

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2025-13: Hyatt Studios Final Site Plan
Review Type	Final Site Plan and Third Review of Architecture
Parcel Identification	07800-00-00-013A0, 07800-00-00-073A7
Location	The south side of Rt. 250 East approximately 250’ west of the Hansen Rd./Rt. 250 intersection (See Figure 1.)
Zoned	Planned Development Mixed Commercial (PDMC), Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	WS Four LLC (78-73A7), Happy Boxes Pantops LLC (78-13A) / Design Develop LLC (Kevin Schafer)
Magisterial District	Rivanna
Proposal	To construct a four-story hotel in addition to associated site improvements.
Context	The site is comprised of two vacant parcels. The area is characterized by a mix of residential and commercial development (Figure 1).
Visibility	The proposed development will be readily visible from the Entrance Corridor.
ARB Meeting Date	July 7, 2025
Staff Contact	Khrist Taggart

PROJECT HISTORY

DATE	APPLICATION/REVIEW TYPE	RESULT
January 6, 2020	ARB2019-148 / Initial Site Plan	The ARB did not recommend approval of the Initial Plan due to development issues arising from the tree conservation area and landscaping easements on the subject property. A subsequent review of ZMA2002-08 revealed that the application plan needed to be amended to permit hotel use and to address issues related to the tree conservation area and landscape easements.
November 15, 2021	ARB2021-117 / Initial Site Plan and Preliminary Review of Architecture	The Board’s review of the initial site plan resulted in a similar recommendation to the one provided for ARB2019-148. The Board also provided preliminary comments on the architectural design and did not recommend approval of the special exception request to waive the stepback requirement.
January 11, 2022	ZMA2020-13 / Zoning Map Amendment SE2021-16 / Special Exception	The Planning Commission forwarded a recommendation of approval of the rezoning to the Board of Supervisors with two additional recommendations (note: the PC reviewed no architectural designs): 1) Applicant to explore a pedestrian connection between this and the adjacent property; 2) Additional landscaping to be added at the front of the property on Route 250. The Planning Commission also forwarded a recommendation of approval of SE2021-16 to the Board of Supervisors with the recommendation that landscaping of substantial size be added at the front of the property (near Route 250) to mitigate the four-story height of the building.

January 28, 2022	SE2021-16 / Special Exception	Based on the revised architectural renderings dated December 22, 2021, showing a hotel with three stories above grade at the Route 250 frontage, Zoning determined that the special exception to waive the stepback requirement was no longer necessary. Consequently, an ARB recommendation on the special exception was no longer needed.
February 7, 2022	ARB2021-117 / Second Review of an Initial Site Plan and Architectural Design	The ARB recommended approval of the revised Initial Plan with the assumption that the development issues arising from the tree conservation and landscaping easements on the subject property are resolved. The Board also provided comments on the revised architectural design.
March 16, 2022	ZMA2020-13 / Zoning Map Amendment	The Board of Supervisors approved the rezoning to amend the application plan and proffers to permit a hotel and to remove a tree conservation area and the landscape easement along the western perimeter of the site (TMP 78-13A).
July 5, 2022	ARB2022-48 / Review of a Final Site Plan and Architectural Design	The ARB approved the site plan and architectural design pending staff approval of several conditions. An application that addressed those conditions was not received.
September 16, 2024	ARB2024-54 / Overlook Hotel Initial Site Plan	This proposal replaced the previously reviewed initial and final site plan and architecture. Since the previous submittal, TMP 78-13A has been added to the site plan, a different hotel brand has been proposed, and the architectural renderings show all four stories above grade. In this zoning district, a 15’ stepback is required above the third story on the street-facing elevation. Due to the setback from the EC street and the grade change, the ARB supported waiving the stepback.
January 22, 2025	SE2024-30 / Special Exception	The Board of Supervisors approved the special exception request to waive the stepback requirement.



