

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2021-104: 490 Westfield Road Comprehensive Sign Plan and Hookaholic Lounge Wall Sign
Review Type	Comprehensive Sign Plan and Certificate of Appropriateness for a Wall Sign
Parcel Identification	061W0-01-0C-00400
Location	490 Westfield Road at the intersection with Seminole Trail (Fig. 1)
Zoned	Commercial (C1) / Entrance Corridor (EC) / Airport Impact Area (AIA)
Owner/Applicant	THE 29 GROUP LLC / Hookaholic Lounge (Chadi Nassif) / American Made Signs (Brion Draper)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	To establish a Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) for a multi-tenant building (Fig. 2) and to install a cloud-style wall sign (Fig. 3).
Context	This building, which formerly housed the Nature Conservancy, has been divided into a multi-tenant building. Two tenants have applied for signs, Sigora Solar and Hookaholic Lounge, on the south and east elevations, respectively.
Visibility	The east and south sides of the building are clearly visible from the EC (Rt. 29).
ARB Meeting Date	February 7, 2022
Staff Contact	Khris Taggart

PROJECT HISTORY

In 2020 a Certificate of Appropriateness was issued for a post and panel sign for Hookaholic Lounge in one of the planting islands along Westfield Rd. Also in 2020, Sigora Solar submitted an application (Fig. 4) for a wall sign and a refacing of the existing pylon sign at the corner of Westfield and Rt. 29. That application is pending revisions. Hookaholic Lounge submitted a wall sign application in 2021 that generated the need for a Comprehensive Sign Plan.

ARB COMPREHENSIVE SIGN REVIEW PROPOSED CRITERIA
PROJECT #/NAME: 490 Westfield Rd Building TAX MAP/PARCEL#: 061W0-01-0C-00400

SIGN FEATURE	DESIGN CRITERIA
SIGN TYPE	Channel letters on Raceway & Cloud Cabinets
LETTER FACE COLOR	Orange (PMS 021 C) Black, White, Green (PMS 368 C), Yellow (PMS 3965 C)
TRIM CAP COLOR/RETURN COLOR	Black, White
RACEWAY COLOR	19-1543 TPG Brick Red
SIZE LIMITATIONS	Channel Letter Max Height: 24" Channel Letter Max Depth: 5" 40 Sq. Ft. Max Cloud Cabinet Max Height: 36" Cloud Cabinet Max Depth: 5"
LOCATION(S)	South side, sign to be positioned centered between windows. East Side, sign to be centered in middle above arches and below extruded brick roof line.
MOUNTING DETAILS	Attachment methods allowed by state code is Thread alls though the wall with blocking or Lag shields and lags into brick wall.
LOGO/GRAPHICS DETAILS	1 Logo and Company Name allowed per side of building.
ILLUMINATION DETAILS	LED Front-lit channel letters and cloud cabinet only. Single stroke and 1.2 Watt per Module maximum per channel letter.



Figure 2: 490 Westfield Road Proposed Comprehensive Sign Plan Criteria and Proposed Sign Locations

ELEVATIONS



PROPOSED



**LED Cloud Sign, Front-Lit
Extruded Polycarbonate Face
LED Illumination
120V Input / 12V Output (Low Voltage)
Mounted over Extruded Brick with 2" Stand Offs
1/2" X 2.5" Lags with Lead Lag Shields
Conduit will be External, Liquid Tight down wall
and run into the tenant space.
Meets or Exceeds VA State Code**



