

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2022-29: TJACH Premier Circle Initial Plan
Review Type	Initial Site Plan
Parcel Identification	061M0000000600
Location	405 Premier Circle, on the west side of Rt. 29, approximately 300’ north of Westfield Road
Zoned	Neighborhood Model District (NMD) / Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	PHA Premier Circle / Timmons Group (Jonathan Showalter)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	To begin a three-phase development for Virginia Supportive Housing (VSH), Piedmont Housing Alliance (PHA), and the Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless (TJACH), the first phase of which involves constructing a four-story, 80-unit single room occupancy (SRO) building for VSH with associated site improvements.
Context	The site of the proposed development is surrounded by a mix of commercial development, including retail, restaurants, gas stations, banks, hotels, and motels to the north, south and east, and residential development to the west.
Visibility	The proposed development will be readily visible from the Entrance Corridor.
ARB Meeting Date	May 2, 2022
Staff Contact	Khrist Taggart

PROJECT HISTORY

The motel on this site predates the establishment of the Entrance Corridors. The ARB approved a sign application for the motel in 2001 and reviewed, but did not recommend approval of, ARB2017-07, an Initial Site Plan for a Lidl grocery store. A revised initial site plan to address ARB comments for the Lidl grocery was not submitted. A rezoning and special exception for this site were approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 17, 2021. Design Planning staff comments on the rezoning focused on providing adequate planting area for EC landscaping free of utility conflicts in both Phase II and III and noting that the Rt. 29 elevation of the Phase III building must be a fully designed front.

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
	Structure design		
1	The goal of the regulation of the design of development within the designated Entrance Corridors is to ensure 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.	Buildings on sites adjacent to the subject parcel predate the establishment of the Entrance Corridor. These include the 3-story Royal Inn motel and a 2-story office building to the north, and the 2-story former Nature Conservancy building to the south. Buildings in the area that have been reviewed and approved by the ARB include the Pet Supplies Plus building, the AutoZone building, the Shell station, the 7-11, Waffle House, and buildings in the Branchlands development. A Springhill Town Place Suites hotel was approved across Rt. 29, behind the Flaming Wok building, but has not been constructed.	Provide material/color samples for review.
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.	The overall building design is one that is contemporary in style but uses building materials (brick and metal) that are reflective of ones used historically within the County, providing a minimal connection to the surrounding context and local historic architecture. The proposed brick color (Dover white), as described by the manufacturer, has the look of a weathered painted brick with red undertones. The color is not representative of the red brick found in the surrounding context of the site, but it is expected to have an appropriate appearance.	Revise the windows along the south elevation, west of the courtyard area to match the scale of the windows present in the overall building design or otherwise relieve the blankness.
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 design of the southern portion of the east elevation to add architectural details to relieve the blankness.
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.		Revise the site plan set to include a phased demolition plan.
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.		Revise the site plan set to include the limits of work for each phase of the development.
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	The metal in the building design is reflective of a historic building material, but its placement in the design does not reflect the traditional locations found in historic building design.	
		The “L” shape form of the building helps minimize its mass. The contrasting	

	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.	color of the vertical metal window bays helps to further break up the massing and establish a rhythm across the “inner” elevations of the “L”. However, the end elevation closest to the EC has windows that are much smaller than those in other parts of the building. This results in a higher degree of blankness facing the Entrance Corridor. The development of the site is split into three phases. The building and site improvements for VSH being reviewed in this submittal make up the first phase, with additional buildings and site improvements north and south of the Phase I building making up Phases II (PHA building) and III (nonresidential), respectively. The demolition plan is not phased; it shows all site elements that will be demolished for the overall development. A phased demolition plan is required to determine the extent to which EC Guidelines should be applied. Human scale can be seen in the overall building design through the use of alternating materials and though likely to have minimal visibility in later phases, other elements of human scale in the building design are found in the brick soldier course at the top of the first floor and the windows and courtyard at the base of the building. Along the east and south elevations of the stair tower, storefront windows are used to relieve blankness, add texture, and provide a sense of scale. However, the wall south of the stair tower has no windows or detailing visible from the street.	
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.		
12	Architecture proposed within the Entrance Corridor should use forms, shapes, scale, and materials to create a cohesive whole.		
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.		
13	Any appearance of “blankness” resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.		