Figure 1: Pictometry image highlighting subject property.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUES 9/16/2024	RECOMMENDATIONS 9/16/2024	ISSUES 7/7/2025	RECOMMENDATIONS 7/7/2025
	GENERAL GUIDELINES				
	<i>Purpose, Compatibility with the character of the Entrance Corridor</i>				
1	The goal of the regulation of the design of development within the designated Entrance Corridors is to ensure that new development within the corridors reflects the traditional architecture of the area. Therefore, it is the purpose of ARB review and of these Guidelines, that proposed development within the designated Entrance Corridors reflect elements of design characteristic of the significant historical landmarks, buildings, and structures of the Charlottesville and Albemarle area, and to promote orderly and attractive development within these corridors. Applicants should note that replication of historic structures is neither required nor desired.	This portion of the Rt. 250 EC includes a mixture of small- and large-scale commercial and service buildings of varying styles and forms that largely use brick as the primary building material. The proposed hotel does not have a strong tie to the traditional architecture of the area. It does, however, use some forms and materials that are found in the area’s historic buildings. The material changes and scoring of the EIFS create some appearance of a base, middle, and top, which is a traditional system of architectural division. The hotel uses brick at the base of the building, a common building material used historically in the County, and two types of Hardie lap siding which resembles a common building material used in the region. The central entrance and end pieces provide a balanced design, and the articulation along the building elevations reduces some of the building’s mass. However, the upper stories are largely clad with EIFS (approximately 70%) which will have greater visibility from the EC and is less reflective of traditional architecture. Revising the mixture of wall materials to increase the visibility of the brick from the EC would be appropriate. The renderings show the tower-like forms on the entrance bay of the north and south elevations with different treatments. On the	Revise the architectural design to increase the visibility of brick from the EC. Consider further changes to the EC elevation to reduce blankness at the stair tower.	The architectural drawings have been updated to incorporate several changes. The Hardie siding on the upper levels of the stair tower located at the northeast corner of the building has been replaced with brick. Additionally, a bay of windows has been incorporated into the tower, and a canopy structure has been installed at the ground level, where the previous utilitarian door has been replaced with double storefront doors. These modifications mitigate the blankness of the elevation and enhance its visual interest as viewed from the EC.	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.		Revise the tower-like form on the entrance bay of the north elevation to match the form found on the entrance bay of the south elevation.	The renderings have been revised to show that the tower-like form of the north elevation matches the form of the south elevation.	
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.		Due to the setback from the EC street and the grade change, the ARB supports the waiver of the stepback.		
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.	north elevation, the form is flat but on the south elevation, the form has depth. The form shown on the north elevation has an awkward appearance and does not contribute to a cohesive whole. Revising the form to match the south elevation would be appropriate.			
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.	As indicated in the History section above, a 15’ stepback is required above the third story on the east elevation of this building. This elevation uses tower-like forms, material changes, and slight variations in colors in an attempt to provide visual interest and relieve blankness. However, the overall composition of this elevation has a back-of-building appearance and monumental character. Incorporating a stepback on this elevation would reduce its mass and provide an opportunity to revise the elevation to better address the EC.			
9	Building forms and features, including roofs, windows, doors, materials, colors and textures should be compatible with the forms and features of the significant historic buildings in the area, exemplified by (but not limited to) the buildings described in Appendix A [of the design guidelines]. The standard of compatibility can be met through scale, materials, and forms which may be embodied in architecture which is contemporary as well as traditional. The replication of important historic sites in Albemarle County is not the objective of these guidelines.				
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.				
12	Architecture proposed within the Entrance Corridor should use forms, shapes, scale, and materials to create a cohesive whole.				
13	Any appearance of “blankness” resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.				
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	The canopies along the building’s front and rear entrances and brick and Hardie siding along its base help to provide human scale. However, the base materials are expected to have reduced visibility from the EC. Revising the design to use an		Except for the proposed change in cladding material for the tower element at the northeast corner, the overall composition of the building materials remains largely consistent with the previous	None.

