ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	**SP-2023-07: The Home Depot Outdoor Storage Display Sales**
Review Type	Advisory Review for a Special Use Permit
Parcel Identification	06100000013200
Location	1531 Rio Road East (Fig. 1)
Zoned	Planned Development Shopping Center (PDSC), Entrance Corridor (EC), Airport Impact Area (AIA), Managed Steep Slopes
Owner/Applicant	Home Depot USA Inc./Williams Mullen (Valerie Long)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	To establish outdoor storage, display and sales of lawn, garden and related merchandise in association with the construction of a Home Depot store at the former location of the Sears store at the Fashion Square Mall property.
Context	The project is located at the north end of the Fashion Square Mall. A mix of commercial and office buildings is found nearby.
Visibility	The garden center is located adjacent to the Rio East Entrance Corridor. The street is elevated above the site. Some mature trees and shrubs stand along the street and entrance drive, but views are available between the trees and through gaps in the landscaping, and visibility increases during the winter months. The view from Rio will be down into and over the garden center, and across the site entrance to the front of the building. The garden center is located approximately 700' from the Rt. 29 Entrance corridor. A berm is present along the Rt. 29 frontage of the mall property. At the southern end, the height of the berm and trees planted on the berm almost entirely limit visibility of the mall building. The height of the berm decreases moving northward and the building becomes more visible. At the far north end of the property, there is no existing landscaping along the Rt. 29 frontage. Although the berm is at its shortest at this end, drivers in vehicles in the northbound lanes are often too low to see the building. Visibility is greater on the west side of Rt. 29 and for pedestrians. (Figs. 2 and 3) See "Project Details" and "Analysis" for additional information.
ARB Meeting Date	August 7, 2023
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

- The ARB recommended approval of the initial site plan (Fig. 4) for the Home Depot project on May 15, 2023. The initial site plan was approved on May 18, 2023.
- A special use permit (SP) is required for the outdoor display use. This staff report is limited to an analysis of the proposal for that use, including appearance, treatment, and screening. The ARB's recommendation on the SP will be forwarded to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.
- The applicant submitted an application for a preliminary architectural review for the design of the main Home Depot store under the July 17, 2023 submittal deadline for review by the ARB on September 5, 2023.

PROJECT DETAILS (Fig. 4)

The proposal includes the storage, display, and sale ("display") of garden and related merchandise in an open-air, partially roofed Garden Center and in various locations outside the building.

- Proposed display items outside the store include plants displayed on tables and racks, lawn mowers, grills, wheelbarrows, snow blowers and similar/related items, as well as customer pick-up lockers, propane exchange cabinets, building materials under the lumber pick-up canopy, and a Tool Rental Center area. VISIBILITY: Display items on the Rt. 29 side of the building will be visible from the Rt. 29 corridor, though at a distance. Those items will also have some visibility from Rio Rd., particularly at the entrance into the site, though existing and proposed landscaping will break up the view.
- The proposed Garden Center is partially roofed and partially open to the sky. Products housed in the Garden Center include plants, mulch, building materials and other similar items. VISIBILITY: With existing landscaping, views will be available down into and over the garden center from Rio Rd. (It is estimated that the garden center is about as tall as the Sears building, and the main Home Depot building is somewhat taller.) The Garden Center will be visible from Rt. 29, but at a distance.
- Temporary staging areas for the storage of items including mulch, stone, soil and other similar products, and lumber deliveries are proposed in the portion of the parking lot along Rio Road and behind the building. VISIBLITY: These areas are not expected to be visible from the EC streets.

ANALYSIS NOTE: This analysis is limited to the design of the garden center and the related storage, display and sale of merchandise.

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	***Purpose; Compatibility with significant historic sites*; 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	The main entrance into the garden center from the outside is provided on the Rt. 29 side of the structure. It is marked by a composite wood siding-faced entrance feature surrounding two overhead doors. Extending out from the entrance feature is fencing that encloses the garden center. The garden center fence located between the garden center entrance and the main store building is composed of a black vertical metal fence with expanded metal	Revise the drawings to indicate that the vertical metal fence of fence 3 will be black. Indicate on drawing DD02-01 the material and color of all the garden center canopies and the

