

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	ARB-2026-00014: Airport Road Self-Storage
Review Type	Final Site Development Plan and second review of an architectural design
Parcel Identification	03200000001700
Location	North side of Airport Road, east of Timberwood Blvd. (Fig.1)
Zoned	Light Industry (LI), Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	Six Star Associates LLC / United Land Co. (Hunter Wood) & Collins Eng. (Chuck Rapp)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	To construct a new self-storage facility with associated site improvements.
Context	Immediately to the west of the site there are institutional and industrial properties. Across Airport Rd. to the south is a mix of industrial, institutional and residential development. The UVA Foundation’s North Fork research park is located to the north and east.
Visibility	The development will be readily visible from the Entrance Corridor street.
ARB Meeting Date	August 24, 2026
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

The ARB reviewed the initial site plan and a conceptual architectural design for this project on April 20, 2026. The comments resulting from that review are included in the Analysis section of this report. This revised submittal addresses most of those comments. (See Fig. 2 for a comparison of the original and revised architectural designs.)



Figure 2: Comparison of original (left) and revised (right) architectural designs.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	RECOMMENDATION 4/20/26	ISSUE 8/24/26	RECOMMENDATION 8/24/26
	<i>Purpose; Compatibility with the character of the Entrance Corridor; Compatibility with significant historic sites; Structure design</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.	Revise the architectural design, including form, material and color changes, to establish a more overall cohesive design. Revise the architectural design to further reduce mass and increase human scale. Consider adding additional tower features to the EC elevation.	The architectural design has been significantly revised to address the ARB’s comments from 4/20/26. A tower element has been added, and the building blocks have been switched so that a tower now marks the Airport/Timberwood intersection and the Airport and Timberwood elevations of the shorter block are flanked by towers. Window configurations and the distribution of various siding types have been reworked to reduce blankness, and to distinguish the two building blocks while maintaining overall coordination. While the building remains very large, this reworking, and a 5’ reduction in the tower height, help reduce the visual impact of the massing and scale, though the number of materials, textures and colors may contribute to a “busy” appearance.	Provide the perspective views without the landscaping. Revise the architectural elevations to note that the materials and colors of the backs and sides of the tower elements will be consistent with the those on the front.
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.	Revise the architectural feature at the southeast corner of the building to appear more like a traditional tower. Revise the “Caribbean” blue color for a more coordinated overall appearance.		Revise the architectural drawings to show accurate color names for the materials at the upper tower wall, the tower cap, and the FW-120 metal panels.
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.	Provide updated perspective views of the building and site illustrating any proposed architectural changes. Provide the perspective views both with and without the proposed landscaping.		Reconsider the block veneer detail at the windows on the EC elevation of the eastern building block.
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.	Provide a roof plan. Add detail to the architectural drawings to show a consistent treatment on the sides and backs	Other features have been reduced or removed for better alignment with the guidelines: the ground floor garages were removed from EC side of building; the travelway around the building and the RV parking area have been labeled as “not proposed with this set of plans,” and the amount of blue accent EIFS has been reduced and moved to locations that have less visibility from the EC.	Submit physical material samples for review.