		alternate base material and shifting the brick to the upper floors would help increase the visibility of the brick and further establish the base-middle-top pattern.		submission. However, the addition of a canopy and a bay of windows on the EC-facing elevation improves the scale of this side of the building, making it appear less like the back of the building and reducing its monumental character.	
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	A single building is proposed, so a connecting device is not necessary.	None.	A single building is proposed, so a connecting device is not necessary.	None.
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	Though materials and colors vary slightly, the proposed design is consistent with examples found online.	None.	Though materials and colors vary slightly, the proposed design is consistent with examples found online.	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>	The drawings do not include the standard window glass note.	Revise the architectural drawings to include the standard window glass note.	The drawings have been revised to include the standard window glass note. The glass specifications are noted on page 16 of the architectural submittal. Based on a web search, the specifications of the glass noted (VLT 68%, VLR 11%) meet the criteria.	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.	A dumpster pad is shown east of the southeast corner of the building, built into the retaining walls that skirt the southern end of the parking lot. The site plan does not include details on the dumpster enclosure but in this location, the dumpster pad and enclosure are not expected to be visible from the EC. A patio is shown along the rear of the building in the site plan but no details on hardscape, railings, lighting, etc. have been provided in the architectural drawings.	Revise the site plan and architectural drawings to show the location of mechanical equipment. Show how the equipment will be screened from the EC. Revise the architectural drawings to provide details on the hardscape, railings, lighting, etc. proposed for the patio.	The applicant's response letter notes that mechanical equipment is primarily Packaged Terminal Air Conditioner (PTAC) units below each window. The units are flush with the surrounding wall and match it in color. The architectural drawings also show roof-mounted mechanical equipment, which the applicant's correspondence indicates will be screened by the parapet wall. However, no information about the heights of the equipment and parapet has been provided.	Revise the architectural drawings to provide heights for the equipment and parapet wall. Show how the equipment will be screened from the EC.
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	No information has been provided on the location(s) of ground or building-mounted mechanical equipment.			

	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 applicant's correspondence indicates that the hardscape of the patio will be brushed concrete, the patio retaining wall will be clad with the Glen-Gery thin brick used for the building and topped with black steel railing to enclose the area.	
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 appears on sheet C1.	None.	The note appears on sheet C1.	None.
	Lighting				
	<i>General Guidelines</i>				
22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets.	Lighting spills over to adjacent properties but spillover does not exceed ordinance requirements.	None.	Lighting spills over to adjacent properties but the spillover does not exceed ordinance requirements.	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 photometric plan shows fixtures that are full cutoff and lighting levels (18.1 fc) below the Guideline's maximum.	None.	The photometric plan shows fixtures that are full cutoff and lighting levels (17.6 fc) below the Guideline's maximum.	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.				
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 color temperature for the proposed fixtures has been noted on the lighting plan as warm white (3000K).	None.	The color temperature for the proposed fixtures has been noted on the lighting plan as warm white (3000K).	None.
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.	The color of the lighting fixtures has been indicated on the plans as black.	None.	The color of the lighting fixtures has been indicated on the plans as black. The mounting height of the pole fixture has been indicated on the plans as 20' including the base.	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	The mounting height of the pole fixture has been indicated on the plans as 20' including the base.			