	orderly and attractive development within these corridors. Applicants should note that replication of historic structures is neither required nor desired.	mesh behind. It is 12' tall. The garden center fence that runs parallel to Rio Rd. is 20' tall. The uppermost 10' is composed of vertical metal fence (presumably black) on the outside, black fabric mesh on the inside, and black chain link in between. The layered design is expected to limit the visual impact of the chain link fence. The lower 10' is composed of black vertical metal fence on the outside, and black expanded metal mesh on the inside. An overhead door is provided in the fencing on the Rio side and a pedestrian door is provided in the fencing on the Rt. 29 side. The overall building falls into the "big box" category of design, with a large footprint and large-scale building elements. As viewed from the Rt. 29 side of the site, the garden center structure is scaled down in comparison to the main building and has the appearance of a subordinate addition. The garden center entrance feature is different than the building's other entrance features. The facing material is different. The paint color has not been identified but is rendered in a different shade than the others. A bronze-colored steel canopy is proposed over the doors, like the other entrances, and the overall design is generally simpler, more utilitarian. The garden center is partially enclosed at the top. Some of the roofed areas are expected to be visible from some vantage points on Rio Rd. The roofed sections are a combination of retractable black mesh over the central area and white prefinished metal canopies set at varying heights. Vertical translucent fiberglass wall panels enclose a portion of the garden center. The fiberglass will appear to glow when lit from the interior at night – an effect that is not appropriate for the ECs.	house plant enclosure roof. Indicate on the plans the color of the Garden Center wood siding. Eliminate translucent fiberglass from the garden center design. Add the EC frontage trees along the Rt. 29 side of the site.
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.		
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.		
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.	Product display areas are proposed at intervals on the sidewalk along the Rt. 29 front of the garden center wall and fence and along the front of the main building. The product display - illustrated as plants on tables and racks - helps mitigate the blankness of the garden center fence and entrance feature. (More information on the display areas is provided below.) The design of the garden center has no connection to the historic architecture of the county. Given the site layout and immediate context, it is understandable that establishing such a connection would be a challenge in this case. Nevertheless, the opportunity exists to harmonize the new development with the existing character of the corridor by meeting the guidelines for frontage landscaping. Consistent landscaping along the street can provide the balance needed for flexibility in the architectural design. Trees added along the Rt. 29 frontage can help mitigate visual impacts and bring this part of the site into closer conformity with EC guidelines.	
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.		
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	The Rio Rd. elevation of the garden center is a length of fencing broken only by a single overhead door. The fence design will result in some texture along its length and height, but the elevation is generally without relief and without human scale. Fencing broken at intervals with masonry posts or other architectural features could provide better scale and relieve blankness. Drivers on Rio Rd. will see little of the fencing; pedestrians will have a better view. When landscaping is mature, visibility will be further reduced. The Rt. 29 elevation of the garden center is broken up into an entrance feature and lengths of fence.	
13	Any appearance of “blankness” resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.		

		The trees proposed for the parking lot will help break up the view and relieve the scale. Trees added along the Rt. 29 frontage would further limit impacts and help bring the site into closer conformity with EC guidelines.	
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	The garden center adjoins the main store building, which adjoins the existing mall building.	None.
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	The proposal is a version of a trademark design.	See the architectural and landscape recommendations.
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: *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.*	The garden center includes no windows.	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.	It is anticipated that the design for the main building will include equipment mounted on the roof. Consideration of that condition will occur with the preliminary architectural review that is currently scheduled for September. The plan shows a generator and transformer at the east corner of the store, visible from Rio Rd. The generator is shown in a gated and fenced enclosure. The fence is composed of black vertical metal fence with black chain link behind. (The same fence design is proposed for the tool rental center, which is located along the existing mall building near the Home Depot lumber canopy.) The transformer is illustrated at a small size compared to the surroundings and is not expected to have a visual impact on the EC. Evergreen screening added along Rio could sufficiently limit visibility of the generator and transformer.	None at this time.
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 standard mechanical note will be needed on the site and architectural plans.	
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.	Storage areas are proposed within the garden center, outside the garden center along its Rt. 29 side, along the Rt. 29 side of the main building, and along a section of the existing mall building adjacent to the Home Depot store. These storage areas will be visible from the ECs, though at varying degrees. Proposed screening includes canopies partially over the garden center, fencing around the garden center and tool rental center, landscaping in various locations, and an option for fencing along Rio Rd. The various fences proposed for the site use a combination of vertical metal fence, chain link, and expanded metal mesh. The applicant has indicated that this combination of materials has not yet been installed at a Home Depot store. When used, the chain link is not the outermost layer of the fence. This could eliminate the utilitarian character of the material. As such, it could be an acceptable component of the design. The layered design would not provide complete screening but could provide enough screening to sufficiently limit visual impacts given the distances and available vantage points. A mock-up of the fencing could resolve any uncertainties. Some garden centers stack products higher than the fence that encloses the space. This creates a disorganized, disorderly, and unattractive appearance. Limiting the height of stored products to the height of the fence would be appropriate. The varying fence heights may pose a challenge in this regard. Storage racks interior to the garden center could be taller than 12’ and, depending on	Provide a mockup of the various garden center fence designs for ARB approval prior to approval of the building permit for the Home Depot store. Products for storage, display and/or sale must not be stacked higher than the shortest garden center fence. Consider providing the garden center fence at a consistent height.
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.		

