

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2022-15: Crozet Self Storage
Review Type	Final Site Development Plan
Parcel Identification	05600000003200 and 056000000032A0
Location	5696 Rockfish Gap Turnpike (See Figures 1 and 2.)
Zoned	Highway Commercial (HC) / Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Yousef LC / Merchants Retail Partners LLC (Andrew Lewis)
Magisterial District	White Hall
Proposal	To construct a 90,000 sf, 3-story self-storage building with associated site improvements.
Context	The surrounding area is a mix of residential development and wooded lots, with institutional and commercial development further west on Rt. 250.
Visibility	All four sides of the proposed building will be visible from the Entrance Corridors.
ARB Meeting Date	March 21, 2022
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

Three conceptual designs for a storage building were presented for review at the September 7, 2021 ARB meeting. A design like one of the conceptual designs was reviewed by the ARB in an initial site plan review on December 20, 2021. (See Figures 3 and 4.) Comments from the December meeting are included in the analysis section of this report. Since December, the applicant has significantly revised the proposal to address the ARB's concerns. The building has been shifted to the east, away from Crozet Avenue and the intersection; a community meeting room has been incorporated into the plan; and substantial revisions have been made to the architectural design to address form, mass, and scale. (See Figure 5.)

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	RECOMMENDATION 12/20/21	ISSUE 3/21/2022	RECOMMENDATION 3/21/2022
	Purpose; Compatibility with significant historic sites: Compatibility with the character of the Entrance Corridor; 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.	Provide perspective renderings that show the proposed building in the surrounding context to clarify the scale, extent of visibility, and visual impacts along both corridors.	Perspective views have been provided showing the building from both directions on the corridor. There are no buildings located close enough to the site to be included in the images for scale comparison. The architectural changes improve the mass and scale of the building, and the images show that the landscaping will help soften the appearance of the development.	Revise the roof form of the southwest tower for greater coordination throughout the building.
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.	Revise the architectural design to incorporate forms, features and materials that reflect the traditional architecture of the area.	The architectural design has been revised to include a change from a flat roof to a mansard roof, the addition of gabled bays on the EC elevation alternating with trellises, a pyramidal roof on the tower at the southeast corner of the building, and a tower added at the southwest corner where a new community meeting room is located. These elements are a better reflection of historic architectural forms than the previous proposal and they provide greater visual relief than the previous proposal. In this design, the bays project over 3’ from the main wall.	Replace some of the EIFS with masonry (brick or stone) to establish a stronger tie to the historic architecture of the area.
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.	Revise the architectural design to include architectural elements with greater relief.	The southwest tower is an improvement over the window that was previously proposed in that location, but it has a roof form that differs from the others used in the building and this results in an uncoordinated appearance.	The southeastern tower and/or the first stories of the gabled bays are appropriate locations for additional masonry.
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.		Building materials have been revised to EIFS (in colors SW 6112 and 6101) above a stone water table, white vinyl windows and white accents, and a mix of metal and fiberglass shingle roofs. The amount of EIFS is extensive. Replacing some of the EIFS with masonry (brick or stone) could establish a stronger tie to the historic architecture of the area. The southeastern tower and/or the first stories of the gabled bays would be appropriate locations for	
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.		additional masonry. The gabled bays and general arrangement of architectural elements are reminiscent of the design of the buildings fronting Rt. 250 at the Shops at Clover Lawn, an ARB-approved development. The proposed building height is 35' to the top of the mansard on the Rt. 250 side (and 45' to the top of the southeastern tower roof). The gabled bays are approximately 33' tall and 21' wide. This compares to the 40' height of the main roof of the Clover Lawn buildings, and 37' height and 20' width of Clover Lawn's gable bays. (See Figure 6.)	
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.	Revise the architectural design with a combination of reduced footprint, reduced height, substantial breaks in the building form, and substantial changes in depth for recesses and projections along the walls to reduce the mass and scale of the building.	The revised building measures 135.5' x 225.5'. The previous building size was 260' x 120'. The current proposal reduces the building size by 645 sf in footprint. Although the height of the main building has not changed, the change from flat roof to mansard roof tends to reduce the visual impact. (For comparison, the Clover Lawn buildings measure approximately 175' x 60' and 186' x 70'.) The building design has been further revised with increased breaks in the building form and greater changes in depth. The gabled bays project over 3' from the main wall. A canopy has been added above the overhead doors on the east elevation. These changes substantially improve the general character and appearance of the building. The addition of the community meeting room with the canopy on two sides and the small patio introduces elements of human scale and pedestrian orientation into the design.	None.
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.			
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.			
12	Architecture proposed within the Entrance Corridor should use forms, shapes, scale, and materials to create a cohesive whole.			
13	Any appearance of "blankness" resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.	Revise the architectural design to eliminate blankness on all sides of the building.	The change in roof form significantly reduces blankness on all the elevations. The trellises, tower elements, gabled bays, and material/color changes further reduce blankness on the Rt. 250 side of the building.	None.
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be	None.	A single building is proposed.	None.