	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.				
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 standard lighting note is on the site plan.	None.	The standard lighting note is on the site plan.	None.
30-31	<i>Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting</i>	No decorative lighting is proposed.	None.	No decorative lighting is proposed.	None.
	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.	The site plan has been revised since the previous submittals to include TMP 78-13A. The inclusion of this parcel with 78-73A7 increases the length of the frontage along the EC, allowing for the standard row of large shade/ornamental trees. The plan shows large shade trees with ornamental trees interspersed along the frontage. However, the “Landscaping Required” notes on Sheet C6 list an incorrect caliper size (2½” instead of 3½”), and the tree spacing is inconsistent, exceeding 35’ in several locations west of the entrance to the site.	Revise the landscape plan to show the frontage trees spaced at 35’ on center consistently along the frontage. Revise the caliper size under the “Landscaping Required” notes on Sheet C6 to note the correct caliper size required for frontage trees (3½”).	The landscape plan has been revised to show frontage trees at 35’ on center consistently along the frontage. The plan also shows more interspersed ornamentals and evergreen shrubs along the parking lot between the EC and the building. This landscaping arrangement is expected to better integrate the site into the surrounding context. The caliper size under the “Landscaping Required” notes on Sheet C11 has been revised to note the correct caliper size requirement for frontage trees.	None.
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.				
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.	No interior roads are present in this site, but the entrance drive has a prominent appearance. A row of trees is shown in the triangular space between the travelway and the parking lot, but they are not aligned with either the drive or the lot. Revising the row of trees to align with the drive or the parking lot and providing infill landscaping would be appropriate for this space.	Revise the row of trees between the entrance drive and the parking lot to align with either the drive or the lot and provide additional landscaping for a coordinated appearance.	The row of trees between the travelway into the site and the parking lot has been revised to align with the lot. The landscape plan has also been revised to show additional ornamentals and evergreen shrubs interspersed between the trees. However, a tree at the northern end of the 19-space parking row near the entrance to the site is shown over an existing stormwater pipe.	Revise the landscape plan to eliminate the conflict between the tree at the northern end of the 19-space parking row and the pipe.
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.	Other than the sidewalks shown around the building, no interior pedestrian paths are proposed. In the planting area between the building and the sidewalks are ornamental trees and evergreen shrubs.	None.	The plan has been updated to show an interior pedestrian way that runs along the entrance drive, through two drive aisles and a parking island, eventually leading to the sidewalk around the building. No trees are shown along the sidewalk that runs along the entrance drive but due to the size of the planting area, there appears to be little space for medium trees, 25' on center, along the sidewalk. Additionally, a tree is shown in the middle of the sidewalk near where the entrance travelway meets the parking lot.	Revise the landscape plan to include medium trees, 2½" caliper at planting, where space permits growth and tree health, along the sidewalk adjacent to the travelway into the site. Revise the landscape plan to eliminate the conflict between the tree near the end of the entrance travelway and the sidewalk.
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	The trees along the perimeter of the parking areas meet the size and spacing requirements except at the southern end of	Provide a large perimeter parking lot tree, 2½" caliper at planting, at the	A perimeter parking lot tree that meets size and spacing requirements has been provided at	See the interior pedestrian way landscaping recommendation above.

	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.	the 19-space parking row along the travelway into the site. There are 124 parking spaces. This requires 12 interior parking area trees. The landscape plan shows 14 interior parking trees grouped in planting islands throughout the parking area. However, the trees' spacing appears too close to support tree health. The landscape plan does not show any shrubs along the perimeters of the parking lot. Shrubs along the perimeters would help mitigate the negative visual impacts of the unrelegated parking and large area of paving on the EC.	southern end of the 19-space parking row near the travelway into the site. Revise the interior parking area trees to provide sufficient spacing to support tree health. Revise the landscape plan to show shrubs along the northern, eastern, and southern perimeters of the parking lot.	the southern end of the 19-space parking row along the travelway into the site. However, this tree is shown in the middle of the sidewalk along the entrance travelway. The layout of the trees in the interior parking islands has been modified; however, the spacing between the trees appears to have decreased in certain locations, and overall still seems insufficient for promoting optimal tree health. The landscape plan has been revised to show evergreen shrubs at the required height along the perimeters of the parking area.	Revise the interior parking area trees to provide sufficient spacing to support tree health.
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.	The landscape plan shows ornamental trees and evergreen shrubs along the perimeters of the building. The trees are expected to help further break up the long elevations visible from the EC.	None.	No changes to the building landscaping have been made since the initial site plan review.	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>.	The proposed plants are on the recommended species list.	None.	The proposed plants are on the recommended species 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	The plant health note is present on the plan.	None.	The plant health note is present on the plan.	None.

