



COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE
Department of Community Development
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FINAL ARB ACTION MEMO - MINUTES

Date: October 19, 2020

Time: 1:00 PM

Meeting Room: Virtual Meeting

Members:

Frank Stoner: Present
Frank Hancock: Present
Fred Missel: Present
Dade Van Der Werf, Chair: Present

Staff:

Margaret Maliszewski
Khris Taggart
Carolyn Shaffer

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Van Der Werf called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and established a quorum.

DISCLOSURES: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

CONSENT AGENDA: None.

WORK SESSIONS: None.

Regular Review Items

a. ARB-2020-96: Rio Hill Redevelopment

Location: West of Rt. 29, East of Berkmar Drive, south of Woodbrook Drive

Proposal: To renovate a majority of the existing Rio Hill Shopping Center (excluding the Kroger store and the southeast corner of the center), removing portions of the existing canopies and store entries to update the current façade.

Staff Contact: Khris Taggart

Representatives for the Project: Josh Kagan, Albert Fitch, David Timmerman, Valerie Long, Ryan Cheney, Debra Ramey, Vy Do

Staff presented a summary of the staff report and recommendations via PowerPoint. The ARB asked staff questions about phasing and landscaping. David Timmerman then provided background on the project, the current condition of the site, the designers' goals, some design concepts, materials, the positive and negative aspects of the canopies and their relation to the pedestrian experience. ARB members expressed encouragement about renovating and re-energizing the shopping center. They asked the applicants questions about removing the colonnade and/or canopy and related structural issues, whether proposed work would be contained within the existing footprint (yes), how much additional height was proposed (5-6'), the width of the sidewalk (a generous 15'), the frame motif, how it breaks on the sides, its depth (varied) and hierarchy. Mr. Van Der Werf noted the possible financial benefit of maintaining covered walkways and recommended consideration of multiple canopy types and parking lot trees. In response to a question from the ARB, the applicant noted that staff's comments in the report were on target. There were no comments from the public.

In discussion, the ARB members considered the challenges and benefits of improving the pedestrian experience. Barracks Road shopping center and Stonefield were noted in comparison, with a caution about not getting too close to the latter model. The canopies and blankness (some areas were addressed, but blankness remains) were noted as additional primary issues. The metal green screens were noted as a possible positive addition for treating blankness. Signage and color choices (not too busy, not too bland) were noted as additional challenges. The applicant was encouraged to consider the transparency of the glass. The benefit of having 3D images was mentioned, as was the possibility of continuing review in a work session setting.

The ARB offered the following comments on the proposal for the benefit of the applicant's next submittal:

1. Provide line drawing elevations and plans to show in more detail what is proposed. Include 3-dimensional views.
2. Incorporate warmer-toned materials and colors into the design. Provide a material and color palette for consideration.
3. Consider alternate materials, additional architectural details, and additional canopies/canopies with greater depth to improve human scale and the pedestrian experience.
4. Consider alternate materials and/or additional architectural detail to reduce the scale of expansive wall areas.
5. Consider design revisions that improve the pedestrian experience.
6. Indicate if any new accessory structures or mechanical equipment will be included in the renovation. If so, show how they will be screened from view from the EC.
7. Provide the standard mechanical equipment note on the site and architectural drawings: "Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated."
8. Provide a lighting plan for review. Over-illumination of the building is not appropriate for the EC.
9. The owner is responsible for ensuring that the site matches the approved site plan. Missing landscaping must be installed. Alternatively, the owner may submit a site plan amendment that proposes alternate landscaping.

10. Consider adding landscaping close to the building to further break up its length and to improve the pedestrian experience.
11. Provide with the next review a proposed Comprehensive Sign Plan for the renovated building.

OTHER BUSINESS

a. EC Guidelines

The ARB discussed the images presented as historic precedents, noting the relevant characteristics of each and identifying some images as unnecessary. The ARB asked staff to distribute a list of EC streets so that members could choose corridors and provide suggestions for additional precedent buildings, sites and landscapes. Staff will prepare additional groups of images for buildings of the recent past and recently constructed ARB-approved buildings.

b. Approval of Minutes: October 5, 2020

Motion: Mr. Missel moved for approval of the minutes from the 10/05/2020 ARB meeting.

Mr. Hancock seconded the motion.

The motion was carried by a vote of 4:0

c. Next Virtual ARB Meeting: November 2, 2020 at 1:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. to the next ARB Virtual Meeting on November 2, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.