

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2023-100: Glenbrook at Foothills Phase IV Initial Site Plan
Review Type	Initial Site Development Plan
Parcel Identification	056A2-01-00-062R0, 056K0-00-03-11800, 056K0-00-03-11900, 056K0-00-03-12000
Location	South side of Three Notch'd Rd., west of 5466 Union Mission Ln. (Fig. 1)
Zoned	Residential (R6) / Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Glenbrook LLC / Collins Engineering (Scott Collins)
Magisterial District	Whitehall
Proposal	To construct a mix of 45 single family attached and detached residential units with associated site improvements.
Context	The north side of the project area is bordered by railroad tracks that run parallel to the Rt. 240 EC. The north side of Rt. 240 is occupied by single family detached residences. To the east of the site is the Union Mission church. Phase III of the Glenbrook at Foothills development is located to the south and west. The site has been partially cleared and graded.
Visibility	The blocks of residences located closest to the railroad tracks are expected to have the most visibility from the EC. The lower portions of the buildings may not be visible, and the buildings may block the view of those located further south.
ARB Meeting Date	December 18, 2023
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

The ARB reviewed and recommended approval of the initial site plan (ARB2021-33) for Phase 3 of this development in May of 2021. The plan was later revised to eliminate the blocks of townhouses that were expected to be visible from the EC, so the final site plan was not reviewed by the ARB. The current initial site plan includes townhouses in the areas that were eliminated from the previous plan.

ANALYSIS

Gray highlight = means the guideline can't be reviewed at initial site plan stage, but recommendations can be provided for final

Yellow highlight = means the guideline can only be reviewed for location/configuration at the initial plan stage, and location/configuration can be made a condition of initial plan approval, and can be the basis for denial

Regular text = means the guideline can be reviewed at initial plan stage, can be made a condition of initial plan approval, and can be the basis for denial

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	Compatibility, Structure Design		
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.	Architectural designs were not included with the initial plan submittal. It is anticipated that the proposed townhouses will incorporate some level of traditional residential building forms and features, but a detailed analysis can be performed when the designs are submitted. The site plan shows decks and/or porches on the building elevations facing the EC, so those elevations may look like the back of the residence, with less detail and reduced coordination. Orderly and attractive development would be promoted by incorporating sufficient architectural detailing into these elevations and supplementing with landscaping.	None at this time.
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.		
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.	Architectural designs were not included with the initial plan submittal. The townhouse designs could be compatible with the buildings in earlier phases of the development. A detailed analysis can be performed when the architectural designs are submitted.	None at this time.
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.		
9, 11-16	Structure design	Architectural designs were not included with the initial plan submittal.	None at this time.
	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.	Equipment locations are not shown on the plan. Ground mounted equipment is not expected to be visible from the EC street.	Indicate on the plan where mechanical equipment will be located.
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."	The note does not appear on the plan.	Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the plans.
22-31	Lighting	No lighting information is included in the initial plan submittal. A note on the plan says that no lighting is proposed.	Provide information on wall-mounted light fixtures with the next

		However, it is likely that the townhouses will have building-mounted fixtures.	submittal.
	Landscaping	A landscape plan was not included in the initial plan submittal. The landscaping guidelines can be analyzed in detail when the landscape plan is submitted.	Include a landscape plan with the next submittal.
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.	The site is separated from the EC by railroad tracks. The plan shows a 10' increase in the width of a water easement that abuts the railroad. A minimal 6'-deep landscape buffer is proposed on the development side of the easement along Lots 120 and 140-145. A landscape plan was not included in the initial plan submittal, so the suitability of the planting in this area cannot be determined at this time. An 8'-tall wooden fence is proposed on the development side of the landscape buffer and along the northern lot lines of lots 116, 117 and 119. The fence is illustrated as board-on-board with a natural stain. A 7-space parking lot is located between the townhouse blocks that are adjacent to the railroad. The back-out extension for the parking is located adjacent to the water line easement, leaving no space for landscaping. Landscaping along the full length of the north perimeter of the project area would help promote visual order and continuity along the corridor.	Revise the plan to provide landscaping along the full length of the north perimeter of the project area.
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 planting strip is provided between	None at this time.