	used to unify groups of buildings within a development.			
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	None.	The building does not have the appearance of a trademark design.	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: <i>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.</i>	None.	The architectural drawings note the window glass as “clear.”	Provide specs on the window glass for review.
	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.	Include a detail of the dumpster enclosure in the plan. Add low level planting to screen the lift station from view.	The dumpster has been removed from the plan. Ornamental grasses and shrubs (<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> and <i>ilex crenata</i> Hoogendorn) are proposed near the lift station. HVAC equipment is proposed at the northeast and northwest corners of the building. Holly trees and shrubs are proposed for screening. Wrapping these shrubs around the corner of the northwest equipment would provide for increased screening.	Add holly shrubs to wrap around the western side of the equipment at the northwest corner of the building for better screening.
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.”	Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the site and architectural plans.	The note appears as general note #34 on Sheet C1.0 of the site plan, but it is not on the architectural drawings.	Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the architectural drawings.
22-31	Lighting	Provide a complete lighting plan for review. Include all proposed building- and ground-mounted lighting in the plan.	A lighting plan is included in the site plan set.	See below.
22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets;	-	There is no excessive spillover.	None.
23	Light should be shielded, recessed or flush-mounted to eliminate glare. All fixtures with lamps emitting 3000 lumens or more must be full cutoff fixtures.	-	Proposed light fixtures are full cutoff styles.	None.

24	Light levels exceeding 30 footcandles are not appropriate for display lots in the Entrance Corridors. Lower light levels will apply to most other uses in the Entrance Corridors.	-	The maximum illumination at the ground is 9.9 footcandles. However, the photometric plan was calculated using an LLF of .95 instead of 1.0.	Revise the photometric plan using an LLF of 1.0.
25	Light should have the appearance of white light with a warm soft glow; however, a consistent appearance throughout a site or development is required. Consequently, if existing lamps that emit non-white light are to remain, new lamps may be required to match them.	-	The lamps are proposed with a color temperature of 4000K. 3000K would produce a warm white light, consistent with the EC guidelines.	Revise the lighting plan to use lamps with a color temperature of 3000K.
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.	-	The color of the finish for the fixtures and pole has not been identified.	Revise the lighting plan to identify the color of the finish for the light fixtures and poles. Bronze is recommended.
27	The height and scale of freestanding, pole-mounted light fixtures should be compatible with the height and scale of the buildings and the sites they are illuminating, and with the use of the site. Typically, the height of freestanding pole-mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors should not exceed 20 feet, including the base. Fixtures that exceed 20 feet in height will typically require additional screening to achieve an appropriate appearance from the Entrance Corridor.	-	A 20' pole is proposed, but a base for the pole is not addressed.	Include a note on the plan stating that maximum pole fixture height is 20', including any base for the pole.
28	In determining the appropriateness of lighting fixtures for the Entrance Corridors, the individual context of the site will be taken into consideration on a case by case basis.	-	The surrounding area is generally not very brightly lit.	See other lighting recommendations.
29	The following note should be included on the lighting plan: "Each outdoor luminaire equipped with a lamp that emits 3,000 or more initial lumens shall be a full cutoff luminaire and shall be arranged or shielded to reflect light away from adjoining residential districts and away from adjacent roads. The spillover of lighting from luminaires onto public roads and property in residential or rural areas zoning districts shall not exceed one half footcandle."	-	The note appears on the plan.	None.
30-31	<i>Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting</i>	-	No decorative lighting is 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.	None.	Lawns and shade trees are characteristic of residential properties in the surrounding area but are not typical of commercial properties. The portions of the site not occupied by structures or parking do not have the appearance of lawns.	None.
8	Continuity within the Entrance Corridor should be obtained by planting	None.	Sycamores and dogwoods are proposed along the Rt. 250	None.

	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.		EC. Red Oaks are proposed west of the building. A variety of other trees are proposed throughout the site. The tree species are used throughout the corridors.	
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.	See other landscape recommendations, below.	13 large shade trees are provided along the Rt. 250 frontage. The spacing of the trees is adjusted to correspond to the architectural features of the building elevation facing the street. On the Crozet Ave. side, an informal mix of trees is proposed between the building and existing wooded area to remain along the frontage. Note that much of the existing wooded area stands in the right-of-way. Ornamental trees are interspersed on both frontages.	None.
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.	Provide 16 large shade trees along Brownsville Rd., 2½” caliper at planting.	A mix of trees and shrubs is proposed along Brownsville Road, including large deciduous, ornamental, and evergreen, in an informal arrangement. The quantity of trees is sufficient to meet the intent of the guideline.	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.	None.	Trees are provided along or near all sidewalks on site.	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	Add a large tree on the north side of the parking lot, 2½” caliper at planting.	Trees of the required planting size are distributed around the perimeter of the parking areas at the required spacing.	None.

