

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	SDP-2025-00122: Archer North Phase 2 Initial Site Plan
Review Type	Initial Site Development Plan
Parcel Identification	04600000010800, 046000000109R0, 046000000109G0, 046000000109H0
Location	North of Ashwood Blvd. and east of Seminole Trail (Rt. 29)
Zoned	Planned Residential Development (PRD), Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Archer North LLC/Collins Engineering (Scott Collins)
Magisterial District	Rivanna
Proposal	To construct Phase 2 of a residential development consisting of 224 new units in townhouses, attached condominiums, and apartments, with associated site improvements.
Context	The property was previously the site of a motel and the Ridgewood mobile home community. The Forest Lakes residential development is to the east and northeast. Brookhill is across Ashwood Blvd to the south. Wooded property is to the west across Rt. 29.
Visibility	The development will be visible from the Entrance Corridor, but the 100' buffer along Rt. 29 will reduce visibility when it is mature. North of Calloway Drive, the buffer consists of mostly newly planted trees, so Building 20, in particular, will be seen clearly through the buffer at first, then less so, as the buffer matures. The parcel (46B5-1D) at the northeast corner of Ashwood Blvd. and Rt. 29 is currently wooded. That condition reduces visibility of the proposed development, though grading on the parcel will remove some trees. When that parcel develops, visibility could increase significantly. In addition to Building 20, Buildings 16 and 19 may have some visibility from the EC street at the Calloway Drive intersection. Buildings 12 – 14 could have some visibility across parcel 46B5-1D depending on tree removal and future development. Building 12 could have some visibility across Ashwood Blvd.
ARB Meeting Date	October 27, 2025
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

A rezoning and an initial site plan (ZMA-2020-07, SDP-2021-79 and ARB-2021-118) were approved for this property in 2021. The rezoning was amended in early 2025 to allow for a variety of unit types (ZMA-2023-14). A final site plan was approved for Phase 1 of the development in June 2025. ARB action was not needed on that plan because site sections showed that Phase 1 buildings wouldn't be visible from the EC street. Phase 1 is under construction.



ANALYSIS

Gray highlight = means recommendations on this guideline can be provided for the benefit of the final site plan submittal, but cannot be the basis for denial of the initial site plan

Yellow highlight = means the guideline can only be reviewed for location/configuration at the initial plan stage, and location/configuration can be made a condition of initial plan approval, and can be the basis for denial

Regular text = means the guideline can be reviewed at initial plan stage, can be made a condition of initial plan approval, and can be the basis for denial

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	GENERAL GUIDELINES		
	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.	Architectural designs were not submitted with the initial site plan. It is anticipated that the proposed buildings will have a contemporary appearance but could incorporate traditional forms and features. Grading and landscaping will have a visual impact on the EC. Appropriate treatment of slopes and buffers will help promote orderly and attractive development as viewed from the EC. Building 20, located closest to the EC, has the largest footprint of buildings in the development. Treatments will be needed to mitigate mass and scale.	Provide architectural designs for review for Buildings 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20. Show how the guidelines on structure design and architectural compatibility are being met.
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.		
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.		
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.	Building designs could be compatible with buildings in nearby residential developments. Compatibility can be determined when architectural designs are submitted for review. The required wooded buffer along Rt. 29 will establish a level of unity with the Brookhill development to the south.	
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.		
12	Architecture proposed within the Entrance Corridor should use forms, shapes, scale, and materials to create a cohesive whole.	Maximum building height is noted as 4 stories. Notes on Sheet 2 indicate maximum heights of 65' and 48'.	Provide consistent information on the plan regarding building heights.
13	Any appearance of "blankness" resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.	The layout plan suggests that secondary elevations of Building 20 face the EC street and Calloway Drive. End elevations of Building 12 could have some visibility from the EC. Blankness would not be appropriate on any of these elevations.	Provide architectural designs for review. Show how the guidelines on scale and blankness are being met.
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	The plan does not show connecting devices between buildings. Such devices would not likely be seen from the EC street.	None.
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	The buildings in the development are not expected to have the appearance of trademark structures.	None at this time.
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>	Window glass is not expected to have a significant impact on the Entrance Corridor because the buildings will be located behind the 100' buffer as viewed from the EC street.	None at this time.
	Accessory structures and equipment		
17	Accessory structures and equipment should be integrated into the overall plan of development and shall, to the extent possible, be compatible with the building designs used on the site.	The mechanical equipment note included as Site Note 1 on Sheet 2 references architectural designs and an S-3 screen. The note may need revisions, depending on the architectural design submitted for review, and the S-3 screen is not illustrated on the plan. The north/west end elevation of Building 12 includes what may be service sheds.	Revise the mechanical equipment note (Site Note 1 on Sheet 2) to provide for full screening of roof- and ground-mounted equipment as viewed from the EC. Provide details for all proposed screens and fences. Provide elevations detailing the service sheds on the end

