with the addition of appropriate landscaping and fencing, in addition to placing new mechanical equipment in locations that meet guidelines requirements.	
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.		
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 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.	The building would be painted a color (Nomadic Desert) that is compatible with the surroundings. The addition of roof-mounted equipment visible from the EC would detract from improvements to the site and the unity and coherence along the corridor. Unity and coherence would be more substantially improved by bringing landscaping and new mechanical equipment into conformance with ordinance and guidelines requirements.	See landscaping and equipment recommendations, below.

10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.		
	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.	With this proposal, no major changes to the existing building form are proposed. The proposed changes include painting of the building, the addition of a garage bay door near the southeast corner of the building, and the infill of an existing garage bay door along the north elevation.	None.
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	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.	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.	The proposal does not include any proposed changes to the existing blank elevations.	See landscaping of building recommendations, below.
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	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.	The existing building is not reflective of any trademark design. The proposed paint colors appear to be standard for the company, but they do not create an overall trademark appearance for the building.	None.
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.*	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.	Dumpsters are proposed near the northwest corner of the site. A 6' wood fence with a swing gate is proposed on the north side of the building where the travelway begins. But it is anticipated that the gate will remain open during business hours and the site appears to slope up towards the rear of the property. This will allow for unimpeded views of	Revise the plans to show a dumpster enclosure to match the approved fencing. Revise the plans to clarify whether the existing roof-
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.	the proposed dumpster location. An enclosure to match the approved fencing would be appropriate. The existing building includes roof-mounted mechanical equipment that is visible from the EC. The elevations do not show the equipment, but the plans do not indicate that it is to be removed. New mechanical equipment (air intake and exhaust stacks) related to the proposed paint booth would also be visible from the EC, as depicted in the building elevations. This equipment should be relocated to eliminate visibility from the EC. Alternatively, locations that significantly reduce visibility, combined with other mitigation measures (landscaping, painting equipment), may be acceptable given that an existing building is being re-used. Section 5.1.31 of the ordinance states that no vehicle awaiting repair shall be visible from the public street. A 6'-tall board-on-board fence and "vision slats" added to existing chain link fence are proposed to meet this requirement. The wood fence appears more suited to a residential setting and is expected to appear out of place in this commercial context. A fence material that better relates to the commercial nature of this portion of the Rt. 29 EC would be appropriate. A metal panel fence would complement the building and could be more durable. Compatibility and durability are considerations identified in the screening fence design criteria approved by the ARB for Countywide Certificates of Appropriateness. (See Table B.) Chain link fence is not appropriate for the EC, but it currently exists on site. If the existing chain link height meets ordinance requirements (if no additional height is needed), the vision slats would be acceptable, depending on the color.	mounted equipment is to be retained or removed. Revise the plans to relocate the proposed rooftop equipment to a location that is not visible from the EC. Alternatively, show a location that significantly reduces visibility, and additional mitigation measures. Revise the plans show a fence design that relates more closely to the building and the surrounding commercial context. Revise the plans to indicate a compatible color for the vision slats for the chain link fence. No increase in chain link fence is approved.
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.		

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.	No above-ground stormwater facilities are existing or proposed.	None.
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."	The note is not present on the site or architectural plan.	Revise the site and architectural plans to include the standard mechanical equipment note.
22-29	***Lighting***	The site includes three pole lights and building-mounted lighting. The applicant proposes no change to the lights. Three decorative streetlights were installed along Rt. 29 as part of streetscape improvements associated with the Rt. 29 upgrades.	None.
30-31	***Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting***	No decorative lighting has been 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.	A row of shrubs runs along the east elevation of the building. There are no street trees along the Rt. 29 Entrance Corridor. The proposed site perspective shows the addition of a planting bed of shrubs and annuals and a decorative gravel bed with annuals along the existing travelway into the site. These planting arrangements are not typical of frontage landscaping. While the available planting area for frontage landscaping is limited by existing and potential future pedestrian improvements called out in the Rio29 plan (a 14' shared-use path), landscaping that better meets the guidelines would be appropriate. A site plan amendment will be required if the Special Use Permit is approved. A complete landscape plan should be included with the first submittal of that plan. It should show street trees and shrubs along the frontage.	Note that the site changes that are shown will require a Site Plan Amendment. A complete landscape plan should be provided with the first submittal of that amendment.
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.	There are no interior roads in this site.	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.	There is a sidewalk around the southeast corner of the building.	None.
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.	There are currently no perimeter parking area trees existing or proposed. Between the southern perimeter of the site and the travelway and parking area visible from the EC there appears to be spacing for the required landscaping. 24 short-term vehicle storage parking spaces are proposed, plus another 7 spaces for customers and employees. This is an overall decrease in parking from 38 spaces to 31 spaces. No interior trees are illustrated currently.	Revise the plan to show landscaping in the planting areas along the northern and southern perimeters of the site.
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	The north and south ends of the existing building feature long elevations that are mostly blank. There are no planting areas, existing or proposed, along	

	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.	these elevations but the addition of landscaping along the north and south perimeters of the site could help soften the appearance of these blank elevations.	
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)*.	A plant schedule was not included in the concept plan.	Provide a complete landscape plan with the first site plan submittal.
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."	The note will be needed on the site plan.	Include the plant health note on the landscape plan in the first site plan submittal.
	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 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.	No major changes are proposed to the general site layout. The existing building is oriented parallel to the Entrance Corridor. No changes are proposed to the site entrances or the sidewalk along Rt. 29. No significant natural features remain on this property. Views are not expected to be impacted.	None.
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 landforms 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.	No grading of the site is shown.	None.
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 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.	Existing drainage patterns are not proposed to be changed.	None.