	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.			
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.	Increase the planting along the Rt. 250 side of the building to offset the impacts of the scale of the building. Add low level plantings all along the Rt. 250 frontage.	The number of trees along the Rt. 250 frontage remains the same, but significant low-level plantings have been added, including a double row of shrubs and ground cover. Extending the shrubs and ground cover along the street side of the stormwater facility would provide for a more coordinated appearance. Along Crozet Avenue, existing wooded area is now to remain, and a mix of large shade and ornamental trees is proposed between the wooded area and the building. The proposed sizes and quantities meet the requirements.	Extend the shrubs and ground cover planting along the Rt. 250 side of the stormwater facility.
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 Landscapes (Appendix D)</i> .	None.	The plants are on the various lists.	None.
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."	None.	The note is on the plan.	None.
	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.	Revise the design to reduce the scale of the building to not overpower the setting of the site.	Much of the site is already developed. Large groups of mature trees currently stand near the center of the site and along the western perimeter. Smaller groups are at the southeastern corner and at the driveway accessing Brownsville Rd. Previously, all trees were to be removed. Now, with the building shifted to the east, the trees at the western end of the site are to remain, though a large portion of them are within the right-of-way. The proposed building is oriented parallel to Rt. 250. The chamfered corner at the intersection with Crozet Ave. has been replaced with a projecting bay with hipped roof and canopy. The layout appears generally organized. Access is proposed off Brownsville Rd. near the intersection with	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 <i>Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance</i> 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.		Rt. 250. A sidewalk is proposed along Rt. 250. The design has been revised to take better advantage of topography to reduce scale and to increase landscaping to offset visual impacts.	
	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 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.	Indicate on the plan the material and color proposed for the retaining wall. A muted earth tone color is recommended.	The building has been redesigned with a slightly reduced footprint, a partial below-grade basement and a mansard roof. This takes better advantage of the topography to reduce the mass and scale of the building. The stormwater facility has been redesigned. It now includes an emergency spillway on the EC side.	Provide in the plan details, including material and color, on the design of the seat wall. A muted earth tone color is recommended. Extend the shrubs and ground cover planting along the Rt. 250 side of the stormwater facility.
44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.	Include a detail of the retaining wall safety railing in the plan.	Low level landscaping was not added at the facility, but ground cover was added to the west, between the parking area and the EC, and all along the EC side of the building. If shrubs were continued along the EC side of the stormwater facility, a more continuous landscape would be achieved.	
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.	Add low-level landscaping in the vicinity of the stormwater facility to integrate it more fully into the landscape.	The retaining wall is no longer proposed. A “seat wall” is proposed west of the community meeting room. Details have not been provided but the comment response letter states that the wall will match the stone of the building’s water table.	

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.	None.	The building location has been shifted to the east to retain most of the wooded area along Crozet Avenue, a large portion of which is in the right-of-way. Tree protection fencing is not shown on the plan.	Show tree protection fencing for the wooded area to remain at the west end of the site.
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.			

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

- 1. The revised building design: scale, style, character.
- 2. The extensive use of EIFS.
- 3. Landscaping: quantity and character relative to the building scale and building design.

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

- 1. Revise the roof form of the southwest tower for greater coordination throughout the building.
- 2. Replace some of the EIFS with masonry (brick or stone) to establish a stronger tie to the historic architecture of the area. The southeastern tower and/or the first stories of the gabled bays are appropriate locations for additional masonry.
- 3. Provide specs on the window glass for review.
- 4. Add holly shrubs to wrap around the western side of the equipment at the northwest corner of the building for better screening.
- 5. Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the architectural drawings.
- 6. Revise the photometric plan using an LLF of 1.0.
- 7. Revise the lighting plan to use lamps with a color temperature of 3000K.
- 8. Revise the lighting plan to identify the color of the finish for the light fixtures and poles. Bronze is recommended.
- 9. Include a note on the plan stating that maximum pole fixture height is 20’, including any base for the pole.
- 10. Extend the shrubs and ground cover planting along the Rt. 250 side of the stormwater facility.
- 11. Provide in the plan details, including material and color, on the design of the seat wall. A muted earth tone color is recommended.
- 12. Extend the shrubs and ground cover planting along the Rt. 250 side of the stormwater facility.
- 13. Show tree protection fencing for the wooded area to remain at the west end of the site.

