

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2023-107: Barnes Lumber Countywide Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria
Review Type	Work Session - Countywide Certificate of Appropriateness Criteria
Parcel Identification/ Zoning	056A20100071B0/Heavy Industry (HI), 056A2010007100/Downtown Crozet District (DCD), 056A2010002500/Commercial (C1), Entrance Corridor (EC)
Location	5625-5755 The Square, south of the railroad tracks, east of Oak St., north and west of the residences on Hill Top St.
Owner/Applicant	Crozet New Town associates, LLC/BRW Architects (Kurt Keesecker)
Magisterial District	White Hall
Proposal	To establish design criteria for future applications for development of the Barnes Lumber property under the Public Private Partnership category of Countywide Certificates of Appropriateness
Context	The site of the proposed development lies in the heart of Crozet.
Visibility	Development in most of the project area could be visible from the Entrance Corridor.
ARB Meeting Date	January 16, 2024
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

On November 2, 2023 a zoning text amendment adding developments subject to public/private partnerships as a category of Countywide Certificate of Appropriateness was approved by the Board of Supervisors. For each development area that is subject to a public/private partnership, design criteria must be approved by the ARB before staff level review is available for individual development proposals according to those approved criteria. The Barnes Lumber criteria are the first to be reviewed by the ARB under this new category of Countywide Certificate.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	PROPOSED CRITERIA/STANDARD	ISSUE/COMMENTS	RECOMMENDATIONS/ QUESTIONS FOR THE ARB
	Purpose Compatibility with significant historic sites: Compatibility with the character of the Entrance Corridor; Structure design			
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.	Building materials The following materials can only be used if they comprise less than 10% of gross area of façade: 1. Vinyl siding 2. Unpainted CMU 3. Large format (30” or greater) aluminum panels	Vinyl is not an appropriate siding material for the Entrance Corridors. Metal panels other than aluminum could have an inappropriate appearance for the EC. The applicant’s definition of temporary structure includes “no limit on the length of time the structure is installed,” which seems contradictory.	Add vinyl siding to the exclusions. Revise the aluminum panel limitation to focus on metal, generally, and on appropriate shape and configuration.
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.	Façade articulation Façade segment lengths must have a physical or visual break through articulation on an interval of 2x building height (min.); articulation may be: 1. Recess or projection, 6” minimum 2. Change in material, texture, detailing 3. Change in roof line, parapet break, arcades, awnings/canopies	A 6” change in depth is not sufficient to mitigate mass/scale. A change in wall texture may not be distinguishable from the EC street. Change in detailing may not be sufficient to mitigate mass/scale as viewed from the street.	What maximum length of time should be considered temporary? Increase the minimum depth of recesses and projections for greater façade articulation detectable from the EC street.
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.	Exclusions Temporary structures and converted train cars would be exempt from review.	Parapet breaks, arcades, and awnings/canopies may not be sufficient to mitigate mass/scale. Further coordination is needed on current ordinance and building code requirements for temporary structures and converted train cars to	Eliminate texture change as a possible method of articulation or require it in combination with other features. Further clarify the extent of “change in detailing” needed to qualify as a mass/scale mitigation method.
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.		fully understand impacts. The terms “façade” and “elevation” are often confused.	Provide images for consideration illustrating how parapet breaks, arcades, and awnings/canopies can mitigate mass/scale. Clarify that “façade” means any/all building elevations, or revise “façade” to “elevation”. Is there any objection to excluding converted train cars from ARB review?
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.			
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.			
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.	Building transparency 1. 30% minimum ground story transparency measured between 2’ and 12’ above grade. 2. 20% minimum upper story transparency measured floor to floor.	-	-
		Exclusions Murals are allowed on any elevation of the buildings	As written, the criteria would allow for all elevations visible from the EC to be covered with murals. The applicant has indicated that an internal review group would be responsible for reviewing proposed mural content.	Are murals an acceptable blank wall treatment for buildings on this EC? For all building elevations visible from the EC? Should there be a limit to the number of elevations on a single building that can be covered with murals? Across multiple buildings?

				Should murals be subject to ARB review?
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.		Connecting devices are not specifically addressed in the proposal.	-
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.		Trademark buildings are not specifically addressed in the proposal.	-
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>	Building materials Window glass as per ECDG	-	-
	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.	Exclusions Food trucks and associated outdoor dining areas would be exempt from review.	ARB approval is currently not required for food trucks. Outdoor dining areas should be shown on a site plan. Location and any fencing design could have visual impacts on the EC.	Show areas proposed for food trucks and outdoor dining areas on the site plan with fencing location and details.
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.	Fences Equipment, accessory structures and parking areas must be screened from the EC. Fences must be 6' tall.	Trees are proposed on the development side of the fence but could help mitigate the appearance as viewed from the EC if planted on the railroad side of the fence.	Should parking lot trees be located on the EC side of the fences?
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.		Fence designs can vary. Should one or more features (besides height) be required to be consistent?	Clarify that the 6' fence height is a requirement (no shorter, no taller).
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.		Fence materials with durability are needed. Should a range of acceptable/unacceptable fence materials be specified?	Add standards for articulation along the length of fence.
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."		Block lengths are not indicated in the submittal. The lengths appear	Add standards for fence material. No vinyl, no reflective finishes. Should fence designs be

