

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2023-32: BMW Sales and Service Building Renovation
Review Type	Building Permit Review
Parcel Identification	07800-00-00-01500, 07800-00-00-015B0
Location	1289 and 1295 Richmond Rd.
Zoned	Highway Commercial (HC), Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Flow 1295 Richmond LLC/BRW Architects (Bruce Wardell)
Magisterial District	Scottsville
Proposal	The applicant proposes to renovate the BMW sales and service buildings by revising the existing curved parapets to horizontal parapets, painting the existing EIFS and brick white, and adding a canopy over the sales building’s main entrance and storefront window.
Context	Commercial uses characterize this portion of the Rt. 250 Entrance Corridor: a Wawa convenience store with a fueling station, an O’Reilly Auto Parts (formerly a Goodwill Store), and a Take 5 oil change facility lie across Rt. 250 to the north; the new Flow Volkswagen/Mazda/Audi/Porsche dealership lies across Rt. 250 to the north/northeast, with the former Flow Audi/Volkswagen/Porsche dealership to the east, and the Virginia National Bank office building to the west.
Visibility	The north and west elevations of the showroom building and the north, east, and west elevations of the service building are readily visible from the Rt. 250 Entrance Corridor.
ARB Meeting Date	May 15, 2023
Staff Contact	Khris Taggart

PROJECT HISTORY

The ARB approved ARB1998-66 and ARB2008-168, site plans and architectural designs for the existing BMW sales building and service building in 1999 and 2009, respectively. The ARB has also approved several signs for the buildings and the site since 1999.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	GENERAL GUIDELINES		
	<i>Purpose, Compatibility with the character of the Entrance Corridor, Compatibility with significant historic sites</i>		
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.	In the 1998 ARB review of the existing BMW showroom building, the Board identified the masonry detailing and division of wall surfaces into a base, middle, and top as traditional aspects of the design that increased its compatibility with the County’s historic architecture. The curved forms present in the existing building design are contemporary features and an example of individuality allowed by the EC Design Guidelines.	Revise the proposal to provide a design that maintains the existing base-middle-top pattern. Options include, but are not limited to, adding a second color to the paint scheme, using a treatment that maintains/emphasizes the texture of the brick, and/or revising the design to maintain the tan brick. Provide samples of any revised materials/colors with the next submittal.
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 BMW renovation proposal would revise the curved parapets on the north elevation of the sales and service buildings to horizontal parapets, add a canopy over the main entrance to the sales building and its storefront window, and change the earth-tone colors found in the existing EIFS and brick to white. The change of the parapets from curved to horizontal forms better connects them to the historic architecture of the County and the forms found in the surrounding context. However,	
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.	painting the brick and EIFS a single color (white) will weaken the impact of the base-middle-top pattern and downplay the varying textures of the building materials. Adding a second color to the paint scheme, using a treatment that maintains/emphasizes the texture of the brick, or revising the design to maintain the tan brick could help maintain a closer tie to the historic architecture of the area.	
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.		
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.		

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.		
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.		
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.		
	Structure design		
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	The proposed changes to the parapet elements along the façades of the showroom and service building will not change the existing overall scale of buildings and the addition of canopy elements to the showroom building helps to add an element of human scale to that building design. However, painting the EIFS and brick a single color will result in the materials appearing uniform from the EC, eliminating the base-middle-top pattern that helps to break up the elevation and provide human scale to the building design.	See the recommendations in the architectural Guidelines above.
13	Any appearance of “blankness” resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.	The building renovation is not expected to create blankness that will need relieving.	None.
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	No connecting devices are proposed.	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>	No changes are proposed to the existing window glass.	None.
	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.	There are no new accessory structures proposed.	None.
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.	The architectural drawings note that the existing roof-mounted mechanical equipment is to remain and the changes to the form of the parapets are expected to maintain the screening of the existing roof-mounted equipment from the EC.	None.

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 new stormwater facilities are proposed.	None.
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 architectural plan. No changes are proposed to the existing site.	None.
22-31	Lighting		None
	<i>General Guidelines</i>		
22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets;	A lighting plan has not been provided with this submission. No changes to the existing pole-mounted lighting are proposed but the applicant has noted that 6 new building-mounted fixtures are proposed for the underside of the canopy being added at the entrance to the showroom building.	Revise the plan to provide manufacturer, illumination levels, and color temperature for the new fixtures.
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.		
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.		
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.		
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.		
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.	No new pole-mounted fixtures are proposed.	None.
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.		
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 is not present in the documents submitted.	Revise the submittal to include the standard lighting note.
	<i>Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting</i>		
30	Light used for decorative effect shall:	No decorative landscape lighting is proposed.	None.

	a. be compatible with the character of the Entrance Corridor. Compatibility of exterior lighting and lighting fixtures is assessed in terms of design, use, size, scale, color, and brightness. b. impact only the immediate site. The effect of the illumination should not be discernible from distances along the Entrance Corridor.		
31	Where used for decorative effect, outdoor light fixtures shall: a. be equipped with automatic timing devices and shall be extinguished between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and dawn. b. be shielded and focused to eliminate glare. Glare control shall be achieved primarily through the use of such means as cutoff fixtures, shields and baffles, and appropriate application of mounting height, wattage, aiming angle, fixture placement, etc. c. be cutoff luminaires, aimed so as not to project their output beyond the objects intended to be illuminated; or non-cutoff luminaires, equipped with glare shields, visors, barn doors, and/or other similar shielding accessories as required to meet the following criteria: Light distribution from all lighting installations shall be cut-off at all angles beyond those required to restrict direct illumination to within the perimeter of the landscape feature being illuminated. d. never exceed 3,000 lumens. Further restrictions on lumens may be imposed by the ARB. e. not be modified to reflect seasonal colors. f. be of a number that is compatible with the scale of the object and the development to be illuminated, such that the light emitted will not over-illuminate or overpower the site, as determined by the ARB.		
7-8, 32-38	Landscaping	No changes are proposed to the existing landscaping.	None.
6, 39-44	<i>Site Grading, Site Development and layout</i>	No changes are proposed to the existing site layout and grading.	None.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. The design of the BMW showroom and service building renovation: change in the parapet form, the use of white/a single color in the design.

Staff offers the following recommendations on the proposal:

1. Revise the proposal to provide a design that maintains the existing base-middle-top pattern. Options include, but are not limited to, adding a second color to the paint scheme, using a treatment that maintains/emphasizes the texture of the brick, and/or revising the design to maintain the tan brick. Provide samples of any revised materials/colors with the next submittal.
2. Revise the plan to provide manufacturer, illumination levels, and color temperature for the new fixtures.
3. Revise the submittal to include the standard lighting note: 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.

ATTACHMENTS

[Attach. 1: ARB2023-32: BMW Sales and Service Buildings Renovation Site Diagram](#)

[Attach. 2: ARB2023-32: BMW Sales and Service Buildings Renovation Architectural Drawings](#)

[Attach. 3: ARB2023-32: BMW Sales and Service Buildings Renovation Line Drawings](#)