

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2026-00003 and SDP-2026-00033: Sheetz Initial Site Plan
Review Type	Conceptual Architectural Review and Initial Site Development Plan
Parcel Identification	06100-00-00-13300
Location	1648 Rio Road East
Zoned	Planned Development Shopping Center (PDSC), Entrance Corridor (EC), Airport Impact Area (AIA)
Owner/Applicant	Home Depot U.S.A, INC./Sheetz, Inc. (Tony Caruso), Williams Mullen (Valerie Long)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	To demolish the vacant Red Lobster restaurant and build a Sheetz fuel station with a 6,132-square-foot building, a 5,328-square-foot fuel pump canopy, and associated site improvements on a parcel totaling approximately 2.072 acres.
Context	The site is situated east of Rt. 29 North and a multi-tenant retail building, adjacent to the Rio Road East Entrance Corridor. It is currently occupied by a vacant Red Lobster restaurant. The surrounding buildings feature the recently completed Home Depot to the south and a blend of modern commercial styles, with many utilizing brick as a primary material.
Visibility	The proposed development will be highly visible from the Rio Road Entrance Corridor and slightly visible from the Rt. 29 Entrance Corridor.
ARB Meeting Date	May 4, 2026
Staff Contact	Khris Taggart

PROJECT/SITE HISTORY

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) approved the site and architectural plans for the Red Lobster restaurant in 2009. On December 15, 2025, a pre-application meeting was held to discuss the proposed changes to the site. Design staff recommended revisions to the site layout (specifically the orientation of the building and fuel pump canopy, as well as the location of the dumpster), the architectural design (the use of faux windows on EC facing elevations), and the type of signage (recommending a monument sign instead of a pole sign). The current proposal maintains the building orientation, dumpster location, and the use of faux windows on the elevation facing Rio Road as presented during the pre-application meeting.

