

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2023-114: Flow Kia
Review Type	Preliminary Architectural Review
Parcel Identification	07800-00-00-009A0 and 07800-00-00-011B1
Location	1390 Richmond Road (Fig. 1)
Zoned	Highway Commercial (HC) / Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Flow 1390 Richmond LLC / Design Develop, LLC (Kevin Schafer)
Magisterial District	Rivanna
Proposal	To demolish and replace the southern portion, and renovate the northern portion, of the Kia auto dealership building.
Context	The subject parcel is on the north side of the Rt. 250 East EC, a corridor that is home to several other auto dealerships. The Kia building is the last remnant of popular mid-century roadside architecture that once predominated along this street.
Visibility	The proposed building will be readily visible from the EC street.
ARB Meeting Date	February 19, 2024
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

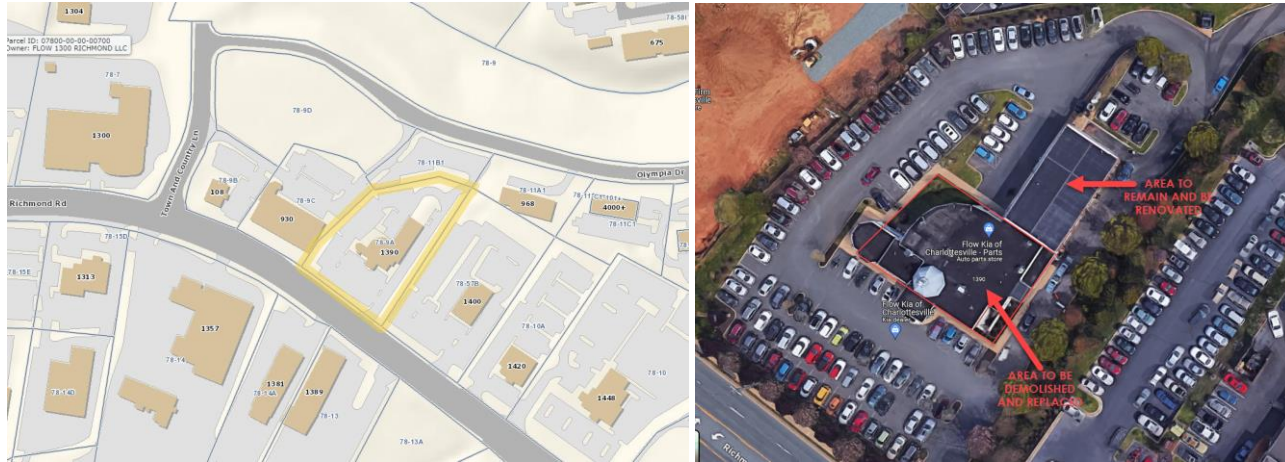


Fig. 1: Project location (left) and proposed areas of demolition, replacement, and renovation (right).

SITE/PROJECT HISTORY

The Kia building was originally constructed as a restaurant associated with the Town & Country Motor Lodge (originally located just to the west), both designed by local architect Stanislaw Makielski in the mid-1950s. This section of Rt. 250 was home to several buildings in popular roadside architecture styles. With its dome based on that of Monticello, this building was an icon and is the last remnant of the group. (Fig. 2) Additions to the building were approved in 2008. Removal of the dome and additional changes and additions were approved in 2016.

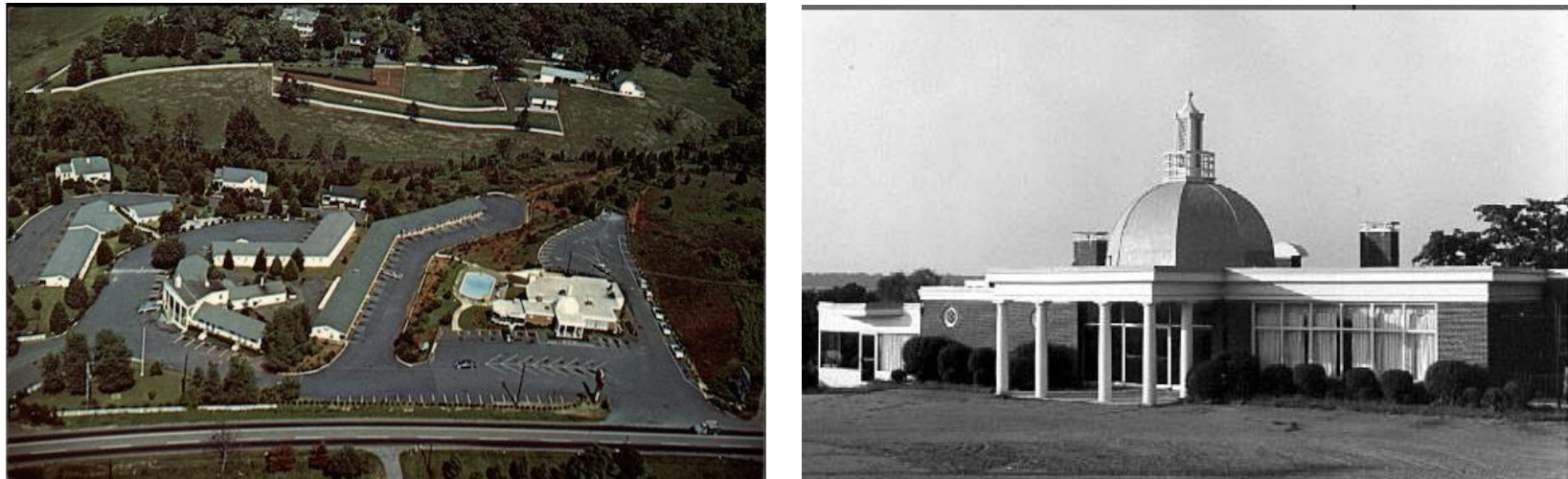


Fig. 2: Historic views of the Town & Country Motor Lodge and restaurant. (sources: cardcow.com and Virginia Department of Historic Resources)

ANALYSIS

Note: This review is focused on the proposed architectural design. The proposed changes will require an amendment to the site plan. Both the site and architectural designs will return to the ARB for additional review in the future.