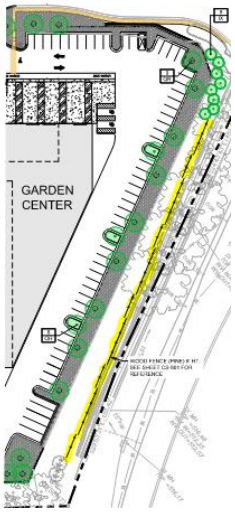
		layout, products stored at the taller 20’ fence height might be viewed above and beyond the 12’ fence. However, viewers would likely need to be positioned at a distance from the garden center to see this condition due to the location of the lower garden center canopies. A consistent fence height could resolve the problem but could also increase the amount of 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.	Stormwater features are not expected to have a significant visual impact on the EC streets.	None.
	Lighting		
	General Guidelines		
22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets;	Spillover will be reviewed with the final site plan.	None at this time.
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.	Light fixtures are proposed to be mounted on poles that are attached to the garden center fence, extend above the garden center, and shine into it. They are proposed with a color temperature of 4000K, which exceeds the guideline.	Limit the color temperature of garden center light fixtures to 3000K maximum.
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.		
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.	A maximum of 20 fc is recommended for the Home Depot parking lot, as is standard in the ECs. For a coordinated appearance, a 20 fc maximum is also recommended for the outdoor display areas. No wall- or ground-mounted fixtures are shown illuminating the exterior of the garden center.	Limit outdoor illumination levels to 20 fc maximum at the ground. Confirm that no wall- or ground-mounted light fixtures are proposed to illuminate the outdoor display areas or show them on the plan and provide all details for
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.		

			review.
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.	The light fixtures that shine into the fenced garden center are proposed with a black finish.	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.	Parking lot lighting will be reviewed with the final site plan.	None at this time.
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 will be needed on the site plan.	None at this time.
	Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting		
30	light used for decorative effect shall: 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.	Decorative lighting for storage areas is not included in the proposal.	None.
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.		
	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.	Lawns are not included in the proposal and are not consistent with the commercial character of the area. Trees along the EC streets would help integrate the building and display areas into the corridors. Planting trees along Rt. 29 where there are currently none would enhance visual order along the corridor.	Provide EC frontage trees along Rt. 29.
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	The Home Depot parcel extends to Rt. 29. There are no street trees existing or proposed along the Rt. 29 frontage. Given the extent of the redevelopment that is proposed, the standard shade and ornamental trees along the Rt. 29 frontage would be appropriate.	Provide EC frontage trees along Rt. 29. Provide a detail showing how the new screening along the Rio frontage

	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.	At the required 35’ spacing, 14 street trees are required along Rio Rd. There are 5 existing mature oak trees located on the property line along the northwestern half of the frontage. They are spaced approximately 45-50’ apart. 52 Schipka English Laurel are proposed in a row on the Home Depot side of those oaks. Also proposed are 14 new Nellie Stevens Holly trees continuing the row of oaks to the south, though the holly are shifted to be on site. An additional 8 Nellie Stevens Hollies are proposed in an irregular row at the north end of the shrub row, rounding the curve at the entrance into the site. The hollies grow to a height of 15’ to 30’ and a width of 8’ to 25’. They are shown spaced approximately 11.5’ apart and are suited to establishing a hedge. There are power and telephone lines along the Rio frontage, approximately 13’ from the centerline of the proposed trees, and the ground slopes steeply down beginning a short distance from the guard rail along the sidewalk to the retaining wall at the parking lot. It isn’t clear that there is sufficient space for the proposed planting.	will work with the available planting area, easements, utilities, topography, sidewalk, and guardrails. Eliminate the screening fence buffer alternative.

A “buffer alternative” is also proposed for screening along Rio Rd. Its primary feature is a 6’-tall staggered wood fence. A fence of that design, height, and length would appear out of character in this location, in such close proximity to the EC street, and landscaping would still be needed for consistency with ARB-approved screening fence criteria. A landscape-only solution is more appropriate for this location.



