

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2024-59: Community Christian Academy
Review Type	Major Amendment
Parcel Identification	06100-00-00-12700
Location	114 Old Brook Road (Figure 1)
Zoned	Residential (R2), Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Alliance Bible Church of Charlottesville et al, Trustees / Kelsey Schlein (Shimp Engineering)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	To construct a modular classroom building behind the existing parsonage, and to undertake associated site improvements. The modular building would be located approximately 210' from the property line along Rio Road and 260' from the sidewalk.
Context	The site is located on the north side of Rio Road East, where there is a mix of commercial and residential structures ranging from small to medium/large in scale. Brick is a predominant material in the area.
Visibility	The modular classroom will have some limited visibility from the Entrance Corridor.
ARB Meeting Date	November 4, 2024
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

A Special Use Permit (SP) was approved on September 4, 2024, to add a modular classroom building to this site. ARB staff provided recommendations during the review of the SP, most of which focused on adding landscaping to mitigate the visual impacts of the structure. The approved concept plan (Figure 2) showed the modular building envelope in the general location of the existing parsonage, with a landscape buffer between the modular building and the parking lot. The Zoning Division has determined that the current proposal, which retains the parsonage and places the modular building to the east of that building, is consistent with the approved concept plan.

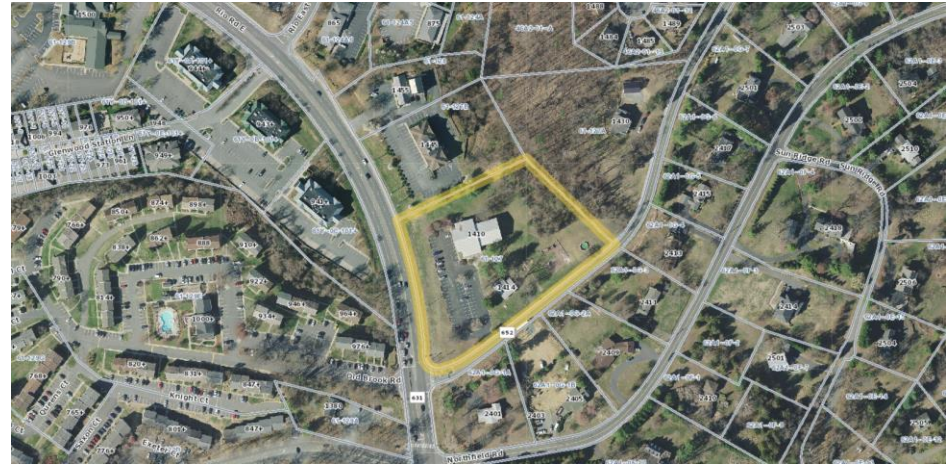


Figure 1: Project location at the northeast corner of Rio Road and Old Brook Road