			
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	A single building is proposed in this phase with two additional buildings to be constructed in later phases. The site layout is not conducive to use of physical connecting devices.	
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	The building does not have the appearance of trademark design.	
16	Window glass in the Entrance Corridors should not be highly tinted or highly reflective. <i>Window glass in the Entrance Corridors should meet the following criteria: 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>	The elevation drawings note that the storefront windows will have limited reflectivity, but full glass specifications have not yet been provided. The updated specifications are <i>visible light transmittance (VLT) shall not drop below 40%. Visible light reflectance (VLR) shall not exceed 30%.</i>	Revise the architectural drawings to note conformity with the updated window glass specifications.
	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.	A generator pad, utility transformer, and dumpster pad are shown near the northwest corner of the building. This location is expected to be sufficiently screened by the proposed building and future frontage landscaping.	Confirm that the visibility of roof-mounted mechanical equipment has been considered in the perspective drawings.
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	The building elevations show roof-mounted mechanical equipment and what appears to be an elevator tower. The applicant's narrative states that the equipment will not be visible, but the degree of visibility of the elevator	

	fencing devices.	tower is unclear.	Revise the architectural drawings to show the finish (material, color, detailing) of the elevator tower and show the tower in the perspective drawings.
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.		
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.	No above ground stormwater facilities are proposed.	None.
44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.		
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 is present on the site plan but not the architectural drawings.	Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the architectural plans.
	Lighting		
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.	All proposed fixtures are full cutoff fixtures.	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 plan shows a maximum illumination at the ground of 8.6 fc, which is expected to have an appropriate appearance. However, a LLF has not been indicated on the luminaire schedule.	Revise the lighting plan to indicate that the plan was calculated using an LLF of 1.0 for all fixtures and revise the photometrics accordingly.
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.	All fixtures shown on the plan specify a color temperature approximating warm white (3000K).	None.
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 fixtures and poles has been indicated as dark bronze.	None.
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.	The heights noted for the poles do not exceed 20’ but the plan does not indicate if the fixture heights shown include the pole base.	Revise the plan to indicate the fixture heights will not exceed 20’ including the base.
28	In determining the appropriateness of lighting fixtures for the Entrance Corridors, the individual	The plan does not include any information on wall-mounted lighting.	Revise the lighting plan

	context of the site will be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis.		to include fixture locations and illumination values for the wall-mounted lights.
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 standard lighting note is missing from the plan.	Add the standard lighting note to the plan.
30-31	Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting	No decorative landscape 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.	No landscaping is shown along the frontage in this phase of the development. The frontage trees shown in the overall landscape plan are located near the overhead power line and most are within a VEPCO easement. Existing underground power and gas lines further reduce planting area. The approved application plan and code of development for this site clearly state that the EC frontage landscaping requirements are to be met. The proposed planting plan does not meet the guidelines and there does not appear to be sufficient planting area available to shift the trees to alternate locations along the frontage while maintaining the current layout of buildings and parking areas. Increasing the planting area could resolve the problem; this would require changes to the Phase 3 building and parking. Consequently, approval of the initial site plan is not recommended.	Staff does not recommend approval of the site plan at this time because of the utility/easement conflicts with frontage landscaping. Revise the site plan to provide for planting area along the EC frontage that accommodates all required landscaping while avoiding all utility and easement conflicts.
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. 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.		
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.	Sidewalks are provided along the north, east, and south elevations of the Phase I building. Where there are planting areas adjacent to sidewalks trees are provided.	None