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.	of the towers and the tall “Ash Gray” corrugated metal panel element on the north elevation, just west of the tower, consistent with the fronts.	A roof plan showing the various components and slopes of the roof and revised perspective views have been submitted, though versions of the perspectives without landscaping were not provided.	
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.	Consider switching the taller building block with the shorter block and consider additional contrast between the two blocks.	The perspectives suggest that the materials and colors of the sides and backs of the tower elements are consistent with the fronts, but the architectural elevations do not include this information.	
10	Buildings should relate to their site and the surrounding context of buildings.	Consider providing 5 window bays in the taller block and 3 in the shorter one.	4” concrete block veneer is used at the base of the towers and at the base of the taller building block. It extends above the first floor and up the sides of the windows on the EC elevation of the eastern building block. This treatment creates an unusual detail.	
11	The overall design of buildings should have human scale. Scale should be integral to the building and site design.	Consider opportunities to bring down the building height.	Notes on the architectural drawings indicate the same material and color for the upper portion of the tower wall and the tower cap, although the renderings show them as different colors. One of the metal siding colors is noted as “white” though it is rendered as a tan or beige color.	
12	Architecture proposed within the Entrance Corridor should use forms, shapes, scale, and materials to create a cohesive whole.			
13	Any appearance of “blankness” resulting from building design should be relieved using design detail or vegetation, or both.			
14	Arcades, colonnades, or other architectural connecting devices should be used to unify groups of buildings within a development.	None.	Arcades and colonnades are not proposed. A single building is proposed for this part of the property. It is not physically connected to the buildings to the north.	None.
15	Trademark buildings and related features should be modified to meet the requirements of the Guidelines.	None.	The building design does not have the appearance of a trademark design.	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>	Provide on the plans information on the proposed window glass consistent with the guidelines requirement. Indicate if the windows provide a view into the building interior.	The applicant's comment response letter states that a statement regarding VLT and VLR will be added to the plan prior to building permit submittal. Confirmation that the guideline will be met must be on the plan prior to final site plan approval.	Add a note to the plan stating conformity with the VLT and VLR guidelines requirements. Include information on the proposed tint of the window glass. Clear glass and minimal tint are consistent with the guidelines.
	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.	Revise the plan to indicate the height of the ground-mounted mechanical equipment and to show immediate screening of the equipment that is visible from the street.	Ground-mounted mechanical equipment is shown on the plan. The applicant's comment-response letter states that the equipment will be 2-3' tall. Shrubs are shown around the equipment. Planting size for the shrubs near the equipment is proposed at 3 gallons. The size will need to be provided as a height in feet, sufficient to screen the equipment.	In the plant schedule, revise the proposed sizes of the screening shrubs to indicate heights in feet that are sufficient to screen the equipment.
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.	Revise the mechanical equipment note (Site Note #1, Sheet 2) to indicate full screening of roof- and ground-mounted equipment. Coordinate the equipment shown on the plan with the notes. Provide details for all proposed and noted screens and fences.	The equipment screening note on Sheet 2 of the site plan has been revised as requested.	
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.	If rooftop equipment is proposed, provide a roof plan with the locations identified and show how the equipment will be screened from view. Eliminate the RV parking area from the plan. Note that the current site layout may not be able to accommodate sufficient mitigation measures for the parking lot as shown	The RV parking area and vehicle circulation around the building are now labeled as potential future additions. As currently shown, the RV parking area will have some limited visibility from the Entrance Corridor.	
21	The following note should be added to the site plan and the architectural	Add the standard equipment note	The note does not appear on the	Add the standard equipment note

	plan: “Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated.”	to the architectural plans.	architectural plans. A remnant note from a previous apartment building project remains on Sheet 13 of the site plan.	to the architectural plans. Remove the reference to apartment buildings in the equipment note on Sheet 13 of the site plan.
	Lighting			
	<i>General Guidelines</i>			
22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets;	None.	There is no excessive spillover.	None.
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.	None.	Proposed fixtures are full cutoff styles.	None.
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.	None.	The maximum light level is identified as 3.0 fc.	None.
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.	None.	The proposed fixtures have LED lamps with a color temperature of 3000K.	None.
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.	Revise the lighting plan to indicate the color of the poles and fixtures. Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are recommended.	The lighting plan has been revised to indicate black as the color of the light poles and fixtures.	None.
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.	None.	The mounting height of the pole fixtures is noted as 20’. No wall-mounted lights are shown on the lighting plan, though they do appear on the architectural renderings.	If wall-mounted fixtures are proposed, include them and all related details on the lighting plan.
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	None.	The note is on the lighting plan.	None.