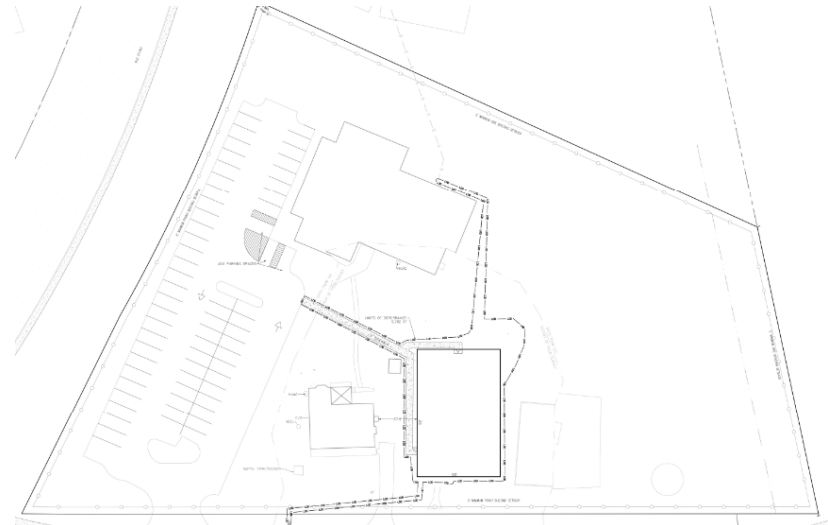
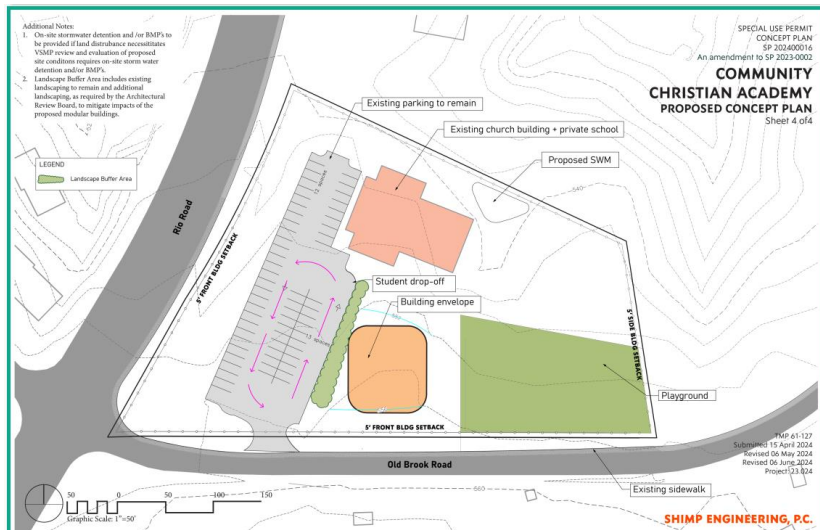


Figure 2: Concept Plan approved with SP-2024-16 (left) and proposed Site Development Plan (right)

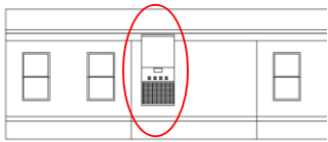
ANALYSIS

NOTE: The applicant's architectural drawings label the modular building elevation facing Old Brook Road as South, facing the existing parsonage and Rio Road as West, and facing the existing church as North. This report uses the same naming conventions.

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	<i>Purpose; Compatibility with significant historic sites; 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 building is a Titan prefabricated modular structure with Hi Rib Steel walls in “ivory” with white trim. Each building elevation has multiple windows, and the site plan shows building entrances on the north and west sides. The structure has minimal detailing, including horizontal trim that defines a base and a top. The applicant has indicated that the building in the following image is similar in appearance to the proposed structure.	Provide physical samples of proposed building colors that are consistent and compatible with existing nearby buildings and that successfully blend into the surrounding context. Add dimensions to the architectural elevations.
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		
		The proposed modular building has little connection to the historic architecture of the County. Its form, materials and features are distinctly utilitarian. With the addition of this building, orderly and attractive development along the Entrance Corridor can be maintained with appropriate placement and coloring of the structure, and with landscaping added to mitigate visual impacts. A physical sample of the proposed building color is needed to confirm	

	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.	compatibility with the surrounding context. The architectural elevations do not include dimensions.	
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.		
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	The windows and trim help mitigate the length of the elevations. The distance from the street and intervening landscaping are expected to help mitigate the building scale as viewed from the street. However, the entrances shown on the elevations do not match those in the floor plan or site plan.	Coordinate the architectural elevations, floor plans and site plan regarding building entrances.
	<i>Compatibility with the character of the Entrance Corridor</i>		
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.	The form and material of the modular building aren't expected to support a cohesive design across the site, but the distance from the EC street, and the existing parsonage and landscaping to remain are expected to help mitigate visual impacts.	See other recommendations.
12	Architecture proposed within the Entrance Corridor should use forms, shapes, scale, and materials to create a cohesive whole.		
13	Any appearance of "blankness" resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or	The modular structure is not blank, but its lack of detail and character result in a monotonous	See landscape recommendations.

