

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.
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 visibility from the Entrance Corridor.
ARB Meeting Date	February 3, 2025
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

The ARB conducted a preliminary review of this proposal on November 4, 2024. Comments from that review are included in the Analysis section of this report.

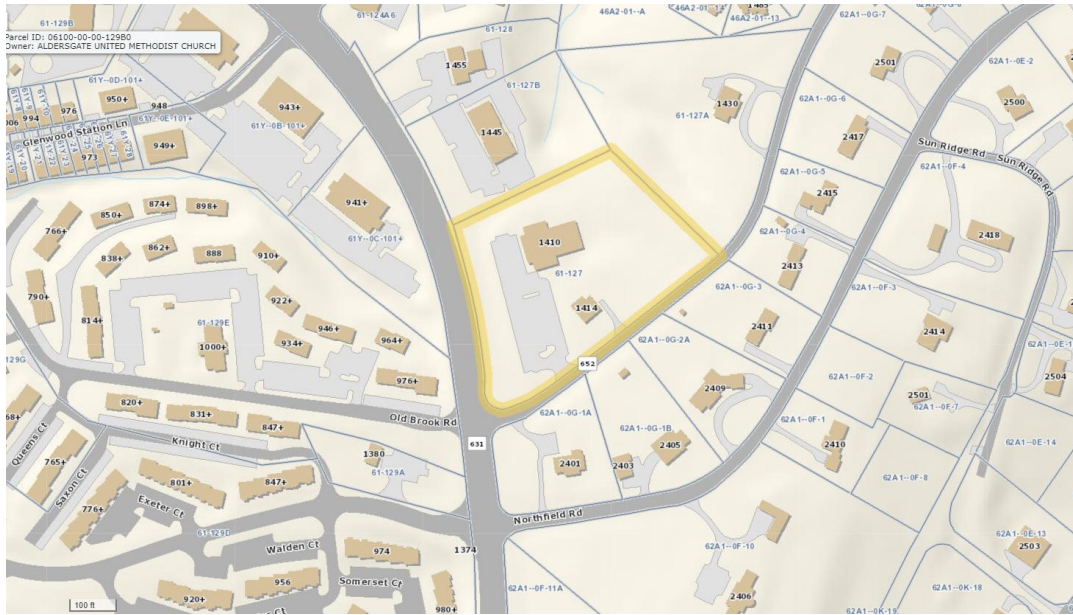


Figure 1: Project location at the northeast corner of Rio Road and Old Brook Road

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	RECOMMENDATION 11/4/24	ISSUE 2/3/25	RECOMMENDATION 2/3/25
	<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.	Provide physical samples of proposed building colors that are consistent and compatible with existing nearby buildings and that successfully blend into the surrounding context.	A Hardi Panel sample and color chips for the skirt (SW 6101), body (SW 6106) and trim (SW 9180) of the modular unit have been provided. The colors are coordinated with each other and are expected to complement the existing church building.	None.
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.	Add dimensions to the architectural elevations.	Dimensions have been added to the elevations. The proposed modular unit is 93.3’ long and 60’ wide. Maximum height is 13.9’.	
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.			
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	Coordinate the architectural elevations, floor plans and site plan regarding building entrances.	Entrances are proposed on the north and west elevations. These entrances have been coordinated among the various plans.	None.
	<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.	See other recommendations.	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 are expected to help mitigate visual impacts.	None.
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 both.	See landscape recommendations.		
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	None.	No connecting devices are proposed.	None.
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	See landscape recommendations.	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.	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>	None.	The type of window glass is not expected to have a significant impact on the EC given the proposed location of the modular building.	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.	Coordinate the architectural elevations and floor plan regarding HVAC locations.	Building mounted mechanical equipment has been shifted to the east elevation, which has no visibility from the EC. The floor plan has been coordinated with	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.	Revise proposed evergreen tree locations for optimal screening of HVAC equipment.	the elevations.	
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.	Consider painting the mechanical units to match the siding.		
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.”			
	Lighting			
	<i>General Guidelines</i>			
22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets;	None.	Wall-mounted fixtures are proposed at the modular building entrances. The fixtures meet the lighting guidelines.	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.	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.	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.	None.		
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.	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.	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.”	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.	None.	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.			
	<i>Landscaping</i>			
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.	Revise the site plan to show existing utilities and easements. 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	The water lines and overhead utilities are shown on Sheet C3 of the site plan. Two Northern Red Oak (large shade, 3½" caliper at planting), three Serviceberry (ornamental, 6-8' tall at planting) and two White Fringetree (ornamental, 6-8' tall at planting) are proposed between the Rio Road property line and the parking lot, in line with existing trees and shrubs. With the existing trees, large shade trees are provided	Add shrubs, 24" in height at planting, to complete the row of shrubs along the Rio Road property line.
8	Continuity within the Entrance Corridor should be obtained by planting different types of plant materials that share similar characteristics. Such common elements allow for more flexibility in the design of structures because common landscape features will help to harmonize the appearance of development as seen from the street upon which the Corridor is centered.			
32	Landscaping along the frontage of Entrance Corridor streets should include the			