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.	This guideline will be reviewed with the final site plan.	None at this time.
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.	This guideline will be reviewed with the final site plan.	None at this time.
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 inches in height.	Some trees are proposed in a new planting bed at the base of the retaining wall parallel to Rio Rd. A row of parking spaces is proposed along the planting bed. Most of the row is also designated for temporary staging of bagged mulch, stones, and soil. There appears to be potential for the stacked items, and the moving of those items, to potentially damage the trees. The requirement for interior parking lot trees will be reviewed with the final site plan	Show how the new trees along the retaining wall will be protected from storage-related damage.
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.	No trees are proposed directly adjacent to the building wall; however, some trees are proposed in tree islands along the travelway that is adjacent to the Rt. 29 side of the building. Seasonal products proposed for display along the front of the building include plants on tables and racks.	None.

37	Plant species: a. Plant species required should be as approved by the Staff based upon but not limited to the *Generic Landscape Plan Recommended Species List* and *Native Plants for Virginia Landscapes (Appendix D)*.	Plant species have not yet been identified.	None at this time.
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 note will be needed on the landscape plan.	None at this time.
	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.	These guidelines were reviewed with the initial site plan and will be revisited with the final site plan. Adding trees along Rt. 29 and Rio Rd. would contribute to an organized development plan.	See landscape recommendations.
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 *Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance* 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 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.	Grading on the Rio Rd. side of the property is proposed to further flatten the site and establish a finished floor elevation of approximately 492' for the store. Retaining walls would be extended along the east side of the travelway that connects the site to Rio Rd., and a new planting bed would be created at the base of the existing retaining wall that runs parallel to Rio. Nine new Red Oaks are shown in this new bed. The elevation of Rio Rd. ranges from 513' to 516' along this frontage. Consequently, these trees will need to reach at least 25' tall before they have any visual impact on the development as viewed from Rio Rd. 	None at this time.
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	This guideline will be reviewed with the final site plan.	None at this time.

	erosion and sediment control plans.		
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.	This guideline will be reviewed with the final site plan.	None at this time.
43	Preservation areas should be protected from storage or movement of heavy equipment within this area.	This guideline will be reviewed with the final site plan.	None at this time.
44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.	Stormwater features are not expected to have a significant visual impact on the EC streets.	None.

Figure 1: Project location

Figures 2a and 2b: Views of the site from the Rio Rd. Entrance Corridor. Rio Rd. is elevated approximately 20' above the Sears parking lot.

Figure 3: View of the site from the Rt. 29 Entrance Corridor.