	both.	appearance. The appearance is expected to be mitigated in part by existing and proposed landscaping and its location behind the parsonage.	
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.
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	The proposal is for a modular structure with a character and appearance typical of the building type. Visual impacts are expected to be mitigated by distance from the street and landscaping.	See 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: <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 information on window glass was provided. Given the distance from the street and the location of existing buildings and landscaping, the type of glass is not expected to have a significant impact on the EC street.	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.	The proposed modular building would have HVAC equipment mounted on its exterior walls. The elevations show 4 units on the west elevation (see example circled in red, below), but the locations are shown differently on the floor plan. The units measure approximately 3.5' wide x 7' tall. Locations on the west elevation are not optimal for an integrated architectural design, but the unit size, the distance from the EC street, and the intervening building and landscaping could help minimize impacts. Adjusting proposed evergreen screening locations to align with HVAC locations for more complete screening would be appropriate.	Coordinate the architectural elevations and floor plan regarding HVAC locations.
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.		Revise proposed evergreen tree locations for optimal screening of HVAC equipment.
19	Screening devices should be compatible with the design of the buildings and surrounding natural vegetation and may consist of: a. Walls, b. Plantings, and c. Fencing.		

			
21	The following note should be added to the site plan and the architectural plan: “Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated.”	The note does not appear on the plan. As proposed, equipment will be minimally visible from the street.	
	Lighting		
	<i>General Guidelines</i>		
22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets;	The lighting plan shows no spillover onto adjacent properties or streets.	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.	The proposed fixture is a full cutoff fixture.	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.	3.6 fc is the maximum lighting level shown on the plan.	None.
25	Light should have the appearance of white light with a warm soft glow; however, a consistent appearance throughout a site or development is required. Consequently, if existing lamps that emit non-white light are to remain, new lamps may be required to match them.	The proposed color temperature is 3000K, which is expected to be a warm white.	None.
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.	Pole mounted fixtures are not proposed.	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.		
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.	Two full cutoff wall fixtures are proposed with minimal illumination at ground level. Visual impacts are expected to be minimal.	None.

29	The following note should be included on the lighting plan: “Each outdoor luminaire equipped with a lamp that emits 3,000 or more initial lumens shall be a full cutoff luminaire and shall be arranged or shielded to reflect light away from adjoining residential districts and away from adjacent roads. The spillover of lighting from luminaires onto public roads and property in residential or rural areas zoning districts shall not exceed one half footcandle.”	The note appears on the lighting plan.	None.
	<i>Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting</i>		
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.	No decorative lighting is proposed.	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.	There are 5 existing shade trees along the EC side of the parking lot. Their spacing ranges from approximately 62' to 92', which does not meet the guidelines requirement for frontage trees or perimeter parking lot trees. The site plan shows that the right-of-way is deep along Rio Road – there is approximately 50' from the sidewalk to the property line. Overhead lines run parallel to the EC street, a few feet from the sidewalk, and from the property across Old Brook Road. The lines are not shown on the site plan. No new shade or ornamental trees are proposed along the Rio property line, but trees in this location could be more successful at integrating the development into the corridor and establishing an orderly appearance along the corridor than landscaping adjacent to the modular building, while offsetting the visual impacts of the modular building.	Revise the site plan to show existing utilities and easements.
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.		To increase the orderly appearance of the site and to better integrate the development into the corridor, add trees so that the landscaping along the Rio property line meets EC guidelines: large shade trees, 3½" caliper at planting, 35' on center, and interspersed ornamentals.
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.	Two trees are located along the Old Brook Road frontage, spaced approximately 50' apart and	Show all proposed landscaping on site.

	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.	flanking the site entrance. One additional tree is shown along Old Brook, in the right of way near the driveway leading to the parsonage.	Add trees so that the landscaping along Old Brook Road is consistent with EC guidelines: large trees, 2½” caliper at planting, 40’ 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.	A mix of existing and proposed trees is shown along the west side of the proposed sidewalk.	None.
35	Landscaping of parking areas: a. Large trees should align the perimeter of parking areas, located 40 feet on center. Trees should be planted in the interior of parking areas at the rate of one tree for every 10 parking spaces provided and should be evenly distributed throughout the interior of the parking area. b. Trees required by the preceding paragraph should measure 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground); should be evenly spaced; and should be of a species common to the area. Such trees should be planted 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.	No changes are proposed to the existing parking lot. The lot has 2 interior trees. Existing trees, including two at the northern end of the lot, 2 on the east side, and 5 on the west side could count as perimeter parking lot trees, though the quantity and spacing do not meet the guidelines requirement. The east side of the parking lot is another location where added landscaping could help mitigate the impacts of the modular building and contribute to a more coordinated and orderly site layout. A landscape buffer on the east parking lot perimeter is consistent with the approved concept plan. (Figure 3)	Consider adding trees and shrubs along the eastern perimeter of the parking lot to help mitigate the visual impacts of the modular building and to increase the orderly appearance of the site layout and landscaping.
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.	A mix of 2 large shade trees, 4 evergreen trees, 3 deciduous shrubs, and 3 evergreen shrubs are proposed between the parsonage and the modular building and along the east side of the driveway leading to the parsonage. The spacing of the plants is very close, some look cramped between the existing and proposed buildings, and one tree is shown off-site. Trees in this area could reduce the visibility of the modular building and its mechanical equipment, but the	Show all proposed landscaping on site. Revise the landscape plan to show evergreen trees near the modular building to screen HVAC equipment and large shade trees added at parking lot perimeters