	following: a. Large shade trees should be planted parallel to the Entrance Corridor Street. Such trees should be at least 3½ inches caliper (measured 6 inches above the ground) and should be of a plant species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 35 feet on center. b. Flowering ornamental trees of a species common to the area should be interspersed among the trees required by the preceding paragraph. The ornamental trees need not alternate one for one with the large shade trees. They may be planted among the large shade trees in a less regular spacing pattern. c. In situations where appropriate, a three or four board fence or low stone wall, typical of the area, should align the frontage of the Entrance Corridor street. d. An area of sufficient width to accommodate the foregoing plantings and fencing should be reserved parallel to the Entrance Corridor street, and exclusive of road right-of-way and utility easements.	EC guidelines: large shade trees, 3½” caliper at planting, 35’ on center, and interspersed ornamentals, and shrubs, 24” in height at planting.	at the required spacing, where space allows outside the RWSA easement. No shrubs have been added along the Rio property line.	
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.	Show all proposed landscaping on site. Add trees so that the landscaping along Old Brook Road is consistent with EC guidelines: large trees, 2½” caliper at planting, 40’ on center.	Eight American Hornbeam (large shade, 2½” at planting) are proposed along Old Brook Road, north of the entrance to the parking lot, with interspersed Serviceberry, White Fringetree, and shrubs. The spacing of the Hornbeam varies; the quantity is consistent with the guidelines requirement.	None.
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.	None.	Two existing trees are shown on the south/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	-	No changes are proposed to the existing parking lot. Trees have been added along the Rio Road property line where easements allow. (See #32.)	None.

	Entrance Corridor streets. Shrubs should measure 24 inches in height.			
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.	Show all proposed landscaping on site. Revise the landscape plan to show evergreen trees near the modular building to screen HVAC equipment.	All proposed landscaping is now shown within the property boundaries. The HVAC equipment has been moved to the east elevation where it will not be visible from the EC street.	None.
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> .	None.	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.”	None.	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.	None.	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.	None.
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.		Little grading is proposed, but four existing trees would be removed to accommodate the new building.	
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.	None.	Minimal grading is proposed at the north corner of the proposed building. Retaining walls, maximum 3' high, are proposed on the northeast and northwest sides of the building, and at the south corner. The grading and walls are not expected to have a significant visual 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 coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping and erosion and sediment control plans.	Show tree protection for all existing trees to remain.	Tree protection fencing is shown for the two trees near the new sidewalk.	None.
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.	None at this time.	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.			

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary point of discussion:

- 1. The need for additional shrubs along the Rio Road property line.

Staff recommends approval with the following revision to the proposal:

- 1. Add shrubs, 24” in height at planting, to complete the row of shrubs along the Rio Road property line.

ATTACHMENTS

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

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