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.	There do not appear to be any long building elevations that will require landscaping in any phase of the development.	
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” in height.	For the changes shown to the parking areas in Phase 1, interior and perimeter parking trees are provided as required, with shrubs shown along the parking row near the entrance along Premier Circle. For the overall landscape plan, a couple of perimeter trees along parking lot #2 are also shown within the VEPCO easement and the interior parking tree requirements (18 trees) are not met. The parking spaces provided appear to be more than what is required, so there is some opportunity for interior planting islands in the parking areas.	Revise the landscape plan to provide additional trees to meet the interior parking area landscaping requirements (one tree for every 10 spaces evenly distributed). Adjust the planting area along parking lot #2 to avoid utility/easement conflicts while meeting all planting requirements.
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> .	The plants are found 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.”	The standard plant health note appears on Sheet L2.1.	None.
	Site Development and layout		
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 is already developed with a motel, travelways and parking areas. There are no existing open spaces, but the site does contain some mature trees. No views are expected to be impacted by the proposed development. The new building is shown behind the existing motel building adjacent to the frontage and is oriented nearly parallel to the EC. A sidewalk exists along Rt. 29, with pedestrian connections to the site along Premier Circle planned for a future phase of the development.	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 32.5.6.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.		
	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 landforms 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.	A berm approximately 10' high exists along the EC frontage. No changes are proposed to this berm in any phase of the development. Retaining walls are proposed along the west side of the property and south of the Phase 1 building. Wall heights are not given but they are not expected to be visible from the EC.	None.
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.	The site contains some mature trees which are not expected to remain, but it is unclear in what phases these trees will be removed.	Revise the site plan to show the limits of work for Phase 1 of the development. Show tree protection fencing on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping, and erosion and sediment control plans where needed.
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. Frontage planting and utility conflicts.
2. The building design: form, materials, colors, detailing, blankness.

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 Initial Site Plan approval:
 - Staff does not recommend approval of the site plan at this time because of the utility/easement conflicts with frontage landscaping.
- 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:

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. Provide material/color samples for review.
2. Revise the windows along the south elevation, west of the courtyard area to match the scale of the windows present in the overall building design or otherwise relieve the blankness.
3. Revise the design of the southern portion of the east elevation to add architectural details to relieve the blankness.
4. Revise the site plan set to include a phased demolition plan.
5. Revise the site plan set to include the limits of work for each phase of the development.
6. Revise the architectural drawings to note conformity with the updated window glass specifications. The updated specifications are visible light transmittance (VLT) shall not drop below 40%. Visible light reflectance (VLR) shall not exceed 30%.
7. Confirm that the visibility of roof-mounted mechanical equipment has been considered in the perspective drawings.
8. Revise the architectural drawings to show the finish (material, color, detailing) of the elevator tower and show the tower in the perspective drawings.
9. Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the architectural plans: “Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated.”
10. Revise the lighting plan to indicate that the plan was calculated using an LLF of 1.0 for all fixtures and revise the photometrics accordingly.
11. Revise the plan to indicate the fixture heights will not exceed 20’ including the base.
12. Revise the lighting plan to include fixture locations and illumination values for the wall-mounted lights.
13. Add the standard lighting note to the 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.”
14. Revise the site plan to provide for planting area along the EC frontage that accommodates all required landscaping while avoiding all utility and easement conflicts. Revise the landscape plan to provide additional trees to meet the interior parking area landscaping requirements (one tree for every 10 spaces evenly distributed).
15. Adjust the planting area along parking lot #2 to avoid utility conflicts while meeting all planting requirements.
16. Revise the site plan to show the limits of work for Phase 1 of the development. Show tree protection fencing on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping, and erosion and sediment control plans where needed.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attach. 1: ARB-2022-29: [TJACH Premier Circle Initial Site Plan](#)
- Attach. 2: ARB-2022-29: [TJACH Premier Circle Architectural Drawings](#)