



County of Albemarle
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING

Architectural Review Board

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DRAFT ARB ACTION MEMO / MINUTES

Date: December 15, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM

Meeting Room: Lane Auditorium

Members:

Chris Henningsen, Chair: Present
Frank Hancock, Vice-Chair: Present
Frank Stoner: Present
Taro Matsuno: Present
Dade Van Der Werf: Present

Staff:

Margaret Maliszewski
Vivian Groeschel

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Henningsen called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and established a quorum.

DISCLOSURES: Mr. Matsuno disclosed that his firm has worked on the renovations at the Riverside Center, but that work does not prevent him from participating impartially in the discussion. Mr. Hancock disclosed that he would recuse himself from the discussion on Riverside Center because his employer is associated with the property.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

CONSENT AGENDA: None.

REGULAR REVIEW ITEMS

ARB-2025-00028: Riverside Comprehensive Sign Plan

Location: 2325 Seminole Lane

Proposal: Comprehensive sign plan amendment

Staff Contact: Margaret Maliszewski

Representative: Paul Kitchings (Gropen Inc.)

Ms. Maliszewski summarized the staff report in a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Matsuno asked if the Comprehensive Sign Plan would apply to both current and future property owners/tenants (yes). Paul Kitchings with Gropen Inc. represented the applicant, greeted the board, and made no formal presentation. ARB members had no questions for the applicant. No members of the public wanted to speak to the application. In discussion, ARB members agreed that staff's

recommendations were appropriate and would contribute to an orderly and coordinated appearance.

Motion: Mr. Van Der Werf moved for approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for ARB-2025-28: Riverside Comprehensive Sign Plan with the revised comprehensive sign plan criteria as listed in Attachment 5 of the staff report, as follows:

SIGN FEATURE	APPROVED CRITERIA
SIGN TYPE / LOCATION	Channel letter wall signs in brick sign bands, panel signs on entrance features or centered over entrance in southern wing. Areas available for wall signs on Building #2325 are identified in the diagram below. Similar locations are approved for Building #2335.
LETTER FACE COLOR	White, blue (Pantone 533C), orange (Pantone 158C)
TRIM CAP COLOR/RETURN COLOR	To coordinate with face color
RACEWAY COLOR	To match the color of the wall to which the sign is attached
PANEL FACE COLORS	Anodized aluminum, brushed aluminum, or similar
SIZE LIMITATIONS	As per Zoning Ordinance and EC sign guidelines
MOUNTING DETAILS	n/a
LOGO/GRAPHICS DETAILS	May include small logo boxes or graphics. Graphics may use multiple colors and must be integrated into the overall sign.
ILLUMINATION DETAILS	Channel letters and graphics: internal halo illumination; Panels: no illumination

This form outlines the specific design criteria established for signs at this location. All standard ARB Sign Guidelines also apply.
Reference: ARB-F(Sign) 99-44: Antiquer's Mall, ARB-2015-80: Riverside Center; ARB-2025-28: Riverside Center CSP Amendment

Mr. Henningsen seconded the motion.

The motion was carried by a vote of 4:0 (Hancock recused)

a. ARB-2025-00029: City Church

Location: 1010 Rio Road East

Proposal: To construct a new 10,000 sf building to house a gym, offices and a kitchen, with associated site improvements.

Staff Contact: Margaret Maliszewski

Representative: John Daly (Mather & Daly Architects)

Ms. Maliszewski summarized the staff report in a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Stoner asked if staff had recommendations on alternate materials (no). John Daly (Mather & Daly Architects) and Chris Becker (City Church) had no formal presentation but addressed the ARB, noting the colors of buildings in the area, the setback of the proposed addition, the windows at the top of the walls, and the willingness to make required revisions and the desire to ensure an appropriate appearance. ARB members asked the applicants what other colors or elements of relief were considered in response to staff's comments (maybe beige or architectural features mixed with white, and the roof potentially matching the church), about the type of construction (pre-engineered metal), and about horizontal structural members (diagonal braces, horizontal girts). In discussion, ARB members appreciated the applicant's presentation and willingness to have a dialogue about the design, and had the following comments:

- limitations in the extent of relief that can be applied are understandable based on the proposed use and program, but the blankness is an issue,
- the openings set at 7-8' height accentuates the blankness, adding transoms or otherwise revising the heights of openings at the first story might help mediate scale and coordinate with the church,

- the parking lot layout might be manipulated to increase trees to help with blankness,
- making the roof colors consistent would be a positive change,
- context is important, with the more immediate context of the church building on site being more important [than other buildings on the corridor], given the close proximity of the church to the addition,
- the new building could recede into the background given the program and formality of the existing church; knowing this building type, it won't be elevated to be on par with the church; thinking how it is in harmony with the church rather than separate from it is something to think about,
- acknowledged that the rendering invites focus on the color but it doesn't feel appropriate in the rendering,
- the grade change may be hard to express in a rendering but if that impacts how this is experienced from the street that is important to explore,
- trees in the parking lot could help break up the blankness,
- the building is well sited and the mass is appropriate and related to the existing building so we are focused on materiality and scale; agree with staff's comments on color; given overall composition of the site and prominence of the church, thinking how this addition might not be brighter or more visually prominent but more compatible or recessive – keep that in the forefront; more muted colors and possible darker colors or colors more similar to the church would be appropriate;
- there is a lot of blankness between the double doors that could be relieved with extra detail – recesses, subtle differences in coloration that imply bays or recesses,
- a canopy on the long façade could break the height and scale,
- the height of the canopies which seem quite high may contribute to the scale issue (lower may help mitigate scale),
- the church is the architectural focus of the site; it would help if the new building is more recessive,
- the roof color could help unify the site,
- trellises may help on the large blank sections to provide more buffer from the starkness of the white,
- the white color is too contrasty in this situation and makes the addition seem bigger; a more neutral color could help the building recede,
- landscaping to relieve blankness of the building would need to be quite proximate to the building to have an effect; parking lot trees don't have that effect, but an additional planting island in the parking row closest to the building could help by not having to address blankness just beyond it;
- ornamental trees on the structural bays could reinforce the structural rhythm of the elevation;
- there is a substantial elevation change from the road; the roof is going to be quite prominent.

Motion: Mr. Matsuno moved to provide the applicant with the comments listed in the staff report, amended as follows, to be addressed with the next submittal:

1. Revise the proposed building materials, colors, and/or details to increase compatibility between the addition and the existing building and to establish a more cohesive whole. Focus on roof and wall color changes to reduce the stark contrast between the church and the addition.
2. Reduce the blankness of the elevation that faces the EC.
3. Consider modifying the heights of canopies and openings.
4. Provide window glass specs with the next submittal. Show that the guidelines criteria are being met: *Visible light transmittance (VLT) shall not drop below 40%. Visible light reflectance (VLR) shall not exceed 30%.*

5. Add the mechanical equipment note to the architectural plans. *“Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated.”*
6. Provide a complete lighting plan with the final site plan showing all proposed building and site lighting.
7. Shift new trees proposed in locations that are close to utility lines to avoid conflicts as the trees mature.
8. Add a tree and tree island in the parking row adjacent to the addition, and plants at the base of the front elevation, to help relieve blankness.

Mr. Hancock seconded the motion.

The motion was carried by a vote of 5:0

WORK SESSIONS: None.

OTHER BUSINESS

a. Minutes Approval: December 8, 2025

Motion: Mr. Stoner moved for approval of the minutes from the December 8, 2025, ARB meeting.

Mr. Henningsen seconded the motion.

The motion was carried by a vote of 5:0

b. Next ARB Meeting: Monday, January 5, 2026, 1:41 p.m. – Lane Auditorium

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:41 p.m. to the next regular ARB meeting on Monday, January 5, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.