

**City of Concord, New Hampshire
Architectural Design Review Committee
May 6, 2025 Minutes - DRAFT**

The Architectural Design Review Committee (ADRC) held its regular monthly meeting on May 6, 2025, in Council Chambers, at 37 Green St, Concord, NH.

Attendees: Co-Chair Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Member Claude Gentilhomme, Member Douglas Proctor, Member Merle Thorpe, and Alternate Member Amanda Savage

Absent: Co-Chair Jay Doherty and Member Ron King

Staff: AnneMarie Skinner, City Planner; Alec Bass, Assistant City Planner – Community Planning; Brian Tremblay, Planning and Zoning Inspector, and Matt Walsh, Deputy City Manager – Development.

1. Call to Order

Co-Chair Elizabeth Durfee Hengen called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

2. Minutes – Approve minutes from April 1, 2025

Alternate Member Savage moved, seconded by Member Claude, to approve the meeting minutes from April 1, 2025, as written. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Staff Memorandum

4. Sign Applications

- 4.1 Advantage Signs, and Christ the King Parish, on behalf of Roman Catholic Bishop of Manchester, requests an architectural design review recommendation for a new 54-square-foot non-illuminated building wall sign (SP-0476-2025) and a new 5.4-square-foot non-illuminated building wall sign (SP-0477-2025) at 67 S State St in the Urban Transitional (UT) District. (2025-039) (PL-ADR-2025-0084)

Josh Messinger (67 South State St), of Advantage Signs, was present to represent this application.

Mr. Messenger provided a summary of the application for the new food pantry building signage. He indicated black acrylic lettering will be used on the outside of the building for signage.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted. Seconded by Alternate Member Savage. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.2 Sousa Signs, on behalf of St. Mary's Bank, requests an architectural design review recommendation for a new 16.8-square-foot internally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0513-2025), a new 53.1-square-foot internally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0498-2025), and a new 5.3-square-foot internally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0499-2025), at 16 Manchester St in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. (2025-032) (PL-ADR-2025-0080)

Alternate Member Savage recused herself from this item due to a conflict of interest for professional reasons as her company is participating in the construction of the building.

Jason Gagnon (225 East Industrial Park Drive), of Sousa Signs, LLC, was present to represent the application.

Mr. Gagnon shared that three signs are going to be installed for the new bank at 16 Manchester St. The gable end includes a front lit, back lit logo and channel letter set and the main entrance includes a front lit, back lit logo.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted. Seconded by Member Proctor. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.3 Signarama of Concord, on behalf of Humble Hands and New Hampshire Troopers Association Inc,

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requests an architectural design review recommendation for two new 2.5-square-foot, non-illuminated building wall signs (SP-0505-2025 and SP-0506-2025), at 109 North State St in the Civic Performance (CVP) District. (2025-038) (PL-ADR-2025-0083)

Kendra Price (249 Sheep Davis Rd), of Signarama of Concord, was present to represent this application.

Ms. Price shared a new tenant is moving into the building and the signage is intended to match signage existing on the building. A standard flat dibond material sign is proposed.

The committee noted that with multiple tenants, a common single sign would be preferable, but understand that due to the feel of the neighborhood and nature of being a corner lot, what is existing and proposed is reasonable.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted. Seconded by Member Thorpe. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.4 Advantage Signs, on behalf of LCHN and Dartmouth Health, requests an architectural design review recommendation for a new 5.16-square-foot non-illuminated building wall sign (SP-0511-2025), a 26.49-square-foot non-illuminated building wall sign (SP-0510-2025), and a new 26.72-square-foot non-illuminated freestanding sign (SP-0509-2025) at 280 Pleasant St in the Institutional (IS) District. (2025-035) (PL-ADR-2025-0081)

Member Proctor recused himself from this item due to a conflict of interest for professional reasons as he is an architect related with this project.

Josh Messinger (Advantage Signs) was present to represent the application.

Mr. Messinger shared the sign elevations provided in the submittal packet. The third sign is a direction sign to assist in parking direction.

Alternate Member Savage stated customers could have difficulty identifying the wayfinding sign in evening hours when the business is open but it is dark outside, and how the wayfinding sign will serve its purpose in that condition.

Mr. Messinger responded that he will bring that issue up with the client, but believes they anticipate the headlights of vehicles to be able to illuminate the sign when needed.

Alternate Member Savage made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted with the following conditions: the wayfinding sign may be externally or internally illuminated; reflective lettering on the wayfinding sign may be used; and, an ampersand shall be added and centered between "Entrance" and "Parking" and only a single directional arrow shall be provided on the wayfinding sign. Seconded by Member Gentilhomme. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.5 Portsmouth Sign Company, on behalf of Double Tree by Hilton and Capital Hotel Company VII, LLC, requests an architectural design review recommendation for a 116.3-square-foot internally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0483-2025) to replace an existing building wall sign, a 115-square-foot internally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0484-2025) to replace an existing building wall sign, a 114.3-square-foot internally illuminated building wall sign (SP-0485-2025) to replace an existing building wall sign, a 48-square-foot internally illuminated pylon sign (SP-0486-2025) to replace an existing pylon sign, and a new 22.33-square-foot non-illuminated building wall sign (SP-0487-2025) at 172 North Main St in the Urban Commercial (CU) District. (2025-036) (PL-ADR-2025-0082)

Ryan Fischer (19 Nimble Hill Rd), of Portsmouth Sign Company, was present to represent the application.