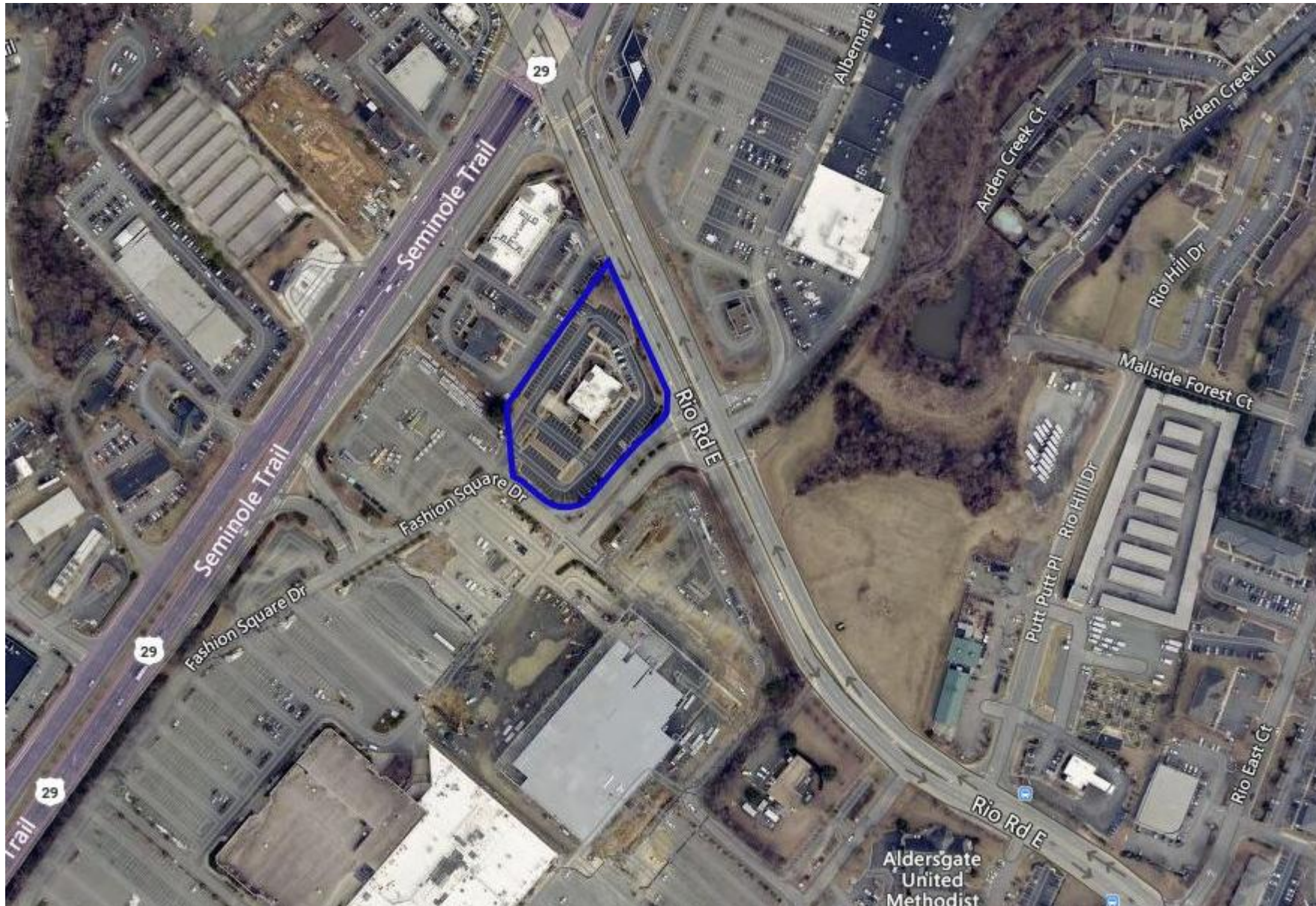


Figure 1: Pictometry image highlighting the subject property.

ANALYSIS

Gray highlight = means the guideline can't be reviewed at initial site plan stage, but recommendations can be provided for final
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		
	<i>Purpose, Compatibility with significant historic sites and the character of the Entrance Corridor, Structure design, Site Development and layout</i>		
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.	The proposed building features cast stone veneer at the base and on the tower elements, with brick veneer above the stone base and standing seam metal roofs topping the towers. The front (south) elevation, which faces the Home Depot parking lot, features tower elements, canopies, and awnings that enhance the storefront entrances and windows. These design elements add visual interest and break up the façade. However, this elevation will not be visible from the Rio EC and will only be minimally visible from the Rt. 29 EC. Similar features are present on the east (right) elevation. The northern elevation of the building features two simulated storefront windows, each with an awning above. Behind the glass of these windows are red metal ACM panels with a graphic design. This side of the building also includes utility connections and underground grease storage tanks. The west (left) side of the building includes a secondary entrance, a service door, and designated areas for propane tank storage. Overall, the orientation of the building, coupled with minimal design elements visible from the Entrance Corridor and the presence of service components, establishes a predominantly utilitarian appearance typical of back-of-house facilities. To enhance the visual presence and provide an appropriate façade for the Rio Road EC, revisions to the building's orientation or the detailing of the elevations visible from the Entrance Corridor are required.	Revise the overall site layout to ensure that the development presents an appropriate front to the Rio Road EC. Revise any back of building elevations visible from the EC to provide design elements that present an appropriate front to the Rio Road EC.
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.	The tower forms, storefront windows, awnings, and building materials effectively contribute to breaking up the façade of the store building, thereby fostering a sense of human scale. However, the windows situated along the south elevation exhibit an awkward appearance, as the glass does not extend down to the cast stone sill, resulting in a "floating" effect. Currently, this elevation will not be visible from the EC; however, should a revised building orientation	

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.	result in greater visibility of this elevation, or if revisions to the north elevation include similar windows, the windows should be extended down to the cast stone sill to mitigate this issue. The rear of the main entrance tower is expected to be visible from Rio Road. As it is currently designed, the stone veneer does not extend around to the back of the tower, which emphasizes the back of building appearance of the north elevation. Revising the design to show the stone veneer wrapping around to the rear of the tower could help provide a more cohesive design. Sheet A311 illustrates examples of the proposed faux windows found in other Sheetz locations. These examples show that the panels obscure interior views of the building and serve as additional branding elements. Revising the design to eliminate these panels and allow views into the building could be beneficial. One of the examples shows multiple smaller openings spaced out across the elevation. Revising the north elevation to use multiple openings could help create more of a sense of rhythm and less blankness than the two openings creates.
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.	While the building utilizes some forms and materials that provide a loose connection to historic architecture, the proposed fuel pump canopy has no relation to historic architecture and lacks human scale. It has a footprint of 5,327 square feet (133' 9" long by 39' 7" wide) and a height of 15' 6" from the ground to the bottom of the truss. The heights at the low and high points of the canopy are 19' 6" and 23' 3", respectively. The size, height, angled roof, and tall trusswork of the canopy create a monumental scale instead of one that feels human in proportion. The placement of the convenience store between the fuel pump canopy and the EC helps to mitigate the canopy's visual impact but an alternative site configuration that provides an appropriate front towards Rio Rd. may create a more beneficial visual impact on 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.	The single-slope roof of the canopy does not relate to the store building but the form can be found in the nearby Aldi located to the north across Rio Road, and in the other Sheetz development along the EC.
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.	
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	
12	Architecture proposed within the Entrance Corridor should use forms, shapes, scale, and materials to create a cohesive whole.	
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	The proposed building design is a much stronger reflection of trademark character than it is a reflection of the requirements of the Guidelines. The elements that loosely recall traditional architecture are reflected in many Sheetz developments, making the building immediately recognizable as brand architecture.