	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.”			
30-31	<i>Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting</i>	None.	No decorative lighting is proposed.	None.
	<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.	Provide confirmation from the easement holder that the shrub planting along the Airport Road frontage is allowed.	Shrubs are proposed at the edge of the utility easement; trees are proposed outside the easement. The applicant has indicated that the drainage easement will be vacated. Trees are now consistently spaced along the EC frontage.	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.	Revise the size of the drainage easement on the Airport Rd. side of the site to allow consistent spacing of EC frontage trees.		
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	None.	Street trees are provided along Timberwood Blvd. at approximately 35’	None.

	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.		on center and along the private access road at approximately 40’ on center. Both are provided at the required size.	
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.	None.	Sidewalk is provided along the short parking rows near the building. Trees are not provided along the length of those sidewalks or the parking rows, but they are provided at the ends of the rows. The parking spaces are not expected to be visible from the EC.	None.
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.	Consider shifting the storm pipe that crosses the 5-space parking row to increase planting area and consider switching the locations of the Sweetbay Magnolia and the Honeylocust nearest the northern building entrance.		
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.	Provide the perspective images without landscaping.	Foundation shrub planting has been added around the perimeter of the building. The landscaped berm will help mitigate the mass of the building. Perspective images without landscaping were not provided.	Provide the perspective images without landscaping.
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> .	None.	The proposed species are on the approved plant 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	None.	The note appears on the plan.	None.

	health of the plant.”			
	<i>Site Development and layout</i>			
	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.	Consider reorienting the building so that the current north elevation faces the EC street.	The applicant notes that the building entrance needs to be near parking, so the entrance remains on the north side of the building. However, the building blocks have been switched so that a tower now marks the Airport/Timberwood intersection and the Airport and Timberwood elevations of the shorter block are flanked by towers. The ground floor garages were removed from the EC side of the building; the travelway around the building and the RV parking area have been labeled as “not proposed with this set of plans.”	None.
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	None.	The grading plan shows a berm proposed	None.

	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.		along the Airport Road frontage. At its highest, the berm is at an elevation of 598'. Most of the rest of the site is at an elevation of approximately 592-594' and the elevation of the Entrance Corridor in the vicinity is approximately 592'. A berm will contribute to the screening of the lower portion of the building.	
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.	None.	There are no trees proposed to remain on this site.	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.	None.	The stormwater facility for the development to the north was sized to include this property.	None.
44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.			
	SIGNS	Note that sign designs and locations are not approved with the site or architectural drawings. Aligning the wall signs with architectural features is recommended.	The landscape plan shows a future freestanding sign location (to be permitted separately) that is coordinated with the proposed landscaping.	None at this time.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the following as the primary points of discussion:

1. The revised building design; building mass and detailing
2. The block veneer window treatment on the EC elevation of the eastern building block.

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. Provide the perspective views without the landscaping.
2. Revise the architectural elevations to note that the materials and colors of the backs and sides of the tower elements will be consistent with the those on the front.
3. Revise the architectural drawings to show accurate color names for the materials at the upper tower wall, the tower cap, and the FW-120 metal panels.
4. Reconsider the block veneer detail at the windows on the EC elevation of the eastern building block.
5. Submit physical material samples for review.
6. Add a note to the plan stating conformity with the VLT and VLR guidelines requirements. Include information on the proposed tint of the window glass. Clear glass and minimal tint are consistent with the guidelines.
7. In the plant schedule, revise the proposed sizes of the screening shrubs to indicate heights in feet that are sufficient to screen the equipment.
8. Add the standard equipment note to the architectural plans.
9. Remove the reference to apartment buildings in the equipment note on Sheet 13 of the site plan. If wall-mounted fixtures are proposed, include them and all related details on the lighting plan.

ATTACHMENTS

Attach. 1: [ARB-2026-00014: Airport Road Self-Storage Architectural Drawings](#)

Attach. 2: [ARB-2026-00014: Airport Road Self-Storage Site Plan](#)