Figure 3: Drawings from ARB2021-104: Hookaholic Lounge Wall Sign Application

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINES	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
II GENERAL SIGN GUIDELINES			
1	Create a consistent and unified design approach along the Entrance Corridors. The <i>placement, size, illumination and colors</i> of signs can create unity along the corridor, or they can create a disjointed, visually competitive environment. Consistent and unified sign design allows the businesses located along the Corridor to have equal standing in visibility. It also provides a pattern of sign placement that makes the business locations and entrances more easily recognizable to both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.	The proposed Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) was not designed with the purpose of providing a framework for coordinated signage for the entire building but rather to allow the signage proposed by the current tenants.	See recommendations below.
2	Establish simplicity and reserve as preferred characteristics for sign design in these areas. This reflects the historic character of the area and enhances the aesthetic qualities of the Corridor. To this end, the overall design of a sign will be evaluated concurrently with that of the building on which it will be installed. The design of a building’s walls, window locations, parapets and other architectural features will influence the Board’s evaluation of appropriate signage. Likewise, a freestanding sign is evaluated in the context of the overall development in which it will be placed. Because each site is composed of a variety of elements that work together to create a unique character and appearance, ARB review of each sign proposal is guided by these sign guidelines within the context of the specific site for which the proposal is made.		
3	Encourage creative design. The County encourages imaginative and innovative signs consistent with the purposes expressed above and in conformance with the regulations of the Albemarle County Code.		
2, 4 8	FREESTANDING SIGNS	There is an existing pylon sign near the southeast corner of the site. The sign face is currently blank and there is a pending proposal to reface it for Sigora Solar. Criteria for the freestanding sign can be reviewed if/when future applications include multiple tenants.	None.
4, 9, 10	WALL SIGNS, WALL SIGNS FOR MULTIPLE BUSINESS CENTERS		
4a	Placement: The design of a building’s walls, window locations, parapets and other architectural features shall influence the Board’s evaluation of appropriate signage. Wall signs can help establish rhythm, scale and proportion across the façade of a building.	A complete sign package has been submitted for review. The proposal allows for channel letters and ‘cloud’ cabinets to be attached to the brick walls in two locations: 1) in the center of the south elevation above the first story and centered between the two middle second-story windows, and 2) centered over the central arch on the east elevation. The location shown on the south elevation (Fig. 2 and 3) does not conflict with any architectural	Revise the CSP to allow signs in the following locations: <u>South elevation:</u> • Top of Building: Centered between the two decorative brick courses, centered
9a	Wall signs shall be integrated with the architecture of the building and the placement of such signs should not obscure architectural features or details, including but not limited to cornices, windows, columns, pilasters and		

	paneling.		
9d	The size of a wall sign shall be coordinated with the size of the architectural element on which it is placed. The sign should not overcrowd the architectural element, the wall, or the sign area. Buildings and building elements should not be used as a billboard. For example, an appropriate height for channel letters in a 30" high sign band is 18". This allows 6" of unoccupied space above and below the letters. Generally, 4" of clear space above, below, and to the sides of a channel letter sign is considered a minimum, with larger clearances required for larger sign bands. The ARB will consider the degree of visibility, the distance from the Entrance Corridor, and the architectural design of the building and the sign area in its determination of appropriate sizes and placement.	detailing, but the single location shown does not provide a complete framework for possible future signage. The location shown on the east elevation (Fig. 2) hides one of the arches and is inconsistent with the Sigora Solar proposal (Fig. 4). A unified appearance and flexibility for current and future tenants would be supported by limiting sign locations on the south elevation to the wall area between the two decorative brick courses at the top of the wall, centered above the second-story windows, or the wall area below the second-story windows and above the stone facing, centered above the first-floor entrances. On the east elevation, a unified appearance would be supported by limiting sign locations to the wall area between the two decorative brick courses at the top of the wall, centered within the building bays. (See Fig. 5.)	above the second-story windows; • Above the first-story stone facing and below the second-story windows: Centered above the first-floor entrances <u>East Elevation:</u> • Centered between the two decorative brick courses at the top of the building, and centered within the building bays.
10a	A complete sign package shall be provided as part of the submittal materials for the review of any new multiple business center. The proposal should address how compatibility among signs will be achieved, and how new signs will be coordinated with the architecture of the building(s); the first approved sign installed in a multiple business center will establish the standard for all future signs for that center. The future review of proposals for new signs in existing multiple business centers will take into consideration the character and appearance of the existing building(s) and with existing sign(s).	The proposed CSP allows 24" high channel letters, leaving only 1½" of clear space above and below a sign in the band at the top of the building. (The band is 27" tall.) Based on the Sigora Solar proposal of 22"-high letters (which do not appear over-crowded), a minimum of 2½" of clear space is appropriate. In the recommended sign area on the south elevation between the first-story stone facing and the second-story windows, there appears to be more space to accommodate increased sign heights. 6" of clear space is recommended there.	Revise the CSP to reduce the maximum allowed height for channel letters to 22" and to require 6" of clear space above and below signs located on the south elevation between the first and second stories.
10b	b. Multiple business centers shall use a single sign type for all wall signs.		
10d	Signs must be placed on the building in a manner that establishes a unified appearance.	Two wall sign types are proposed, channel letters and 'cloud' cabinets. The "cloud" cabinet sign type does not have the appearance of individual letters that will allow the structure of the building to read through. Individual channel letters mounted on a raceway or directly to the building would be appropriate.	Revise the CSP to limit the sign type to individual channel letters.
9b	Channel lettering (mounted on a raceway or individual letters) is preferred to cabinet signs because cabinet signs tend to appear less integrated with the building. Channel letters overlay the wall material and allow the structure of the building to "read through" with less interruption. This results in a more coordinated overall appearance.		