13	Any appearance of “blankness” resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.	The north and west elevations of the store building are not entirely blank, but they have a utilitarian appearance. Revisions to the orientation or detailing of the building are necessary to ensure that the elevations visible from Rio Rd appropriately address the EC.	
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	No architectural connecting devices are proposed for this site. While there are some convenience stores in the County that have physical connections to their fuel pump canopies, this approach is not recommended here. The design and style of the proposed store and canopy do not align closely enough to justify a physical connection.	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>	Specifications and samples of the proposed window glass have not been submitted at this time.	Provide specifications on the proposed window glass. Provide samples, if tinted window glass is proposed.
	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 enclosure is proposed for the northwest corner of the site, north of the building and close to the Rio Road EC. The upper portion of the enclosure is expected to be visible from the street. While no details about the proposed appearance have been provided in this submittal, its current location near the EC further establishes the back-of-building appearance as viewed from the EC. A position further south, away from the EC, would be more appropriate. Two propane lockers and a roof access ladder are proposed to be placed along the west side of the building, where they are expected to have minimal visibility from the EC. Along the north side of the building are the electrical box, gas meter/riser, and associated bollards that are proposed to be finished in dark bronze. In this location, these utility connections are expected to be readily visible from the EC. Revising their placement to relocate them to an elevation where they will be less visible would be appropriate. The architectural drawings show roof-mounted mechanical equipment. However, the positioning of this equipment does not eliminate visibility from the EC, so roof screens are proposed. Although these screens utilize a color (dark bronze) and material (metal) consistent with the overall building design, their proportions emphasize their functional purpose and do not correspond with the architectural composition as a whole. While placing the equipment in a location that is not visible from the EC may not be feasible, a parapet wall similar to the one used at the other Sheetz development along the EC would provide screening that is coordinated with the building design. To ensure a coordinated appearance with the raised wall heights, the height of the tower forms should also be increased.	Revise the site plan to locate the dumpster in a less visible location 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 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.		Relocate the electrical box and gas meter/riser to a location with less visibility from the EC.
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.		Revise the building design to use parapet walls to screen the proposed roof-mounted mechanical equipment. Revise the height of the towers to provide a coordinated appearance.
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 standard mechanical equipment note is not on the site plan or architectural drawings.	Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the site and architectural plans.

	Lighting		
	<i>General Guidelines</i>		
22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets;	A lighting plan has not been provided with this submittal but in other Sheetz locations within the County, illumination levels on the initial lighting plans submitted were well above the Guidelines and ordinance maximums. Submitting a lighting plan that meets the Guidelines and ordinance would be appropriate.	Provide a lighting plan with the next submittal that shows: a. Lighting levels not exceeding 30 fc under the canopy and 20 fc elsewhere. b. Spillover not exceeding .5 fc. c. Full cut off fixtures. d. Freestanding pole heights not exceeding 20’ including the base. e. Wall and freestanding fixture finishes that are either dark brown, dark bronze, or black.
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.		
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.		
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.		
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 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.”		Provide the standard lighting note with the lighting plan.
	<i>Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting</i>		
30	Light used for decorative effect shall: a. be compatible with the character of the Entrance Corridor. Compatibility of exterior lighting and lighting fixtures is assessed in terms of design, use, size, scale, color, and brightness.	A lighting plan has not been provided with this submittal.	If decorative lighting is proposed, revise the plan to show that it meets the Guidelines requirements.

