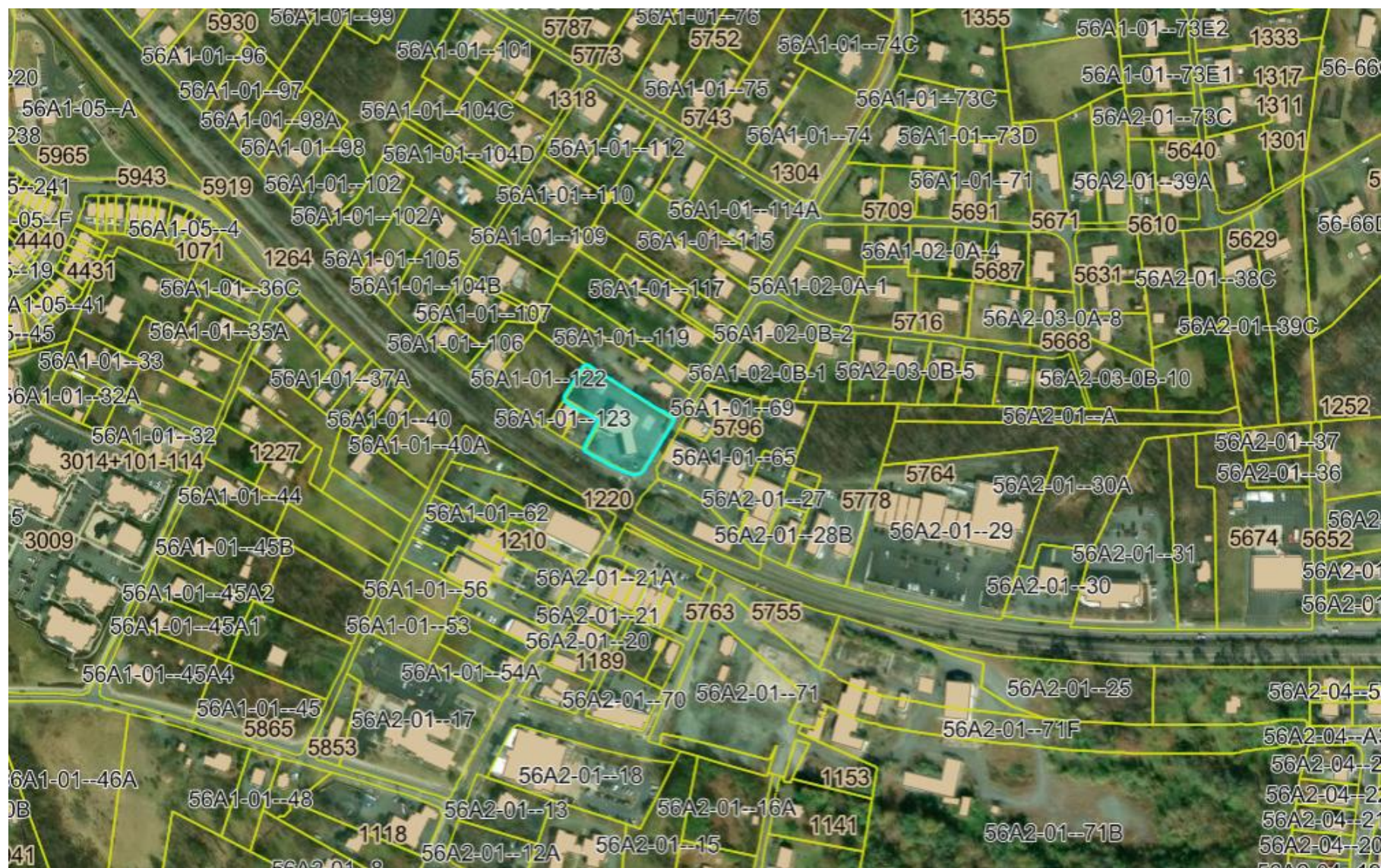


ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2025-22: Fasmart Store – Major Amendment
Review Type	Major Amendment
Parcel Identification	056A1010012400
Location	1248 Crozet Avenue (Figure 1)
Zoned	Downtown Crozet District (DCD) / Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Sappington Revocable Living Trust / Pulley (Katie Gray)
Magisterial District	White Hall
Proposal	To revise the exterior of the building by painting it black and adding Nichiha panels on a portion of the side elevation.
Context	This site is located in Downtown Crozet, with commercial properties to the east, residences and converted residences to the north, the Crozet Depot to the southeast, and additional commercial properties to the south across the railroad tracks.
Visibility	This development is readily visible from the Entrance Corridor.
ARB Meeting Date	October 6, 2025
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski



PROJECT HISTORY

The ARB reviewed and approved the Crozet Convenience Store at this location in 1999 (ARB-P(SDP)-1999-18 and -48). A major site plan amendment was approved in 2000 (ARB-P(SDP)-2000-19), and signs were approved in 2004, 2009, and 2014 (ARB-2004-156, ARB-2009-48, and ARB-2014-103).