		 Example of “cloud” sign	
4d	Lettering and Typeface: Lettering should be in proportion to the sign and the building for visual clarity and overall balance. Proportion of lettering includes font (size) and typeface (style). The use of three typefaces or fewer is more appropriate for signs in the Entrance Corridor. Additional typefaces may be approved only if they contribute to a balanced, legible, unified sign design.	The sign proposal does not specify a limit on the number of typefaces. Consistency in color and alignment can allow for greater variety in typefaces.	See recommendations on sign color and alignment.
4e	Color: Colors must be harmonious with each other. Colors must not clash with other elements on the site, both when viewed in daylight and at night, whether the signs are externally or internally lit. Overly intense color, such as but not limited to dayglo or fluorescent colors, are prohibited. The use of three colors or fewer is more appropriate for signs in the Entrance Corridor. Black and white are counted as colors. Additional colors may be approved if they contribute to a balanced and unified sign design. For raceway-mounted channel letters, raceways shall match the wall color.	The proposed text colors are orange (Pantone 021), black, white, green (Pantone 368), and yellow (Pantone 3965). Limiting the allowed sign type to channel letters would remove the colors black and white from the proposal, reducing the number of colors to three, and maintaining consistency with the color quantity guideline. Black and white are the colors proposed for the channel letter returns. Bronze is the color used for many signs in the ECs and limiting the choice to a single color would increase coordination among the signs on the building.	Revise the CSP to eliminate black and white from the list of face colors and to limit the return color to bronze. Revise the CSP to replace the reference to 19-1543 TPG Brick Red with a note reading: “Raceways will match the color of the wall to which they are attached.”
10c	c. Compatibility among signs must be maintained through color or font and typeface selection.		
9c	For raceway-mounted channel letters, the raceway shall match the wall color.	The proposal specifies that raceways are to match 19-1543 TPG Brick Red. EC standard practice is to include a general note that raceways will match the color of the wall to which they are attached.	

4f	Trademarks, corporate logos and graphics: The ARB may require that the color and scale of standard templates for trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and graphics be modified. When used, trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and/or graphics should be incorporated as an integral part of the overall sign.	The proposed sign criteria notes that one graphic would be allowed per elevation. However, no specific details on graphics have been provided. Graphics that are fully integrated with the text and that are balanced in size and proportion without overwhelming the text would be appropriate.	Revise the criteria for wall signs to indicate that graphics must be fully incorporated as an integral part of the overall sign, and graphics must be balanced in size and proportion without overwhelming the text.
5, 9e, 10e	<i>Lighting, Lighting for Wall Signs, Lighting for Multiple Business Centers</i>		
5	Lighting: The purpose of ARB review is to ensure that new development in the Entrance Corridors is compatible with the historic architecture of the County and to promote orderly and attractive development. There is no historical precedent for internally illuminated signs. However, the ARB recognizes the need to identify businesses to help the traveling public find their destination and exit the highway safely.	The sign proposal limits illumination to a single type (internal face-lit) for the channel letters and the ‘cloud’ cabinets signs. However, face-lit illumination on a cloud sign could emphasize its appearance as a cabinet sign. Limiting the sign type to internally illuminated channel letters would be consistent with other approvals along this section of the corridor.	Revise the CSP to limit the sign type to internally illuminated channel letters.
5a	When illumination is required, the preferred solution is to externally illuminate the sign – in other words, to shine a light on the sign. External illumination is preferred because it allows consistency with the daytime image of the sign. External lighting appears to the viewer as reflected light and allows the focus of the sign to be the original overall shape, color and complete design of the sign. Internal lighting produces a fragmented, rather than unified, sign image at night compared to external lighting and may project light that is distracting to the viewer. Similarly, exposed light sources that form the body of a sign (such as, but not limited to, exposed or bare neon) are not appropriate for the Entrance Corridors. They can produce glare and, generally, do not achieve the subtle character and compatibility that is the goal for the Entrance Corridors.		
5b	Since external illumination does not fit every case, individual channel letters – a type of internally illuminated sign that has less visual clutter impact on the Entrance Corridors – may also be approved. Channel letters are generally the preferred type of internally illuminated wall sign because they project the total sign and are identifiable with the daytime image of the sign. When channel letters cannot be adequately accommodated, internally illuminated cabinet signs may be considered. If cabinet signs are utilized, the backgrounds of such signs must be made opaque (zero light transmission).		
5c	External illumination is also preferred for approved graphics/logos; internal		