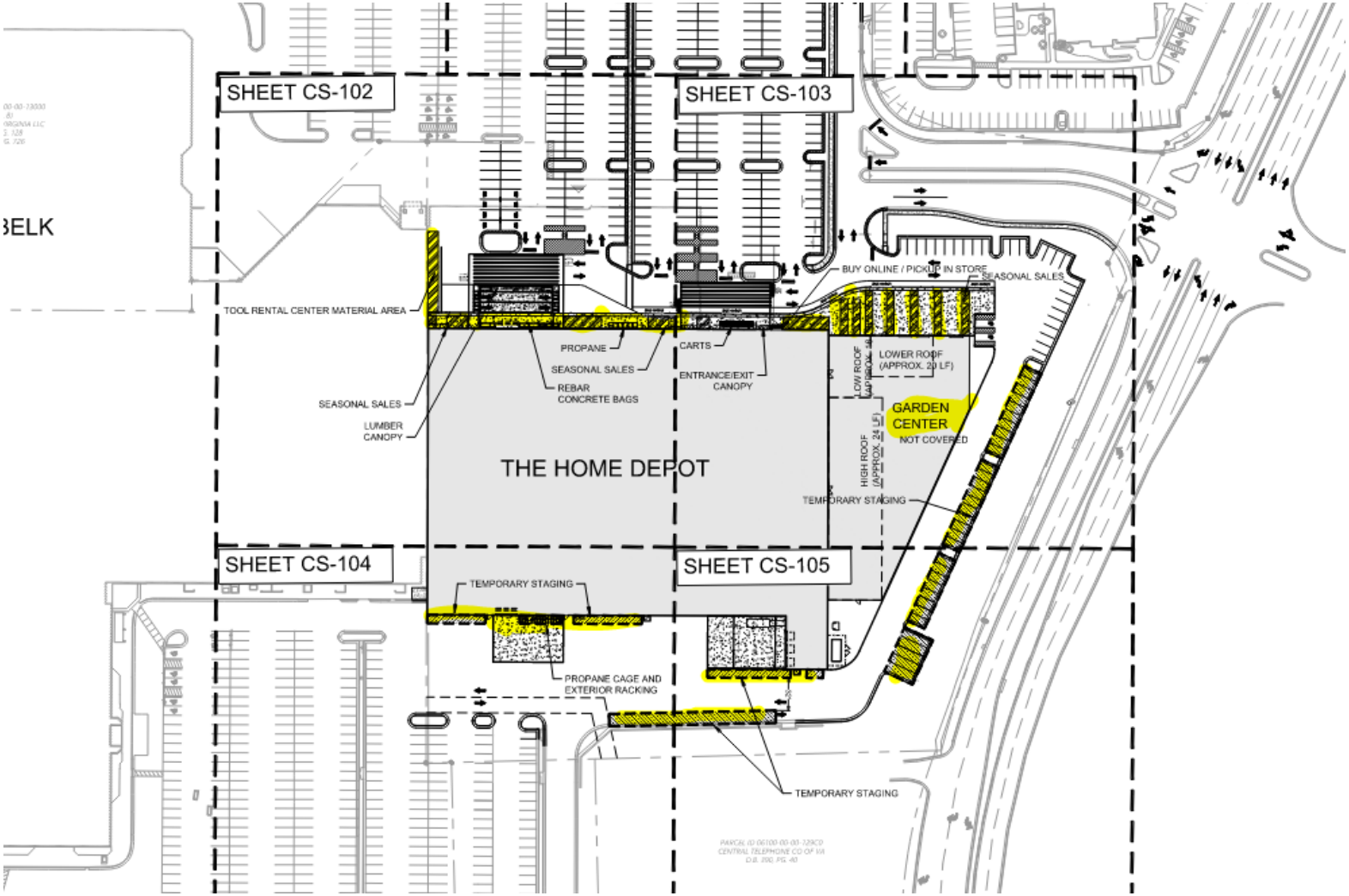


Figure 4: Home Depot Plan with outdoor display areas highlighted.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attach. 1: SP2023-07 Home Depot Site Plan
- Attach. 2: SP2023-07 Home Depot architectural and display drawings

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. Visibility of the products for storage, display and sale.
2. Garden center building materials: composite wood, translucent fiberglass, white canopies
3. Garden center fence: layered design, chain link, fence heights
4. Trees and shrubs proposed for Rio Rd. frontage and available planting area
5. The need for frontage planting on Rt. 29

Staff recommends the following additional information be provided for ARB review prior to the ARB acting on the request for the Special Use Permit. The following motion is recommended:

I recommend that the following additional information be provided for ARB review prior to the ARB acting on the request for the Special Use Permit:

1. Revise the drawings to indicate that the vertical metal fence of fence 3 will be black.
2. Indicate on drawing DD02-01 the material and color of all the garden center canopies and the house plant enclosure roof.
3. Indicate on the plans the color of the Garden Center wood siding.
4. Provide an alternative to the translucent fiberglass.
5. Consider providing the garden center fence at a consistent height.
6. Confirm that no wall- or ground-mounted light fixtures are proposed outside the garden area or show them on the plan and provide all details for review.
7. Provide a detail showing how the new screening along the Rio frontage will work with the available planting area, easements, utilities, topography, sidewalk and guardrails.
8. Show how the new trees along the retaining wall will be protected from storage-related damage.

Should the ARB choose to act on the request for the Special Use Permit without additional information for review, staff recommends the following motion:

I move that the ARB recommend approval of the Special Use Permit with the following conditions:

1. Translucent fiberglass must not be used in the garden center design.
2. A mockup of the various garden center fence designs must be provided for ARB review and approval prior to approval of the building permit for the Home Depot store.
3. Products for storage, display and/or sale must not be stacked higher than the shortest garden center fence.
4. The color temperature of garden center light fixtures must not exceed 3000K.
5. Outdoor illumination, including illumination of items for storage, display, and sale, must not exceed 20 fc at the ground.
6. All outdoor illumination must be full cutoff fixtures.
7. Large shade trees, 3½” caliper at planting, spaced 35’ on center, and interspersed ornamental trees are required along the Rt. 29 frontage of parcel 61-132.
8. The Rio Rd. frontage of parcel 61-132 must be landscaped as shown on the Kimley Horn Home Depot Plan dated 7/24/2023, except that: a) The “buffer alternative” is not approved, and b) The fence adjacent to Rio Rd. is not approved.