		cramped layout doesn't actively contribute to an orderly site layout or plant health. Limiting planting in this location to evergreens for screening HVAC equipment, and providing shade trees along parking perimeters could offset visual impacts of the modular building and contribute to an organized and integrated development along the corridor. A landscape buffer on the east parking lot perimeter is consistent with the approved concept plan. (Figure 3)	consistent with EC guidelines: large shade trees, 3½" caliper at planting, 35' on center; interspersed ornamentals; and shrubs, 24" in height at planting.
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 proposed plants are included in the County's plant list.	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 note appears on the landscape plan.	None.
	Site Development and layout; Development pattern		
6	Site development should be sensitive to the existing natural landscape and should contribute to the creation of an organized development plan. This may be accomplished, to the extent practical, by preserving the trees and rolling terrain typical of the area; planting new trees along streets and pedestrian ways and choosing species that reflect native forest elements; insuring that any grading will blend into the surrounding topography thereby creating a continuous landscape; preserving, to the extent practical, existing significant river and stream valleys which may be located on the site and integrating these features into the design of surrounding development; and limiting the building mass and height to a scale that does not overpower the natural settings of the site, or the Entrance Corridor.	The proposed building is not situated parallel to the EC street or the church building, but it is aligned with the existing parsonage and Old Brook Road, which appears appropriate for its location. The deep setback from the EC minimizes the impact of the orientation, as does the location behind the parsonage as viewed from Rio Rd. Little grading is proposed, but 3 existing trees would be removed to accommodate the new building.	None.
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.		

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.	Minimal grading is proposed at the north corner of the proposed building. It is not expected to have an impact on 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	A 24" Mulberry is located southeast of an existing metal shed and very close to the proposed sidewalk along the west side of the modular building. No information is provided to	Show tree protection for all existing trees to remain. Provide details on how the 24" mulberry

	coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping and erosion and sediment control plans.	show how the tree will be protected during construction.	will be protected during construction.
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.		
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 surface runoff structures or detention ponds are proposed.	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.		