	illumination may be considered for approval on a case-by-case basis. The Board will evaluate the specific design for size (adjusted in proportion to the accompanying lettering), balance, complexity, and distance from and relationship to the Entrance Corridor. These factors will determine the extent of internal illumination that can be approved.		
5d	These solutions are intended to reduce glare, visual clutter and distraction along the streetscape, to provide for coordinated appearances along the Entrance Corridors, to increase visual continuity, to achieve a balance of business identification with order and continuity, and to limit negative impacts along the County’s Entrance Corridors.		
5e	External Illumination: Lighting should be shielded and not create glare. All external light sources shall be white.		
	Lighting should be aimed so as not to project illumination beyond the sign.		
5f	Internal Illumination: Any internal illumination is considered to contribute to visual clutter and will be limited.		
5g	All Illumination shall be non-blinking.	There is no blinking illumination proposed.	None.
5h	Exposed Light Sources: An exposed light source that forms the body of a sign, such as but not limited to signs formed of exposed neon, as opposed to a light shining on a sign, shall not be used in the Entrance Corridors.	There are no exposed light sources proposed.	None.
9e, 10e	<i>i.</i> External illumination is preferred for wall signs / signs in multiple business centers.	Internal illumination (face-lit) is proposed and, if limited to channel letters, would be consistent with other approvals along this section of the corridor. The cloud sign appears to be constructed like a cabinet sign. If allowed, the backgrounds of “cloud” signs should be opaque and constructed so that no light spills outward from the sides or back.	See lighting recommendation above.
	<i>ii.</i> External illumination: Lighting directed toward a sign should be designed and shielded so that it illuminates the face of the sign and does not shine beyond the edge of the sign.		
	<i>iii.</i> Internal illumination: Channel letters with translucent faces shall be constructed such that no light spills outward from the top, bottom, sides or back. Faces and returns of channel letters shall be opaque when back-lit (halo-lit).		
	<i>iv.</i> Cabinet signs shall have a non-illuminated background, or an opaque (zero light transmission) background. Cabinet signs shall be constructed such that no light spills outward from the top, bottom, sides or back. If outlines of letters are proposed, the width of the outline must be in proportion to the width of the letter. An outline width of 1/8” has been found to be an appropriate dimension for signs in the Entrance Corridors.		



(1) RACEWAY MOUNTED CHANNEL LETTER SET

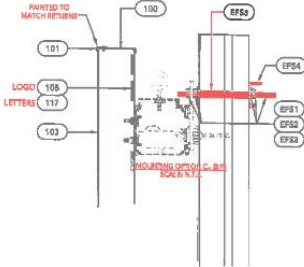
TOTAL : 28.8 SQ.FT.

SIGN SPECIFICATIONS:

RACEWAY MOUNTED CHANNEL LETTER SIGN WITH CHANNEL LOGO.
SPECIFIC COLORS TBD. PANTONE COLORS REQUIRED.
LED ILLUMINATION.

*DEDICATED ELECTRICAL CONNECTION MUST BE EXISTING AND WITHIN 5' OF SIGN LOCATION.

