

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2025-21: Virginia Asphalt Services Solar
Review Type	Building Permit
Parcel Identification	07700000000800
Location	1536 Avon St. Ext. (Figure 1)
Zoned	Light Industrial (LI), Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Bryan Heilman/Sunday Solar (Laura Spetz)
Magisterial District	Scottsville
Proposal	To install a solar array on the roof of the building.
Context	The site is located among a mix of industrial and commercial developments along Avon Street Ext. 5 th Street Station and residential neighborhoods are located to the west and southwest.
Visibility	The building is located approximately 60' from the Entrance Corridor street. The ridge of the roof runs parallel to the street. The panels are proposed for the street-facing slope of the roof, so they will be visible from the Entrance Corridor. (Figure 2)
ARB Meeting Date	September 2, 2025
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

A Certificate of Appropriateness was issued for this development in October 2015.



Figure 1: Project location



Figure 2: Google Street View images of the Virginia Asphalt Services building.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	Purpose; Compatibility with the character of the Entrance Corridor		
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.	With the recommendations identified below, the proposed solar array is not expected to detract from the appearance of the existing building and is expected to maintain orderly and attractive development on the corridor.	See below.
2	Visitors to the significant historical sites in the Charlottesville and Albemarle area experience these sites as ensembles of buildings, land, and vegetation. In order to accomplish the integration of buildings, land, and vegetation characteristic of these sites, the Guidelines require attention to four primary factors: compatibility with significant historic sites in the area; the character of the Entrance Corridor; site development and layout; and landscaping.		
3	New structures and substantial additions to existing structures should respect the traditions of the architecture of historically significant buildings in the Charlottesville and Albemarle area. Photographs of historic buildings in the area, as well as drawings of architectural features, which provide important examples of this tradition are contained in Appendix A.		
4	The examples contained in Appendix A should be used as a guide for building design: the standard of compatibility with the area's historic structures is not intended to impose a rigid design solution for new development. Replication of the design of the important historic sites in the area is		

	neither intended nor desired. The Guideline's standard of compatibility can be met through building scale, materials, and forms which may be embodied in architecture which is contemporary as well as traditional. The Guidelines allow individuality in design to accommodate varying tastes as well as special functional requirements.		
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.		
9-16	Compatibility with significant historic sites; Structure Design		
	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.	14 solar panels, each measuring approximately 8' x 3'9" x 1.4", are proposed in a single row on the EC-facing slope of the black metal roof, aligned with the ridge of the roof and set back from the edges of the roof. The panels would be installed parallel to and approximately 4" off the surface of the roof. The alignment with the edges of the roof and the linear arrangement will have an organized appearance and will help the panels appear integrated with the architectural design.	Panels must be black with black frames.
18	The following should be located to eliminate visibility from the Entrance Corridor street. If, after appropriate siting, these features will still have a negative visual impact on the Entrance Corridor street, screening should be provided to eliminate visibility. a. Loading areas, b. Service areas, c. Refuse areas, d. Storage areas, e. Mechanical equipment, f. Above-ground utilities, and g. Chain link fence, barbed wire, razor wire, and similar security fencing devices.	The proposed panels are black with silver aluminum frames. Black frames would result in a more integrated appearance with the black roof. (Attach. 2, page 1) The applicant has indicated a willingness to use black panels with black frames, noting that that color combination is only available in smaller panels, which would require more panels arranged in two parallel rows.	Panels must be arranged in parallel rows aligned with the peak of the roof and set back from all edges. Conduit must be run inside the building or colored to match the exterior surface to which it is attached.
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.		

		(Attach. 2, page 2) An inverter, AC disconnect (Attach. 2, page 3) and utility meter are proposed to be installed on the wall facing the EC, and conduit would run from a junction box at the panels to the inverter. The wall-mounted equipment would be located near other existing wall-mounted equipment, which is mostly screened by existing landscaping. If the conduit cannot be run inside the building, painting it to match the roof and wall would sufficiently limit its visual impact. The applicant has indicated that the conduit can be painted.	
20	Surface runoff structures and detention ponds should be designed to fit into the natural topography to avoid the need for screening. When visible from the Entrance Corridor street, these features must be fully integrated into the landscape. They should not have the appearance of engineered features.	No new or altered stormwater facilities are proposed with this application.	None.
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 level of visibility anticipated for the new equipment associated with this proposal is not expected to have a negative impact on the EC.	Any new equipment not included with this proposal is subject to ARB review and must be screened to eliminate visibility from the EC.
22-31	Lighting	No lighting is proposed with this application.	None.
7, 8, 32-38	Landscaping	No landscaping is proposed with this application.	None.
6, 39	Site Development and layout; Development pattern	No changes to the site layout are proposed with this application.	None.
40-44	Site Grading	No grading is proposed with this application.	None.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. Visibility of the solar array from the EC
2. Panel and conduit colors
3. Visibility of wall-mounted equipment

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. Panel color must be black with black frames.
2. Panels must be arranged in parallel rows aligned with the peak of the roof and set back from all edges.
3. Conduit must be run inside the building or colored to match the exterior surface to which it is attached.
4. Any new equipment not included with this proposal is subject to ARB review.

ATTACHMENTS

Attach. 1: [ARB-2025-00021: Virginia Asphalt Services Solar: Solar array plans](#)

Attach. 2: [ARB-2025-00021: Virginia Asphalt Services Solar: Additional images](#)