	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.	interior roads and sidewalks.	
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.		
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.	A 7-space parking row is proposed between lots 120 and 140. There is no space for planting on the north side of the row; there is limited space for planting on the west side of the row.	Revise the plan to include trees on the north and west sides of the 7-space parking row.
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.	A 6'-deep landscape buffer is proposed at the north end of lots 120 and 140-145. That depth is minimal. It is anticipated that landscaping in this location will be important for softening the appearance of the rear elevations of the townhouse units. Suitability of the planting will be assessed when a landscape plan is submitted for review.	Include a landscape plan with the next submittal.
37	Plant species: a. Plant species required should be as approved by the Staff based upon but not limited to the <i>Generic Landscape Plan Recommended Species List</i> and <i>Native Plants for Virginia</i>		

	<i>Landscapes (Appendix D).</i>		
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.”		
	Site Development and layout		
	Development pattern		
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.	The site has already been partially cleared and graded. Landscaping along the northern border of the project area would contribute to the establishment of an organized development plan and help mitigate the mass of the proposed buildings.	Revise the plan to provide landscaping along the full length of the north perimeter of the project area.
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 <i>Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance</i> apply, then improvements	Proposed roads and sidewalks continue the pattern established in the Phase 3 plan. Townhouses on Lots 140-145 are oriented parallel to the EC. Townhouses on parcels 116, 117, 119 and 120 are oriented at an angle to the corridor. Landscaping between these lots and the railroad could help mitigate this orientation. Open space is provided near the center of the project area. Views are not expected to be impacted by the proposal.	Provide trees between the railroad and lots 116-120.

	<p>required by that section should be located so as to maximize the use of existing features in screening such improvements from Entrance Corridor streets.</p> <p>f. The placement of structures on the site should respect existing views and vistas on and around the site.</p>		
	Site Grading		
40	<p>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.</p>	The proposed grading is not expected to have a significant visual impact on the EC street. No retaining walls are proposed.	None.
41	<p>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.</p>	The plan shows no existing trees within the project area.	None.
42	<p>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.</p>		
43	<p>Preservation areas should be protected from storage or movement of heavy equipment within this area.</p>		
20	<p>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.</p>	Stormwater facilities are not expected to be visible from the EC street.	None.
44	<p>Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.</p>		

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. Visibility from the EC.
2. Landscaping between the development and the railroad.
3. Orientation of the townhouses.

Staff recommends that the ARB forward the following recommendations to the Agent for the Site Review Committee:

- Regarding requirements to satisfy the design guidelines as per § 18-30.6.4c(2), (3) and (5) and recommended conditions of initial plan approval:
 - Prior to Initial Plan approval the following items shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the ARB: None.
- Regarding recommendations on the plan as it relates to the guidelines: None.
- Regarding conditions to be satisfied prior to issuance of a grading permit: None.
- Regarding the final site plan submittal:

A Certificate of Appropriateness is required prior to final site plan approval. The following items and all items on the ARB Final Site Plan Checklist must be addressed:

 1. Indicate on the plan where mechanical equipment will be located.
 2. Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the plans: “Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated.”
 3. Provide information on wall-mounted light fixtures with the next submittal.
 4. Revise the plan to provide landscaping along the full length of the north perimeter of the project area.
 5. Revise the plan to include trees on the north and west sides of the 7-space parking row.
 6. Include a landscape plan with the next submittal.
 7. Revise the plan to provide landscaping along the full length of the north perimeter of the project area.
 8. Provide trees between the railroad and lots 116-120.

ATTACHMENTS

[Attach. 1: ARB2023-100: Glenbrook at Foothills Phase IV Initial Site Plan](#)