	Signs	Signage is reviewed and approved by separate submission. However, the following preliminary comments are provided. The ARB may require that the color and scale of standard templates for trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and graphics be modified. A wall sign is shown on the east end of the building. The sign is composed of individual white letters (possibly internally illuminated channel letters) above a rainbow-colored band. The number of colors in the sign exceeds the guidelines maximum; internal illumination of the band is not recommended.	Sign applications are required for all proposed signs. Note that the number of colors in the wall sign exceeds the guidelines maximum and internal illumination of the multicolor band will not likely be recommended.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. The proposed frontage landscaping.
2. The proposed landscaping of the parking lot.
3. The visibility of the roof-mounted mechanical equipment and potential mitigation measures.
4. The design proposed for the new fence; the addition of vision slats to the existing chain link fence.

Staff offers the following recommendations on the proposal:

Recommendations on the Special Use Permit

Staff does not recommend approval of the application as proposed because screening issues have not been resolved and it is not clear that the visual impacts can be sufficiently mitigated. Staff recommends that the applicant return for a work session with the ARB to review alternate fence designs that are more coordinated with the building, and options for mitigating the view of the new rooftop equipment, including but not limited to: alternate equipment locations, paint color, and/or landscape screening.

Alternatively, the ARB may choose to forward the following recommendation to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors:

The proposal does not meet the Entrance Corridor Design Guidelines related to fencing and visibility of rooftop equipment. The following conditions of SP approval are recommended:

1. The fence design illustrated in the concept plan is not approved. The fence design is subject to ARB review and approval.
2. The visibility of rooftop equipment shall be mitigated to the satisfaction of the ARB.

Recommendations for the Site Plan Amendment

1. Revise the plans to show a dumpster enclosure to match the approved fencing.

2. Revise the plans to clarify whether the existing roof-mounted equipment is to be retained or removed.
3. Revise the plans to relocate the proposed rooftop equipment to a location that is not visible from the EC. Alternatively, show a location that significantly reduces visibility, and additional mitigation measures.
4. Revise the plans show a fence design that relates more closely to the building and the surrounding commercial context.
5. Revise the plans to indicate a compatible color for the vision slats for the chain link fence.
6. No increase in chain link fence is approved.
7. Revise the site and architectural plans to include the standard mechanical equipment note.
8. Note that the site changes that are shown will require a Site Plan Amendment. A complete landscape plan should be provided with the first submittal of that amendment.
9. Revise the plan to show landscaping in the planting areas along the northern and southern perimeters of the site.
10. Provide a complete landscape plan with the first site plan submittal.
11. Include the plant health note on the landscape plan in the first site plan submittal.
12. Sign applications are required for all proposed signs. Note that the number of colors in the wall sign exceeds the guidelines maximum and internal illumination of the multicolor band will not likely be recommended.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Attach. 1: ARB2021-09:** Caliber Collision Site Plan
- **Attach. 2: ARB2021-09:** Caliber Collision Architectural Drawings

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

Sheet #	Drawing Name	Drawing Date
SP1.0	Site Plan and Detail	1/16/2021
SP1.1	Site Details	
A2.0	Exterior Elevations	
-	Proposed Site Perspective	

TABLE B Design Criteria for Screening Fencing

DESIGN CRITERIA	Screening fencing		
Height	Height should be as low as possible while maintaining full screening.		
Size/Scale	Lengths of 80’ or more must provide variation by using changes in height, different material combinations, projections forward or back, piers, other similar features, or a combination of these.	Length of fence should be mitigated through surface relief, either in detail or massing.	

Structure Design	Minimize the place of the fence structure in the landscape. Design and detailing should be simple.	Detailing should be used to mitigate surface and texture.	Ornamental screening fences may be approved on a case-by-case basis.
	Fences along pedestrian routes should be scaled and detailed relative to human size.		
Materials	Possible fence materials include wood, wood composite, stone, brick, decorative concrete block, metal panels, or a combination of these materials.	No chain link with or without vinyl slats. No barbed wire, razor wire or similar devices. Length and visibility of fence will be considered in determining appropriate fence material.	Metal panel fencing will likely require planting along the fence for mitigation.
	Fence material should match or complement the materials found on the building and/or adjoining structures or landscape.		
	Fence materials should have a proven track record of durability and longevity relative to color retention and overall appearance.		
Colors	Color should be neutral – for example: gray, brown, or black. A white screening fence will rarely be appropriate.	No shiny, reflective finishes. Flat finishes are required.	
Planting	Planting should be used in masses to mitigate the visual impact of the length of the fence.	Placement of planting shall be sufficient to allow for proper plant growth.	Fences longer than 40’ shall include one evergreen tree or 3 shrubs for each 40-foot section or portion thereof planted on the public side.
Location	Areas requiring screening should be placed behind buildings, as viewed from the EC. If buildings are not available for screening, areas and features to be screened should be located as far from the EC as possible.		
	Locating screening fences along pedestrian paths should be limited.		