			elevation of Building 12.
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 are proposed around the cemetery and the dog park. Details are not included in the plan.	Include details in the plan for the cemetery and dog park fences showing designs that do not include chain link.
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.		
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.	Drainage systems are proposed underground and are not expected to have a visual impact on the EC street.	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 note appears on Sheet 2 of the site plan.	Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the architectural plans.
22-31	Lighting	A lighting plan was not included in the initial site plan.	Provide a complete lighting plan showing all proposed ground- and building-mounted lighting for review. Limit fixtures to downlight styles and illumination levels to that which is required for safety/security.
	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	The approved rezoning requires a 100'-wide buffer along the Rt. 29 EC. North of Calloway Drive, the buffer includes 4 existing trees to remain (not identified by size or species), an approximate 180' length of tree save area at the north end, and a mix	Revise the hatching in the Landscaping Plan Legend on Sheet 10 to match the hatching used on the plan.

	and help to integrate buildings into the existing environment of the corridor.	of new trees. The new trees do not fill the buffer area; a band ranging from approximately 15' to 35' in width remains unplanted near the middle of the buffer.	Revise the "Buffers & Landscaping" note on Sheet 2 to eliminate the reference to utilities and retaining walls in the buffer for consistency with the approved application plan.
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 cemetery and land in the immediate vicinity are wooded. Grading for Calloway Drive impacts this area.	
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.	A plant schedule was not included in the plan, so tree species and sizes aren't identified. The hatch types included in the Landscaping Plan Legend on sheet 10 do not match the hatching used on the plan. Notes under "Buffers & Landscaping" on Sheet 2 allow for utilities and retaining walls in the Rt. 29 buffer. This is inconsistent with the approved application plan.	Identify the size and species of the four trees to remain in the Rt. 29 buffer. Provide a complete plant schedule in the site plan. Provide trees throughout the buffer area north of Calloway Drive. Revise the plan to show trees replanted in the buffer near the cemetery wherever grading is proposed.
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.	Trees are shown along Calloway Drive, spaced approximately 35' on center. Pipes are located at the Rt. 29 intersection such that the first tree on the south side of Calloway is 80' from Rt. 29. Grading is proposed in the area, but no re-planting is proposed. This gap in landscaping, combined with the tall retaining wall along Calloway, is expected to create an unbalanced appearance.	Revise the plan to show a consistent row of trees on the south side of Calloway Drive east of Rt. 29 and replanting of the buffer near the cemetery wherever grading is proposed.
34	Landscaping along interior pedestrian ways:	Sidewalks are proposed throughout the	None.

	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.	development. Trees are not provided along all of them. With the buffer along Rt. 29, the wooded condition of the existing cemetery, and the size and location of Building 20, most of those sidewalks will not be visible from the EC.	
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.	A parking lot is proposed near Building 20. The quantity of interior parking lot trees meets the requirement, but tree size and type are not provided. Trees are provided along a portion of the perimeter of the lot. Perimeter trees are not provided where the lot is adjacent to buildings, the dog park, and the open space/seating area. Seven rows of parking spaces, ranging from four to nine spaces long, are proposed throughout the development, including between Buildings 12 and 13. Most of these rows do not have perimeter trees, but they are not expected to be visible from the EC.	None at this time.
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.	Building 20 is the structure that is closest to the EC. The building will be visible through the trees, particularly when the trees are young. Street trees along Calloway Drive will help mitigate the appearance of the south elevation of the building once they are mature, and trees in the buffer will eventually reduce the visibility of the EC elevation and soften its appearance. Trees provided around Open Space A and along the east side of parcel 46B5-1D also border Buildings 12, 13 and 14. Street trees along Calloway Drive also border buildings 16 and 19.	Provide architectural elevations for Building 20 for review.
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>.	Plant species have not been identified.	Provide a complete landscape plan with plant schedule for review.
38	Plant health: The following note should be added to the	The note does not appear on the plan.	Add the standard plant

	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.”		health note to the plan.
	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.	Much of the natural landscape of the site was lost with the development of the former motel and mobile home park. An area of preserved slopes at the north corner of the site (which connects with a proposed vegetative buffer) is to be maintained. A substantial amount of landscaping is proposed along the EC street in the required buffer north of Calloway Drive and wooded area is to remain in and around the cemetery south of the drive. It is anticipated that building mass and scale will be mitigated by the buffers and other landscaping. The buffer along Rt. 29 will contribute to a continuous wooded condition along the corridor begun at the Brookhill development.	Consider revising the site layout to shift Calloway Drive so that buildings can be located on both sides of Calloway, just beyond the Rt. 29 buffer, as illustrated in the approved Application Plan.
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	A significant amount of grading and retaining walls are proposed to accomplish the new development. The layout of roads and paths throughout the development appears organized, although it differs from that shown on the approved Application Plan. That plan had buildings flanking Calloway Drive, which would present a more balanced appearance from the EC. Building 20, a 60-unit building, is oriented parallel to Rt. 29 and to Calloway Drive, but the elevations facing those streets appear to be secondary elevations. The other buildings are much smaller blocks of attached units and are organized primarily along Calloway Drive and Archer Avenue. Most are not oriented parallel to the EC,	