	b. impact only the immediate site. The effect of the illumination should not be discernible from distances along the Entrance Corridor.		
31	Where used for decorative effect, outdoor light fixtures shall: a. be equipped with automatic timing devices and shall be extinguished between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and dawn. b. be shielded and focused to eliminate glare. Glare control shall be achieved primarily through the use of such means as cutoff fixtures, shields and baffles, and appropriate application of mounting height, wattage, aiming angle, fixture placement, etc. c. be cutoff luminaires, aimed so as not to project their output beyond the objects intended to be illuminated; or non-cutoff luminaires, equipped with glare shields, visors, barn doors, and/or other similar shielding accessories as required to meet the following criteria: Light distribution from all lighting installations shall be cut-off at all angles beyond those required to restrict direct illumination to within the perimeter of the landscape feature being illuminated. d. never exceed 3,000 lumens. Further restrictions on lumens may be imposed by the ARB. e. not be modified to reflect seasonal colors. f. be of a number that is compatible with the scale of the object and the development to be illuminated, such that the light emitted will not over-illuminate or overpower the site, as determined by the ARB.		
	<i>Landscaping</i>		
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 landscaping plan shows large shade trees planted at 3.5" caliper along Rio Rd. There are a few areas where the spacing between the trees exceeds 35' on center, specifically near the pedestrian connection to the existing sidewalk along Rio Road, west of the store building, and at the intersection of Fashion Square Drive and Rio Road. However, the plan includes the required number of large trees, and the interspersed ornamental trees and shrubs contribute to the integration of the landscape into the surrounding context.	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.	The landscaping plan shows large shade trees proposed to be planted at 2.5” caliper along Fashion Square Drive. The spacing exceeds 40’ on center near the pedestrian connection north of the right-in entrance, but the number of trees proposed (10) exceeds the requirements (8).	None.
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.	The interior pedestrian pathways are located along the eastern and southern edges of the site, as well as on the west, east, and south sides of the building. The trees along the interior roads also serve as pedestrian trees, satisfying the interior pedestrian way tree requirements.	
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 total of 40 parking spaces is proposed, which requires the installation of four interior parking lot trees. Perimeter trees are provided for the parking areas south of the fuel pump canopy and east of the building, but no trees are provided for the spaces on the west and south sides of the building. This uneven distribution of interior trees leaves the large, central portion of the site without trees. Adding tree islands near the southeast and southwest corners of the building could help meet interior tree requirements. Additionally, shrubs are planned along the perimeters of the parking area to mitigate the impact of the paved surface on the surrounding corridor. However, some of the shrubs are specified to be 18 inches in height at the time of planting, which does not meet the required minimum height of 24 inches.	Revise the landscape plan to provide interior tree islands with large trees at the southeast and southwest corners of the building. Revise the landscape plan to increase the minimum planting height for all shrubs to 24 inches.
36	Landscaping of buildings and other structures:	Shrubs are proposed along the north side of the building. While landscaping can be an effective method to help integrate buildings into their surroundings, in this case, the	

	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.	landscaping does not mitigate the absence of architectural detailing along this elevation that creates a back of the building as viewed from the EC. To create a more appropriate front for the EC, a different building orientation will likely be necessary.	
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.
38	Plant health: The following note should be added to the landscape plan: “All site plantings of trees and shrubs shall be allowed to reach, and be maintained at, mature height; the topping of trees is prohibited. Shrubs and trees shall be pruned minimally and only to support the overall health of the plant.”	The standard plan health note is on the landscape plan.	None.
	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.	The site has already been developed, and no natural landscape or vistas remain. The proposed development features two major structural elements, each with its own circulation patterns. Positioning the building between the fuel pump canopy and the Entrance Corridor is generally beneficial as it helps reduce the negative visual impact of paving on the EC. However, the lack of architectural detailing on the elevations that are visible from Rio Rd. creates a "back-of-the-building" appearance when viewed from the EC. A revised layout might increase the visibility of the fuel canopy and pavement, but it would also enhance the visibility of the façade, potentially presenting a more appropriate front to the development as viewed from the EC. The proposed site plan retains the current vehicular connections along the western boundary of the site while proposing a new connection along the eastern boundary. Along the eastern and southern perimeters of the site the plan shows new sidewalks and along Rio Road the pedestrian connection to the existing sidewalk situated between the roadway and the development is proposed to be reconfigured. A green space and stormwater management area are proposed along the southern perimeter of the site. Reducing the extent of this area may facilitate greater flexibility in the site layout.	See recommendations in #1.
39	The relationship of buildings and other structures to the Entrance Corridor street and to other development within the corridor should be as follows: a. An organized pattern of roads, service lanes, bike paths, and pedestrian walks should guide the layout of the site. b. In general, buildings fronting the Entrance Corridor street should be parallel to the street. Building groupings should be arranged to parallel the Entrance Corridor street.		