Mr. Fischer shared that they are replacing existing signage for rebranding purposes, while adding a new sign for "Haley & Bear" on the west elevation.

Mr. Bass shared with the committee that the property is not located within a performance district, so exterior façade changes would not require architectural design review approval like other buildings which

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may have.

The committee commented that the pylon sign post should be painted a darker color to match the material of the signage, and noted that it appears to be obscured by trees.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted with the condition that the pylon sign post be painted a dark blue or black color. Seconded by Alternate Member Savage. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.6 Carolyn A. Parker Consulting and New England Signs & Awnings, on behalf of Langdon H. Wait, trustee of the trust under the will of Alice E. Ward and Sherwin Williams, requests an architectural design review recommendation for an 81.27-square-foot internally illuminated freestanding sign (SP-0520-2025) to reface an existing freestanding sign, at 149 Loudon Rd in the General Commercial (CG) District. (2025-041) (PL-ADR-2025-0086)

At the request of the applicant, this item was continued to the June 3, 2025 Architectural Design Review Committee and June 18, 2025 Planning Board meetings.

- 4.7 Harvey Signs, on behalf of Kasada, LLC, and Raising Cane's, requests an architectural design review recommendation for 3 new 32-square-foot internally illuminated building wall signs (SP-0523-2025, SP-0524-2025 and SP-0525-2025) and a new 27-square-foot internally illuminated tenant panel sign (SP-0534-2025) on an existing pylon at 287 Loudon Rd in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District (2025-40) (PL-ADR-2025-0085).

Jennifer Squires (AGI signs) and Michelle Robinson (representing Raising Cane's) were present to represent the application.

Ms. Robinson shared that previously their major site plan application received architectural design review approval. Not included in that approval was the signage, which is why they have returned today.

Ms. Squires summarized the materials provided with the application submission, adding that Raising Cane's will be removing two blank vinyl coverings from the existing pylon sign and replacing them with their tenant panel.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted. Seconded by Alternate Member Savage. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.8 Sousa Signs, on behalf of Arts Alley, LLC, and The Friendly Toast, requests an architectural design review recommendation for a new 52.96-square-foot internally illuminated canopy mounted wall sign (SP-0538-2025), and two new 0.95-square-foot non-illuminated window door signs (SP-0539-2025 and SP-0540-2025) at 20 South Main St in the Central Business Performance (CBP) District. (2025-43) (PL-ADR-2025-0087)

Jason Gagnon (225 East Industrial Park Drive), of Sousa Signs, LLC, was present to represent this application.

Mr. Gagnon shared that the Friendly Toast will be one of the tenants of the building on the first floor of this new building. The structure of the canopy as it ended up being constructed was not able to accommodate the sign as originally intended, so it has been shifted to the right of the building and over the door entrance. The materials will be a push through, internally illuminated sign cabinet. The coloring is based on a new rebranding coloring scheme. The doors will also have some vinyl graphics attached from the back.

The committee noted that the black of the glass door in the door signs will actually be clear and not black.

Member Thorpe commented that it is possible to see the back of the sign which overhangs beyond the building from the public space in the site.

Mr. Gagnon shared that the canopy would make it not very visible, and all components are being painted

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to match the feel of the building architecture.

The committee discussed painting the brackets as the same anodized color to match the sign cabinet.

Member Gentilhomme made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted with the condition that the vertical brace of the sign be painted to match the anodized aluminum of the sign cabinet. Seconded by Member Proctor. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4.9 Spectrum Signs and Warrenstreet Architects on, on behalf of Interchange Development, LLC, and Concord Hospital, requests an architectural design review recommendation for a new 4.25-square foot internally illuminated tenant panel sign (SP-0541-2025) in an existing pylon sign at 1 Interchange Dr in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. (2025-048) (PL-ADR-2025-0088).

Jonathan Halle (4 Crescent St), of Warrenstreet Architects, was present to represent the application.

Mr. Halle shared the application is for a tenant panel to be added to the existing pylon sign. Previous signage for the building had already received review and approval by the committee and Planning Board.

Alternate Member Savage made a motion to recommend that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted. Seconded by Member Gentilhomme All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Building Permit Applications

- 5.1 None

6. Site Plan Applications

- 6.1 TFMoran, Inc, on behalf of Interchange Development, LLC, requests approval of an amendment to an approved site plan at Tax Map Lot 06P 5/1, addressed as 1 Interchange Dr, in the Gateway Performance (GWP) District. (2023-105) (PL-AMEND-2025-0014)

Jason Hill (TFMoran), Laurie Rauseo (Interchange Development), and Robert Krausler (PC Architects) were present to represent this application.