	minimally and only to support the overall health of the plant.”				
	Site Development and layout				
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; ensuring 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.	There were three easements on TMP 78-73A7 - a tree conservation area and two landscaping easements. The landscape easement along the western perimeter of the site and the tree conservation easement towards the middle of the site were removed with the approved rezoning amendment (ZMA2020-13). The landscape easement along the southeastern portion of the site was the result of the requirement to mitigate the visual impacts of the adjacent drive-thru and related travelways to the east (Truist Bank). The existing conditions plan shows the boundaries and the landscaping that is to be removed. However, not all the approved landscaping in the easement is shown and it is not clear if the landscaping that is to remain will still mitigate the visual impact of the drive-thru and travelways.	Revise the landscape plan to match the previously approved landscaping in the landscape easement adjacent to the bank. Provide landscaping to compensate for the removed landscaping required to mitigate the visual impacts of the bank site.	The landscape plan has been revised to indicate that the previously approved landscaping within the easement adjacent to the existing bank will remain undisturbed. Additionally, the areas where approved landscaping is currently absent will be replanted accordingly. Additionally, four large trees have been added within the easement. The existing landscaping and added trees are expected to sufficiently mitigate the visual impacts of the bank site.	None.
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</i>	The travelway and parking areas have an organized pattern. The proposed building is not situated parallel to the EC and it is set back approximately 156’ from the right-of-way. This deep setback is not consistent with adjacent properties. There are existing sidewalk segments at the corners of the site along Rt. 250. However, no new sidewalk is proposed to connect the two segments, and the site entrance will remove most of the sidewalk near the site's northeast corner. Views around the site are not expected to be negatively impacted but the building will be significantly taller than any	Revise the site plan to provide a sidewalk along the full length of the frontage for improved connectivity. Provide additional perspectives, with and without landscaping, of the site from the EC.	The site plan has been revised to provide a sidewalk along the full length of the frontage. Perspectives, with and without landscaping, have been provided. They show that the revisions to the EC-facing elevation, distance from the EC, and landscaping are expected to sufficiently mitigate the proposed building’s visual impact.	None.

	<i>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.	buildings in the immediate context. Providing additional perspectives from the EC would help determine the proposed building's visual impact.			
	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 landforms 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.	The proposed development relies on significant grading and extensive use of retaining walls. On the west side of the site, the plan shows two retaining walls, an upper wall that supports the sidewalks and patio area along the rear of the building, and a lower wall between the previously mentioned site changes and the western parcel boundary. The upper wall will have heights ranging from 2' near the corners of the building to 6' around the patio area. No wall heights have been noted for the lower wall but based on the heights of the upper retaining wall and the perspective view the lower wall appears to be about 4' tall. Ornamental trees with evergreen shrubs interspersed are shown at the base of the north end of the upper retaining wall but no landscaping is shown along the base of the upper wall's southern end or the lower wall. Since both walls are expected to be readily visible from the EC through the parking lot on the adjacent parcel, landscaping similar to that proposed at the base of the upper wall's northern end would be appropriate to mitigate the visual impact on the EC. On the east side of the site, the wall heights range from 2' to 6'. The walls are terraced but no landscaping is shown at the base of the walls near the site entrance. The planting area provided at the base of these	Revise the landscape plan to provide trees and shrubs at the base of the retaining walls near the western property line. Indicate retaining wall material(s) and color(s) on the plan. An earth-tone color would be appropriate. A physical sample may be necessary for review. Revise the landscape plan to provide shrubs at the base of the retaining walls along the travelway into the site. Provide perspectives that show the site from the eastbound lanes of Rt. 250.	The landscape plan has been revised to include evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs at the base of the upper wall along the western property line. However, plantings at the base of the lower retaining wall have not been provided. The sanitary line located near the central portion of the wall limits planting along its entire length; however, creating arrangements at both the northern and southern ends would significantly reduce its visual impact on the EC. The site plan has been updated to specify the color of the retaining walls, which will be James River. This color has been approved for use throughout the Entrance Corridors and is expected to blend well in this location. Additionally, the landscape plan has been revised to include trees at the base of the northern section of the retaining wall along the eastern property line, as well as evergreen shrubs at the base of the terraced walls. This landscaping is expected to better integrate the retaining walls into the surrounding environment.	Revise the landscape plan to incorporate the planting of trees and shrubs at the northern and southern ends of the lower retaining wall adjacent to the western property line.