	c. Provisions should be made for connections to adjacent pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems. d. Open spaces should be tied into surrounding areas to provide continuity within the Entrance Corridor. e. If significant natural features exist on the site (including creek valleys, steep slopes, significant trees or rock outcroppings), to the extent practical, then such natural features should be reflected in the site layout. If the provisions of Section 32.5.2.n of the <i>Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance</i> apply, then improvements required by that section should be located so as to maximize the use of existing features in screening such improvements from Entrance Corridor streets. f. The placement of structures on the site should respect existing views and vistas on and around the site.		
	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 existing grading is not being significantly altered.	None.
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.	There are several trees in the northwest corner of the site that are designated for preservation. Tree protection measures are indicated around these trees.	None.
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.	An underground detention facility is shown at the southern end of the site, south of the 9-space parking row.	None.

44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.		
45	Fuel Pump Canopies		
a	Fuel pump canopies may be required to provide customers with protection from the elements and to provide lighting levels required for dispensing fuel. Such fuel pump canopies are functional elements of present-day gas/convenience stores and their character and appearance shall reflect a minimalist design consistent with that function.	The proposed canopy is distinctive and not minimalistic in design. It, like the store building, functions as brand architecture.	Revise the canopy design so that the lowest edge measured from the grade to the bottom of the truss does not exceed 14'6".
b	Fuel pump canopies shall be the smallest size possible to offer protection from the elements. Canopies shall not exceed the sizes identified in Standards for Fuel Pump Canopies as outlined in Appendix B.	The canopy has 4 islands and 8 pumps, and measures approximately 133.9' L x 39.7' W x 22'-5 1/4" H. The canopy footprint is larger than the maximum height and length dimensions listed in the Standards. Canopies larger than the Standards in length have been approved elsewhere in the County. However, limiting the canopy height to 14'6" measured from the grade to the bottom of the truss have been consistently applied with the most recently approved fuel station canopies within the county (Sheetz, Wawa). HEIGHT (from ground to bottom of fascia) Maximum acceptable height is 14' 6". FASCIA HEIGHT Maximum fascia height is 36". <i>Excerpt from Standards for Fuel Pump Canopies</i>	
c	The size of the canopy fascia and canopy support columns shall be in proportion to the overall size of the canopy structure. The fascia shall not exceed 36" in total height, including any accent bands.	The proposed canopy, like the one constructed at Airport Road, has a single-slope roof with a red fascia supported by bronze-colored trusses on piers with stone-vener bases. At 6' high,	