SCALE: TBD/NTS/PROPORTIONAL



INSTALLATION BILL OF MATERIALS			
ITEM#	PART#	DESCRIPTION	QTY.
B101	HW-40113	5/8" X 1/2" HALL TIE ROD END	AVL
B102	HW-40113	5/8" X 1/2" HALL TIE ROD END	AVL
B103	HW-40113	5/8" X 1/2" HALL TIE ROD END	AVL
B104	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B105	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B106	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B107	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B108	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B109	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B110	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B111	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B112	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B113	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B114	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B115	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B116	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B117	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B118	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B119	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL
B120	AL-02-02-0-0-2	ALUMINUM ANGLE 1/2" X 2" X 2" (SEE NOTE 1)	AVL

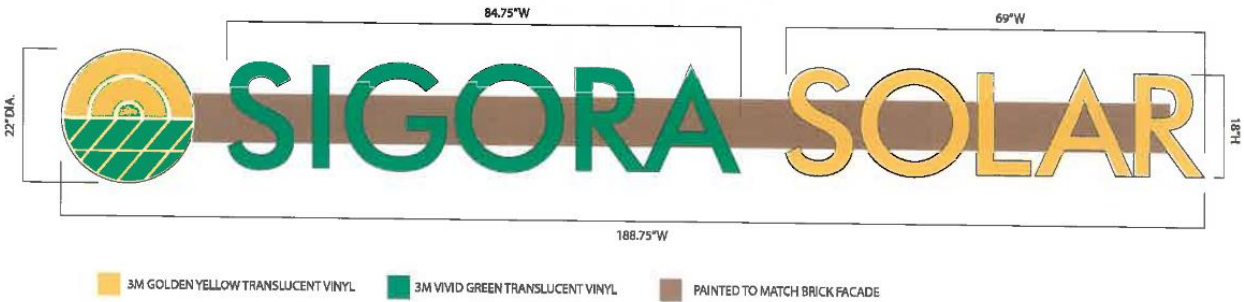


Figure 4: Images from ARB2021-58: Sigora Solar Wall Sign Application

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

- 1. Multiple sign types
- 2. Quantity of text and graphics colors
- 3. Sign locations/alignment

Regarding the Hookaholic cloud sign:

Staff recommends that the sign type be revised to individual letters and that the design be revised to follow the recommended CSP criteria outlined below.

Regarding the Comprehensive Sign Plan:

Staff recommends approval with the following revisions to the criteria and sign locations:

RECOMMENDED COMPREHENSIVE SIGN REVIEW CRITERIA

SIGN FEATURE	DESIGN CRITERIA
SIGN TYPE	Channel letters ~~Channel letters & Cloud Cabinets~~
LETTER FACE COLOR	orange (PMS 021 C), green (PMS 368 C), yellow (PMS 3965 C) ~~orange (PMS 021 C), black, white, green (PMS 368 C), yellow (PMS 3965 C)~~
TRIM CAP COLOR/RETURN COLOR	Bronze ~~Black, White~~
RACEWAY COLOR	To match the color of the wall to which it is attached. 19 1543 TPG Brick Red
SIZE LIMITATIONS	Channel Letter Max Height: 22” Channel Letter Max Depth: 5” ~~Channel Letter Max Height: 24” Channel Letter Max Depth: 5” 40 Sq. Ft. Max~~ ~~Cloud Cabinet Max Height: 36” Cloud Cabinet Max Depth: 5”~~
LOCATION(S)	South Elevation: • Top of Building: Centered between the two decorative brick courses, centered above the second-story windows; • Above the first-story stone facing and below the second-story windows: Centered above the first-floor entrances East Elevation: Centered between the two decorative brick courses at the top of the building, and centered within the building bays. ~~South side: sign to be positioned centered between windows.~~ ~~East Side: sign to be centered in middle above arches and below extruded brick roof line.~~
MOUNTING DETAILS	Raceways or mounted directly to the wall. ~~Attachment methods allowed by state code is Thread alls though the wall with blocking or Lag shields and lags into brick wall.~~
LOGO/GRAPHICS DETAILS	Graphics must be fully incorporated as an integral part of the overall sign. Graphics must be balanced in size and proportion without overwhelming the text. ~~1 Logo and Company Name allowed per side of building.~~
ILLUMINATION DETAILS	LED Front-lit channel letters. ~~LED Front-lit channel letters and cloud cabinet only. Single stroke and 1.2 Watt per Module maximum per channel letter.~~



Figure 5: ARB2021-104: 490 Westfield Road Comprehensive Sign Plan Recommended Sign Locations, South and East Elevations