	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.	but distance from the corridor is expected to mitigate this. The proposed site layout provides a connection to Ashwood Blvd. and an entrance from Rt. 29. The new entrance provides access to public roads through the development. Sidewalks are provided along the primary travelways and they connect with sidewalks on Rt. 29 and Ashwood Blvd. Archer Avenue connects to the Brookhill development across Ashwood Blvd. The appearance along the EC will change significantly with this development, but there are currently no significant views from the street that will be affected.	
	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.	Significant grading is required to establish this development. Impacts of the grading will be mostly visible from Rt. 29 at the entrance into the development with the retaining wall on the south side of Calloway Drive. Retaining walls are noted with a maximum height of 6' but top- and bottom-of-wall heights put the maximum heights at 10', including the wall on the south side of Calloway Drive. A 10'-tall wall in that location is not expected to have an appropriate appearance for the EC. Contours are not rounded on parcel 46B5-1D or north of Lot 26.	Revise the notes on the plan to provide consistent information about retaining wall heights. Revise the plan to significantly reduce the height of the retaining wall on the south side of Calloway Drive to establish an appropriate appearance for the EC. Revise grading so that all contours are rounded.
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.	A tree save area is shown at the north corner of the development. The cemetery and Parcel 46B5-1D are wooded, but the existing tree line in this area is not shown on the plan. Grading is proposed on the north side of the cemetery and onto 46B5-1D. No "tree line to remain" is shown. Grading will likely	Add the existing tree line and tree line to remain to the plans. Maintain grading outside the driplines of trees to

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.	occur within the drip lines of trees to remain in this area.	remain. Show tree protection fencing on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping, and erosion and sediment control plans.
43	Preservation areas should be protected from storage or movement of heavy equipment within this area.		
44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.	The proposed drainage system is not expected to be visible from the EC street.	None.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. Grading and retaining wall at Rt. 29/Calloway Drive intersection
2. Buffer planting
3. Visibility of proposed buildings; building designs to be reviewed by the ARB

Staff recommends that the ARB forward the following recommendations to the Agent for the Site Review Committee:

1. Regarding requirements to satisfy the design guidelines as per § 18-30.6.4c(2), (3) and (5) and recommended conditions of initial plan approval:
 - Prior to Initial Plan approval the following items shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the ARB: None.
2. Regarding recommendations on the plan as it relates to the guidelines: None.
 - Consider revising the site layout to shift Calloway Drive so that buildings can be located on both sides of Calloway, just beyond the Rt. 29 buffer, as illustrated in the approved Application Plan.
- Regarding conditions to be satisfied prior to issuance of a grading permit:
 1. 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.
- Regarding the final site plan submittal:

A Certificate of Appropriateness is required prior to final site plan approval. The following items and all items on the ARB Final Site Plan Checklist must be addressed:

 1. Provide architectural designs for review for Buildings 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20. Show how the guidelines on structure design, architectural compatibility, scale, and blankness are being met.
 2. Provide consistent information on the plan regarding building heights.
 3. Revise the mechanical equipment note (Site Note 1 on Sheet 2) to provide for full screening of roof- and ground-mounted equipment as viewed from the EC. Provide details for all proposed screens and fences.

4. Provide elevations detailing the service sheds on the end elevation of Building 12.
5. Include details in the plan for the cemetery and dog park fences showing designs that do not include chain link.
6. Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the architectural plans: "Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated."
7. Provide a complete lighting plan showing all proposed ground- and building-mounted lighting for review. Limit fixtures to downlight styles and illumination levels to that which is required for safety/security.
8. Revise the hatching in the Landscaping Plan Legend on Sheet 10 to match the hatching used on the plan.
9. Revise the "Buffers & Landscaping" note on Sheet 2 to eliminate the reference to utilities and retaining walls in the buffer for consistency with the approved application plan.
10. Identify the size and species of the four trees to remain in the Rt. 29 buffer.
11. Provide trees throughout the buffer area north of Calloway Drive.
12. Revise the plan to show trees replanted in the buffer near the cemetery wherever grading is proposed.
13. Revise the plan to show a consistent row of trees on the south side of Calloway Drive east of Rt. 29 and replanting of the buffer near the cemetery wherever grading is proposed.
14. Provide a complete landscape plan with plant schedule for review.
15. Add the standard plant health note to the 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."
16. Consider revising the site layout to shift Calloway Drive so that buildings can be located on both sides of Calloway, just beyond the Rt. 29 buffer, as illustrated in the approved Application Plan.
17. Revise the notes on the plan to provide consistent information about retaining wall heights.
18. Revise the plan to significantly reduce the height of the retaining wall on the south side of Calloway Drive to establish an appropriate appearance for the EC.
19. Revise grading so that all contours are rounded.
20. Add the existing tree line and tree line to remain to the plans.
21. Show tree protection fencing on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping, and erosion and sediment control plans.

ATTACHMENTS

Attach. 1: [SDP-2025-00122: Archer North Phase 2 Initial Site Plan](#)