d	Canopy fascias shall not be illuminated.	the stone veneer begins to establish human scale in the canopy, but the overall size and character of the canopy result in an overall monumental scale.	
e	Lighting of fuel pump canopies shall be of the lowest level that will provide safe dispensing of fuel. All canopy lighting shall be flush-mounted and shielded, downward directed, and shall not emit light above the horizontal plane. All canopy lighting shall meet the .5 foot-candle spillover requirement in compliance with zoning ordinance regulations.	No lighting information has been provided for the site. In the most recently approved fuel stations within the county (Sheetz, Wawa), lighting under the canopy was limited to 30 fc.	Provide a lighting plan with the next submittal. The maximum footcandle value must not exceed 30 fc beneath the canopy and 20 fc anywhere else on site.
f	Canopy related elements, including fuel dispensers, support columns, spandrels, planters, etc. shall be compatible with the character of the building and site and shall not be used for advertising.	The canopy uses materials (stone masonry veneer) and colors (dark bronze and red) that coordinate with the main building, but the form, scale, and contemporary design serve as brand architecture, which functions as indirect advertising. The single-slope roof and truss structure of the canopy do not relate to the store building, but the single-slope roof does relate to the roof form that the ARB approved for the Aldi across Rio Rd. to the north and has been approved for the other Sheetz location along the Entrance Corridor.	See recommendations on the canopy in 45a.
g	The architectural elements of a building should not be altered to reflect trademark canopy design.		
h	Canopy fascias shall be limited to the use of one principal color, with ARB review.		
i	Colors, materials, forms, and detailing may be used to coordinate canopies with a site, its building(s), and structures.		
j	Fuel pump canopy applicants should refer to ARB Standards for Fuel Pump Canopies. (Appendix B)		
	SIGNS	Signage is reviewed and approved by a 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. Cabinet-style signs are shown on the south and east elevations of the entrance tower, the north elevation of the building, and on three sides of the canopy. This is not the preferred sign type in the ECs. If illuminated, the background portion of the cabinet-style signs must be opaque. The Pantone equivalents for the proposed sign colors are not indicated in the architectural drawings but they appear to be similar to the ones used for building details and the fuel pump canopy, Pantone red 201C and 187C, which are both appropriate. A monument sign is proposed along Rio Road. The architectural drawings show a cabinet-style sign on top of a brick base that incorporates the fuel price display. The size and attachment method of the Sheetz cabinet result in an overall uncoordinated appearance. A revised design that better integrates the “Sheetz” signage with the base and gas pricing would be appropriate.	Sign applications are required for all proposed signs. Eliminate cabinet-style signs or limit them to secondary signs. All cabinet-type signs must have opaque backgrounds. Revise the monument sign to better integrate the Sheetz cabinet sign and base. Revise the site plan to include a note acknowledging that the sign location is shown only for information and will not be approved with the site plan.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. The site layout as it relates to the building and the fuel pump canopy.
2. The building and canopy design.
3. Landscaping along Rio Rd, Fashion Square Drive, and within the site.

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

- Regarding requirements to satisfy the design guidelines as per § 18-30.6.4c(2), (3) and (5) and recommended conditions of initial plan approval:
 - The ARB does not recommend approval of the Initial Plan at this time. Prior to Initial Plan approval the following items shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the ARB:
 1. Revise the overall site layout to ensure that the development presents an appropriate front to the Rio Road EC.
 2. Revise the site plan to locate the dumpster in a less visible location from the EC.
- Regarding recommendations on the plan as it relates to the guidelines: None.
- Regarding conditions to be satisfied prior to issuance of a grading permit: None.
- 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. Revise the overall site layout to ensure that the development presents an appropriate front to the Rio Road EC.
 2. Revise any back-of-building elevations visible from the EC to provide design elements that present an appropriate front to the Rio Road EC.
 3. Provide specifications on the proposed window glass. Provide samples, if tinted window glass is proposed.
 4. Revise the site plan to locate the dumpster in a less visible location from the EC.
 5. Relocate the electrical box and gas meter/riser to a location with less visibility from the EC.
 6. Revise the building design to use parapet walls to screen the proposed roof-mounted mechanical equipment. Revise the height of the towers to provide a coordinated appearance.
 7. Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the site and architectural plans: “Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated.”
 8. Provide a lighting plan with the next submittal that shows:
 - a. Lighting levels not exceeding 30 fc under the canopy and 20 fc elsewhere.
 - b. Spillover not exceeding .5 fc.
 - c. Full cut of fixtures.
 - d. Freestanding pole heights not exceeding 20’ including the base.
 - e. Wall and freestanding fixtures finishes that are either dark brown, dark bronze, or black.
 9. Provide the standard lighting note with 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.”
 10. If decorative lighting is proposed, revise the plan to show that it meets the Guidelines requirements.
 11. Revise the landscape plan to provide interior tree islands with large trees at the southeast and southwest corners of the building.
 12. Revise the landscape plan to increase the minimum planting height for all shrubs to 24 inches.
 13. Revise the canopy design so that the lowest edge measured from the grade to the bottom of the truss does not exceed 14’6”.

14. Provide a lighting plan with the next submittal. The maximum footcandle value should not exceed 30 fc beneath the canopy and 20 fc anywhere else on site.
15. Sign applications are required for all proposed signs.
16. Eliminate cabinet-style signs or limit them to secondary signs. All cabinet-type signs must have opaque backgrounds.
17. Revise the monument sign to better integrate the Sheetz cabinet sign and base.
18. Revise the site plan to include a note acknowledging that the sign location is shown only for information and will not be approved with the site plan.

ATTACHMENTS

Attach. 1: [ARB2026-00003 and SDP-2026-00033 Sheetz Initial Site Plan](#)

Attach. 2: [ARB2026-00003 and SDP-2026-00033 Sheetz Architectural Drawings](#)