		walls is limited but shrubs may help better integrate the walls into the surrounding landscape. The site plan does not specify the block material and color for the retaining walls, but the perspectives show a white block which would not be appropriate for the EC. The block that has typically been approved in the ECs is Anchor Diamond Pro James River which is a tan color. James River or a darker earth-tone may help the walls better recede into the landscape. Material and color samples may be needed.		Perspectives have been provided that illustrate the site from the eastbound lanes of Route 250. These views indicate that the retaining walls along the western portion of the site will not be visible from the roadway. However, visibility is anticipated through the adjacent parking lot during the fall and winter months when foliage is less dense. Landscaping has been provided along the base of the upper retaining wall, but not the lower wall. Adding landscaping at the base of the lower wall would help integrate it into the surrounding context.	
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.	The landscape plan shows part of a tree line that is to remain southwest of the detention pond, but no tree protection fencing is shown on the plans. Additionally, the full extent of the parcel is not shown.	Maintain grading outside the driplines of trees to remain. Show tree protection fencing on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping, and erosion and sediment control plans. Revise the site plan to show the full parcel on the plan.	The site plan set has not been revised to show tree protection fencing. The site plan has been revised to show the full extent of the parcel on the plan.	Maintain grading outside the driplines of trees to remain. Show tree protection fencing 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.				
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.	The above-ground stormwater feature is sited behind the building and is not expected to be visible from the EC.	None.	No changes have been made to the location of the above-ground stormwater facility since the initial site plan.	None.

44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.				
	Signs	Signage is reviewed and approved by separate submission. However, the following preliminary comments are provided: The ARB may require that the color and scale of standard templates for trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and graphics be modified.	Please note that separate sign applications are required for all proposed signs.	Signage is reviewed and approved by separate submission. However, the comments provided with the previous submittal remain: The ARB may require that the color and scale of standard templates for trademarks, service marks, corporate logos and graphics be modified.	Please note that separate sign applications are required for all proposed signs.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

- 1. Proposed building forms and distribution of materials.
- 2. The extent of retaining walls; the degree of mitigation provided by proposed landscaping.
- 3. Landscaping of the site:
 - a. Along the sidewalk that runs next to the travelway leading into the site.
 - b. Spacing of interior parking trees.

Staff recommends approval of the final site plan with the following revisions:

- 1. Revise the architectural drawings to provide heights for the equipment and parapet wall. Show how the equipment will be screened from the EC.
- 2. Revise the landscape plan to eliminate the conflict between the tree at the northern end of the 19-space parking row and the pipe.
- 3. Revise the landscape plan to include medium trees, 2½” caliper at planting, where space permits growth and tree health, along the sidewalk adjacent to the travelway into the site.
- 4. Revise the landscape plan to eliminate the conflict between the tree near the end of the entrance travelway and the sidewalk.
- 5. Revise the interior parking area trees to provide sufficient spacing to support tree health.
- 6. Revise the landscape plan to incorporate the planting of trees and shrubs at the northern and southern ends of the lower retaining wall adjacent to the western property line.
- 7. Maintain grading outside the driplines of trees to remain. Show tree protection fencing on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping, and erosion and sediment control plans.
- 8. Please note that separate sign applications are required for all proposed signs.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attach. 1: [ARB2025-13: Hyatt Studios Final Site Plan](#)
- Attach. 2: [ARB2025-13: Hyatt Studios ARB Submission Package](#)