Mr. Hill shared that they are before the committee for changes to phase 2 of a previously approved major site plan and architectural design review for alterations of the shell of the building and loading dock area. Some adjustments are being made to the footprint of the building, both internally and externally, as well as some adjustments to landscaping and site features accordingly.

Ms. Rauseo shared that changes to the tenant and architect team are the reason for the changes to the building. The building is about 2,000 square feet larger and includes a second loading dock.

Mr. Krausler shared the pallet has been refined to be a little simpler and characteristic of the surrounding development. Materials will be consistent throughout the site.

Alternate Member Savage commented that the color of the building has been made a little more muted, while allowing the tenant branding the ability to stand out.

Mr. Krausler stated the building will include a fiber material with clapboard trim. The cornice color will be a darker gray or bronze.

Co-Chair Hengen commented the east elevation is visible from a lot of traffic circulating around the site, particularly those leaving Market Basket. However, it looks just like the south elevation which is clearly the back of the building.

Alternate Member Savage asked if rooftop mechanical systems will be screened?

Mr. Krausler stated there will be roof top mechanical systems, but the parapet has not been studied for site line visibility.

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The committee noted that any rooftop mechanical systems should be screened from view of anyone on site.

Ms. Rauseo stated she plans to coordinate with staff about how to interpret, and apply screening requirements based on zoning regulations.

Member Thorpe asked where the utility meters would be located.

Mr. Hill shared they would be near the southern elevation, and landscaping has been provided to assist in screening.

The committee commented that additional landscaping should be added on the southern side of the building between the transformers and the building to assist in screening those units from vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Alternate Member Savage noted that there is almost a double layer of landscape screening between Merchants Way and the east elevation of the building.

Ms. Rauseo asked for a general inquiry about how the committee viewed accent and strip lighting on buildings.

The committee commented that downward facing accent lighting is usually desirable, while strip lighting is more of a case by case. Any lighting should be noted on plans and be part of the architecture of the building.

Member Thorpe commented that evergreen shrubs being mixed in with deciduous trees and shrubs assists in balancing the landscaping areas.

Co-Chair Hengen made a motion to recommended that the Planning Board approve the application as submitted with the following conditions: the rooftop mechanical equipment shall be sufficiently screened to reduce the visible impact from the west, north, and east sight lines from Whitney Road and from within the condominium development; the glazing may be wrapped around the northeast corner onto the east elevation; a mixture of evergreen and deciduous shrubs shall be planted in the landscaped islands in addition to the noted trees; the concrete base of parking light poles shall be lower than the mature height of surrounding landscaping where appropriate and beyond 4 feet from the edge of pavement; and, landscape screening shall be provided along the south of the building to fill the gap between the transformer and building. Seconded by Member Gentilhomme. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Other Business

7.1 Interim Zoning Ordinance Amendment - Batch #1

Ms. Skinner shared with the committee that this is the first batch of interim zoning amendments proposed. The Planning Board has seen these once and they have gone to the economic development advisory committee. They will continue to circulate around various committees before going back before the Planning Board for a public hearing.

Ms. Skinner provided a summary of the proposed batch 1 amendments provided with the agenda packet.

Co-Chair Hengen commented that the proposed 1,000-square-foot maximum requirement for ADUs should be revised to be gross square feet and commented that the 1,000-square-foot size of an ADU is substantial, and is unsure how allowing such large ADUs fits within the purpose statement of protecting community and neighborhood character. It may also lead to a lot of rear lot development and may add to multiple driveway requests.

Member Gentilhomme commented an average house size is about 1,500 squarefeet to 2,500 square feet, adding a 1,000-square-foot ADU is a significant impact to the architecture and character of a

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neighborhood.

The committee discussed the impacts of the different maximum areas for ADUs, as well as a discussion for consideration for a maximum area based off a percentage of the existing principal use as a mechanism to help manage character and impacts to the architecture of neighborhoods. The committee discussed concern that a 1,000-square-foot ADU next to a house that is less than 2,000squarefeet could potentially look like two primary uses instead of accessory.

Mr. Walsh summarized his understanding of the discussion that the intent should be to provide an accessory dwelling unit and not an additional principal use.

The committee recommended ADUs shall be kept to a maximum area of 750grosssquarefeet, and emphasized that they are to be accessory, and remain subservient to the principal single family use.

7.2 Any other business which may legally come before the committee.

The committee discussed the zoning of the east side of North Main Street, north of Centre Street, and how portions are not located within any performance district. The committee discussed how this area will be need to be analyzed carefully during the upcoming master planning effort, as the area is changing and becoming more of a gateway into the City, and should not be sectioned off from the rest of Main Street.

Adjournment

Member Gentilhomme moved, seconded by Member Thorpe, to adjourn the meeting at 11:02 a.m. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Alec Bass
Assistant City Planner – Community Planning