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	<i>Purpose; Compatibility with significant historic sites:</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 existing building is a good example of a contemporary design that reflects the historic architecture of the County. The design sits well in the Crozet National Register Historic District. Black painted brick is not characteristic of Albemarle's historic buildings. Painting the brick black will severely diminish the connection between the existing building and the County's historic structures.	Revise the proposal to include no painting of the brick walls.
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.	The existing red brick, grey roof, and white trim of the building combine to form a balanced design that is compatible with buildings in the area. Painting the red brick black will make the building incompatible with nearby buildings whose predominant colors are shades of red and brown and off-white tones. The black color will appear out of place and will likely be the primary visual experience of the site, downplaying the unified appearance of the overall development.	
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.	Painting the brick will increase the need for maintenance; once painted, the brick walls will need regular re-painting due to fading and peeling. Unmaintained brick will not promote an orderly or attractive appearance on the corridor.	
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.		
	<i>Compatibility with significant historic sites; Compatibility with the character of the Entrance Corridor; Structure design</i>		
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 black paint is part of "refreshing" the building to meet branding standards. The black paint will reduce the effect of texture in the exterior walls and will diminish the appearance and effect of existing brick detailing. The original proposal also includes the application of Nichiha panels to a portion of the northeast elevation (to the right of the main entrance) behind the existing wall sign. As illustrated, the Nichiha panels appear out of place; they have no relationship to the form or detailing of the building and they hide brick detailing intended to frame the wall sign. After discussions with the applicant, the applicant proposes to reduce the area of Nichiha panels to cover only the area of the existing signage. Limiting the panels to the interior of the decorative brickwork would reduce negative visual impacts. However, the Nichiha panels should be considered with the proposed sign design, which is required to be submitted under a separate application.	Revise the proposal to include no painting of the brick walls. Revise the proposal to eliminate the Nichiha panels. If the panels are meant as a backer for a wall sign, include the panels in a sign design submitted in a separate sign application.

			
		<i>Existing wall sign with decorative brick surround.</i>	
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.	Painting the red brick black will make the building incompatible with nearby buildings whose predominant colors are shades of red and brown and off-white tones. The black painted brick is expected to appear unbalanced with nearby development and it is not expected to contribute to a cohesive appearance on the corridor.	
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.		
12	Architecture proposed within the Entrance Corridor should use forms, shapes, scale, and materials to create a cohesive whole.		
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.		
13	Any appearance of “blankness” resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.	There is no change proposed to the existing windows and doors, but the black paint will tend to dilute the texture and detail in the wall surface, thereby reducing the effect of human scale that is otherwise provided by the windows, doors, and brick, and increasing the feeling of blankness.	
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	No new buildings are proposed.	None.
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	The proposal is a “refreshing” of the building to achieve updated branding standards. As such, the black paint is a response to a current trend that will change again in the future, setting the	Revise the proposal to include no painting of the brick walls.

		building up for ongoing revisions to keep up with evolving branding standards.	
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>	No glass changes are proposed.	None.
	Accessory structures and equipment		
17	Accessory structures and equipment should be integrated into the overall plan of development and shall, to the extent possible, be compatible with the building designs used on the site.	Approved equipment is located behind the building at the ground and on areas of the roof that are not visible from the Entrance Corridor. New mechanical equipment is proposed.	Confirm on the drawings that the proposal includes no work that will result in mechanical equipment visible from the Entrance Corridor street.
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.		
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.	No stormwater changes are proposed.	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 is needed on the plans.	Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the plans.
22-31	Lighting	See guideline 45e, below.	See guideline 45e, below.
7-8, 32-38	Landscaping	No changes to landscaping are proposed.	None.

6, 39-44	<i>Site Development and layout; Development pattern, Grading</i>	No changes to the site layout or grading are proposed.	None.
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.	No change is proposed to the size of the canopy.	None.
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.		
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.		
d	Canopy fascias shall not be illuminated.	Fascia illumination is not proposed.	None.
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.	The original plans indicate that the light fixtures in the fuel pump canopy will be replaced. This would require a site plan amendment with a complete lighting plan. After discussions with the applicant, the applicant has chosen to eliminate the canopy lighting from the proposal.	Revise the drawing set to show no proposed changes to the existing fuel pump canopy fixtures.
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 approved color of the columns of the fuel pump canopy is white. The upper portions of the columns have been painted BP green without approval. The current proposal includes painting the entire columns white, which will bring the columns back into compliance with previous approvals.	None.
g	The architectural elements of a building should not be altered to reflect trademark canopy design.	The black color proposed for the brick walls reflects a trademark design.	Revise the proposal to include no painting of the brick walls.
h	Canopy fascias shall be limited to the use of one principal color, with ARB review.	Canopy fascia and trim are to be patched, repaired and painted white.	None.

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)		

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. Painting the building black
2. Adding Nichiha panels to the building

Staff recommends approval of the proposal with the following changes:

1. Revise the proposal to include no painting of the brick walls.
2. Revise the proposal to eliminate the Nichiha panels. If the panels are meant as a backer for a wall sign, include the panels in a sign design submitted in a separate sign application.
3. Confirm on the drawings that the proposal includes no work that will result in mechanical equipment visible from the Entrance Corridor street.
4. Add the standard mechanical equipment note to the plans: “Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated.”
5. Revise the drawing set to show no proposed changes to the existing fuel pump canopy fixtures.

ATTACHMENTS

Attach. 1: ARB-2025-00022: Fasmart Store Major Amendment Architectural Package

Attach. 2: ARB-2025-00022: Fasmart Store Major Amendment Site Plan

Attach. 3: ARB-2025-00022: Fasmart Store Major Amendment Narrative

Attach. 4: ARB-2025-00022: Fasmart Store Major Amendment Paint Specs