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	<i>Purpose, compatibility, structure design</i>		
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.	The proposed design does not reflect the traditional architecture of the area. A new building with materials compatible with those in the surrounding context could contribute to orderly and attractive development on the corridor.	See architectural recommendations below.
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.		
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.	The proposed building features a heavy black band of ACM panels floating above an expanse of storefront glass. An aluminum curtain wall system and a metallic frame around the main entrance are proposed. At the side elevations the ends of the black band and storefront windows are cut at an angle where they meet painted EIFS walls. These forms and materials are consistent with the designs of other contemporary auto dealerships along this corridor. Metal panels, geometric forms, large areas of storefront/showroom glass, and entry elements are typical. However, the nearby buildings typically include a non-transparent feature that grounds the building, which is not present in the proposed design. The black ACM band is expected to be the predominant feature of the building. Though it is composed of a series of metal panels, it is anticipated that the panels will not add texture or scale to the band as viewed from the street, and the degree of reflectivity of the panels is unclear. The metallic ACM of the entrance surround appears highly reflective in some of the images, and the aluminum curtain wall system and the surround may not contribute scale as viewed from the street. The result may be a dark band floating above a transparent box. Revising the design to ground the building, emphasize vertical supports, establish rhythm, and/or reduce reflectivity could establish a stronger tie to the historic architecture of the area and the	Provide samples of the black and silver ACM and the Coventry Gray paint for review. Revise the architectural design to ground the building, emphasize vertical supports, establish rhythm, and/or reduce reflectivity.
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.		
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.		

		surrounding context.	
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	Silver ACM panels frame the entrance at the center of the front elevation, reducing the scale for pedestrians entering the building. The frame isn't expected to impact the scale of the building as viewed from the street.	
13	Any appearance of "blankness" resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.	Blankness is not a characteristic of the design.	None.
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	A single building is proposed.	None.
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	The proposal is a version of Kia's trademark design. Trademark elements include the heavy black metal band with brand signage over the expansive showroom glass and the metallic entrance surround.	See architectural recommendations above.
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>	The narrative states that the windows will not be highly tinted or reflective. The architectural elevation sheet includes a note with the VLT and VLR requirements.	Provide the specifications on the window glass to confirm conformity with the guidelines requirements.
	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 dumpster location at the rear of the property was approved with the previous site plan. It is not visible from the EC street.	Show mechanical equipment locations and heights on the roof plan and building elevations.
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 narrative states that rooftop mechanical units will be screened by the building's parapet and service equipment will be located inside the building or at the rear of the parcel.	
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.	It is anticipated that existing stormwater facilities will be used.	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 note will be needed on the site and architectural drawings.	Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the site and architectural drawings.
22-31	Lighting	Information on exterior illumination of the building is not included in the current submittal. Some of the nationwide Kia image examples show lights mounted under the black band.	Provide information on exterior lighting for review.
7-8, 32-38	Landscaping		
	<i>Site Development and layout, Development pattern</i>		
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 proposed design would maintain the general site layout and building orientation. The proposed building is approximately 8' taller than the existing building. The additional height will block a portion of the view beyond the building to the northwest.	None at this time.
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.		
	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.	A new 6' retaining wall is shown along the east side of the site, extending southward from an existing wall. Placing a wall in this location will likely impact much of the landscaping approved in this area with the previous site plan. A Lumos Networks easement is shown in this area.	With the site plan amendment, provide a planting plan that shows landscaping in the vicinity of the new retaining wall consistent with the previous approval. Provide documentation that the proposed work is allowed in the Lumos Networks easement.
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.		
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.		
44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.	Changes to the existing drainage patterns are not expected.	None at this time.
	SIGNS	Illuminated signs are shown on the proposed building elevations. Signs require separate permits. Review and approval of the wall signs are not included in this application.	Wall signs require separate applications.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Primary points of discussion:

1. Possible revisions to ground the building, acknowledge vertical supports, establish rhythm, and/or reduce reflectivity.
2. The reflectivity of proposed building materials.

Recommended revisions to the proposal:

1. Provide samples of the black and silver ACM and the Coventry Gray paint for review.
2. Revise the architectural design to ground the building, acknowledge vertical supports, establish rhythm, and/or reduce reflectivity.
3. Provide the specifications on the window glass to confirm conformity with the guidelines requirements.
4. Show mechanical equipment locations and heights on the roof plan and building elevations.
5. Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the site and architectural drawings. "Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated."
6. Provide information on exterior lighting for review.
7. With the site plan amendment, provide a planting plan that shows landscaping in the vicinity of the new retaining wall consistent with the previous approval. Provide documentation that the proposed work is allowed in the Lumos Networks easement.
8. Wall signs require separate applications.

Possible motions:

- I move to approve the list of changes outlined in the staff report to be reviewed at a future ARB meeting.
- I move to approve the list of changes outlined in the staff report to be reviewed at a future ARB meeting, amended as follows (state amendments).

ATTACHMENTS

Attach. 1: [ARB2023-114 Flow Kia: Architectural Drawings](#)