			substantial, which could contribute to negative impacts from fencing. As written, the criteria allow fencing to extend the full length of each block, making fencing the primary element visible from the EC. There are approved Couty-wide fence design criteria that could apply here. (See Attachment 2.) Fences illustrated in the criteria are not solid. And the proposed criteria reference guideline 32c, which would allow for a 3 or 4 board fence. That style of fence would not provide sufficient screening of parking areas.	consistent across individual blocks? Are non-solid fence designs appropriate? Provide a scalable plan.
	Lighting	Wall-mounted light fixtures On facades facing the EC, wall lights must have armatures	The proposal limits fixtures to types mounted at the end of an arm with the light aimed back at the building.	Clarify that criteria to be more specific about what lights with “armatures” allows for.
	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.	EC Frontage Treatment Street trees and fence to be provided along the corridor only where parking is located between a new building and the corridor.	A 6’ EC buffer is illustrated on page 44, but a 5’ fence zone is shown on page 17.	Coordinate the 5’ depth of the EC buffer throughout the document.
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.		The fence zone appears to be a combined fence and tree zone, but it is narrow and the plans show no trees in it.	Illustrate in plan view relative locations of fencing and trees along the EC frontage. Show sufficient planting area for the trees.
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		Some of the 30’ building cylinders look small compared to the EC trees on sheet 40. <i>The criteria would allow for fences</i>	Eliminate the extraneous “buffer” note on page 18. Confirm that the 30’

	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.		<i>the full length of the frontage (only broken by the view corridors), with parking behind the fences, and buildings beyond the parking with murals on all sides visible from the EC.</i>	building heights are represented accurately. Is the character/appearance of the potential development, as described in italics to the left, acceptable for the EC?
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.	Landscaping ECDG street tree and parking area landscaping requirements will not apply to lots south of the new public road.	Visibility of the development is much greater than the area where landscape guidelines would apply.	Should ECDG street tree and parking area requirements apply to lots south of the public road?
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.		Standard site plan street tree requirements will apply to the new public road regardless of the countywide criteria.	
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.	Landscaping 1. Parking area tree and shrub requirements will be met for parking areas located between new buildings and the corridor. 2. ECDG street tree and parking area landscaping requirements will not apply to lots south of the new public road.		
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	EC Frontage Treatment Street trees and fence to be provided along the corridor only where	The criteria do not provide for trees to soften the appearance of long elevations facing the corridor.	Should trees be provided along the corridor when buildings are proposed

	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.	parking is located between a new building and the corridor.		without parking lots between the building and the railroad?
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> .	Visual Connections Plant species would be taken from the County-approved list.	-	-
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.”	-	This note will be needed on future site plans.	-
	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.	View Corridors 1. Establish view corridors in the three locations illustrated in the plans (page 17); 2. View corridors must be lined by trees on both sides, spaced 10’ to 30’ apart; tree species can vary among view corridors; 3. The pair of trees at the EC end of the view corridor will match in species.	The location of the railroad presents a challenge. Traditionally, buildings face away from railroad tracks. The location of the tracks relative to the EC street means buildings would face away from the EC. The View Corridor zone plans show no buildings (page 16); the criteria allow for varying setbacks from the EC. Establishing a level of consistency along the frontage, screening objectionable elements, avoiding blank building elevations, and adding landscaping could meet the intent of the guidelines. However, the criteria would allow for fences the full length of the frontage (only broken by the view corridors), with parking behind the fences, and buildings beyond the parking with murals on all sides visible from the EC.	Are the view corridors combined with the proposed fencing and landscaping sufficient methods for achieving an appropriate appearance for the ECs and establishing consistency with the ECDG? Are rear elevations facing the corridor acceptable? Are murals on all visible elevations acceptable? Should murals be subject to ARB review?
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.			
40-44	Site Grading	There are no proposed criteria specific to grading.	-	-
	SIGNS			
		Wall-mounted signs No backlit signage on façade visible from EC.	This criterion needs more specificity to provide clearer direction.	Clarify that the following sign types are not allowed: box and cabinet style signs, internally illuminated signs, channel letters signs.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff Recommendation:

Staff provides the comments, questions, and recommendations outlined above in the Analysis table for ARB discussion.

Possible Motion:

I move to forward the comments and recommendations to the Applicant as discussed by the ARB in the January 16, 2023 work session.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attach. 1:** ARB2023-107: Barnes Lumber – application materials
Attach. 2: ARB2023-107: Barnes Lumber – CW CofA screening fence criteria