ATTACHMENTS

Attach. 1: ARB2022-15: [Crozet Self Storage Site Plan](#)

Attach. 2: ARB2022-15: [Crozet Self Storage architectural drawings](#)

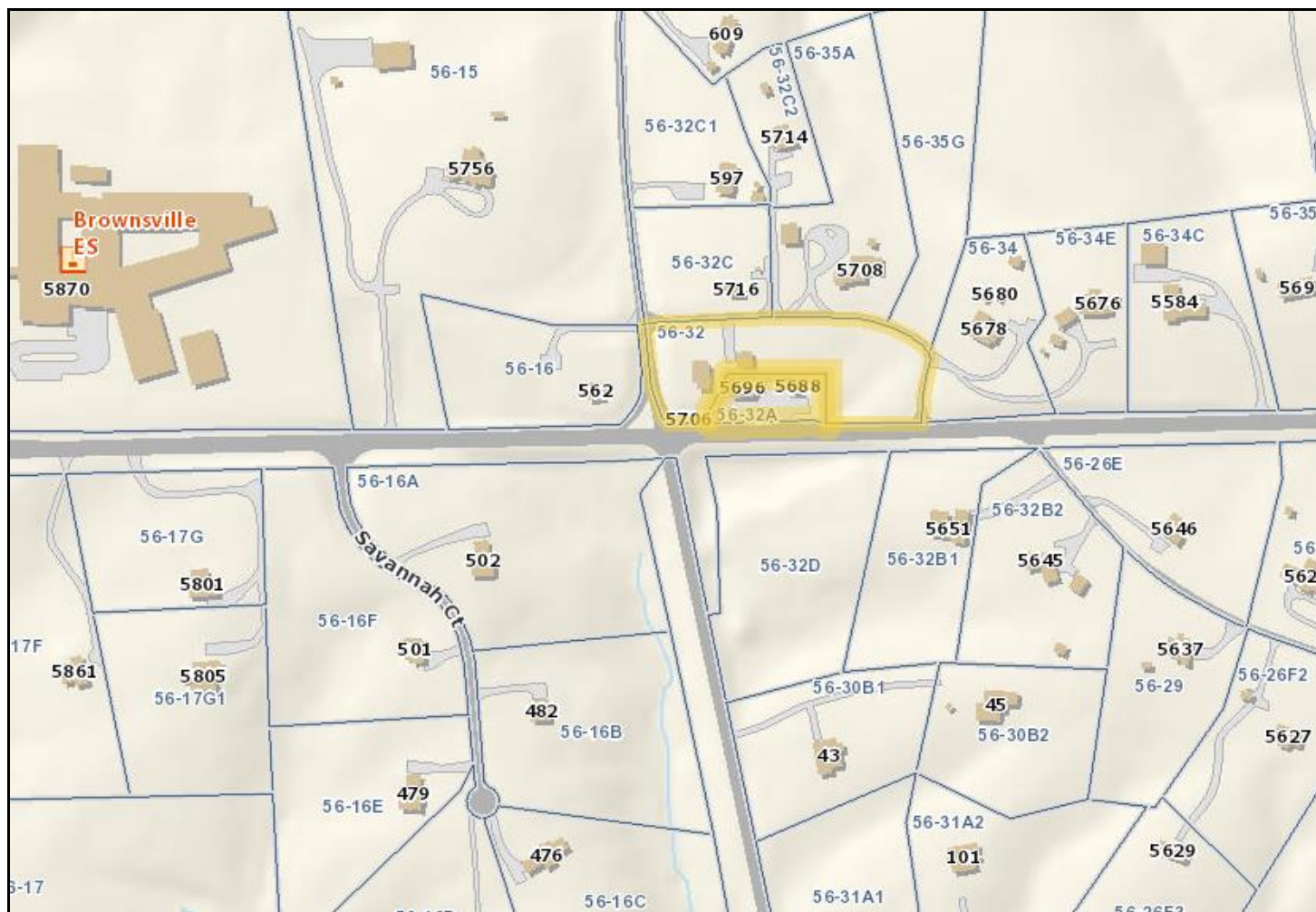


Figure 1: Project location.



Figure 2: View of existing development at subject property, looking west on the Route 250 West Entrance Corridor.



Figure 3: One of three conceptual designs presented at the September 7, 2021 ARB meeting.



Figure 4: The design for the Crozet Self Storage Building reviewed at the December 20, 2021 ARB meeting.



Figure 5: Revised Crozet Self Storage Building design submitted for the March 21, 2022 ARB meeting.



Figure 6: Google street view of the Shops at Clover Lawn.