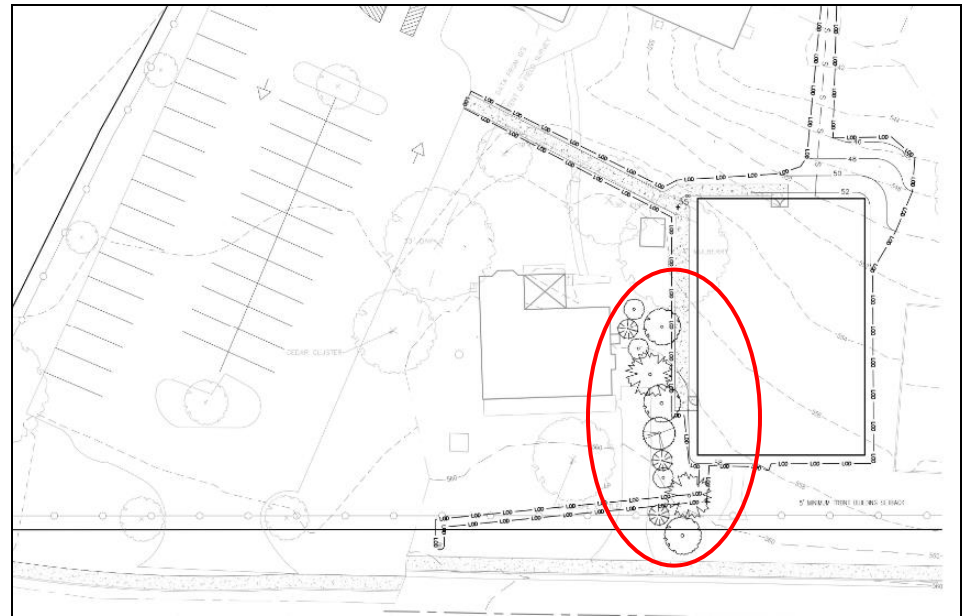
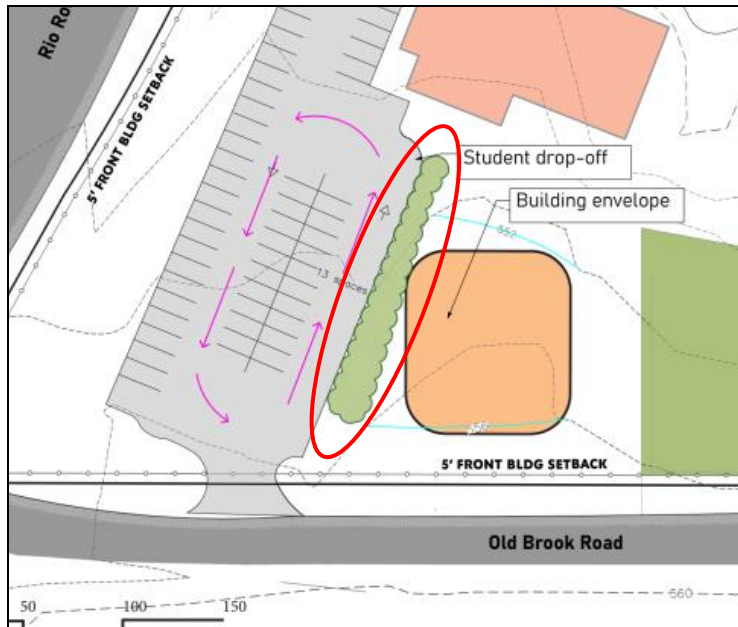


Figure 3: Landscape buffer location on approved Concept Plan (Left) and proposed landscaping with proposed Site Development Plan (Right).

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. Anticipated visibility of the modular building
2. Appropriate methods for mitigating the utilitarian appearance of the modular building
3. Appropriate locations for landscaping to mitigate visual impacts

Staff recommends the following revisions to the proposal:

1. Provide physical samples of proposed building colors that are consistent and compatible with existing nearby buildings and that successfully blend into the surrounding context.
2. Add dimensions to the architectural elevations.
3. Coordinate the architectural elevations, floor plans and site plan regarding building entrances.
4. Coordinate the architectural elevations and floor plan regarding HVAC locations.
5. Revise proposed evergreen tree locations for optimal screening of HVAC equipment.
6. Revise the site plan to show existing utilities and easements.
7. To increase the orderly appearance of the site and to better integrate the development into the corridor, add trees so that the landscaping along the Rio property line meets EC guidelines: large shade trees, 3½” caliper at planting, 35’ on center, and interspersed ornamentals.
8. Show all proposed landscaping on site.
9. Add trees so that the landscaping along Old Brook Road is consistent with EC guidelines: large trees, 2½” caliper at planting, 40’ on center.
10. Consider adding trees and shrubs along the eastern perimeter of the parking lot to help mitigate the visual impacts of the modular building and to increase the orderly appearance of the site layout and landscaping.
11. Revise the landscape plan to show evergreen trees near the modular building to screen HVAC equipment and large shade trees added at parking lot perimeters consistent with EC guidelines: large shade trees, 3½” caliper at planting, 35’ on center; interspersed ornamentals; and shrubs, 24” in height at planting.
12. Show tree protection for all existing trees to remain. Provide details on how the 24” mulberry will be protected during construction.

ATTACHMENTS

Attach. 1: [ARB2024-59: Community Christian Academy site plan](#)

Attach. 2: [ARB2024-59: Community Christian Academy architectural plans](#)