

**Design Review Board
Minutes of Meeting**

**June 7, 2006
9:00 A.M.**

Present: Cheryl McGuire, Tim Hart, Jim Goldsmith, Bob Turgeon, Joann Baierlein, Tim Berres, Paddy Mudd
Excused: Judy Hamilton
Town Staff: Carol Rollins and Gayle Curry

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Cheryl McGuire, chair.

Everyone stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Newcomb House Gallery, 118 St. Mary's Avenue

The Central Business District Community Design Guidelines apply to this project.

At 6 sq. ft. each, the signage as proposed is Code compliant in terms of allowable square footage. As a corner lot, 2 detached signs are permitted. No attached building signage is proposed.

The signs are currently installed on the site, permitted as temporary signs. It is the hope of the applicant that this signage is proposed.

The signs are currently installed on the site, permitted as temporary signs. It is the hope of the applicant that this signage may be utilized permanently with the approval of the Board.

Bolton & Associates, 107 Centennial Street

The Central Business District Community Design Guidelines apply to this project.

At 61.67 sq. ft., the signage as proposed is Code compliant in terms of allowable square footage. As a corner lot, 75 sq. ft. of attached building signage is permitted in order to allow buildings with two street facades to have a sign facing each street. One over size sign is not really consistent with the reasoning behind that additional allotment.

The bottom of the sign is 40' above ground level, well outside of the typical pedestrian's point of view. A seated person in a car is even less likely to see the sign.

This does not meet the guideline for the district which promotes signage designs which relate to the street level, and are user-friendly for pedestrians.

In conformance with the guidelines, only three colors have been selected for the signage. Of some concern is the day/night variation in the appearance of the sign. In the “night” rendering, the sign appears to “float” across the skyline, disconnected from a structure.

Attached to this report is a photo taken June 1st which shows the completed building façade. The photos submitted by the applicant were taken prior to the completion of the building.

Jerry Watkins, Capital Heights, MD, Zack Krebek, Bolton & Associates.

Concurrence: Board members agreed that the sign needs to be dropped down in accordance with the Guidelines. It is not pedestrian friendly, needs to come down to street level. They will be coming back with revisions.

El Ranchito Restaurant, 6325 Crain Highway

The Commercial Highway District Community Design Guidelines apply to this project.

At 56 sq. t., the detached signage as proposed is Code compliant. The support structure has been upgraded from a bare metal pole to a fluted Ionic column in fiberglass, which will require little or no maintenance to stay attractive. The column is 20’ in height, falling within the allowable maximum. Four colors have been utilized, which exceeds three suggested by the Guidelines, unless the cactus was to be construed as a logo.

The attached building signage is also Code compliant at 48 sq. ft. The same comment from above regarding the number of specified colors applies to this sign also. The applicant will need to show/explain how this variety of colors and images works together to achieve a cohesive comprehensive site signage program.

Norma Escobar, El Ranchito Restaurant, Crain Highway, La Plata, Maryland and John Hall, Welcome, Maryland.

Concurrence: Board agreed that there needs to some type of lighting in the parking lot for customers. They asked them to get rid of the man and use the cactus as muted background instead to cut down on some of the colors that are being used. Need the original application for approval. They also need some sight lighting to be added as well. Mr. Turgeon and Mrs. McGuire both agreed that they will not approve 4 colors at all. They will be coming back with revisions.

Walgreens, 6300 Crain Highway

The Commercial Highway Community Design Guidelines apply to this project.

The applicant has submitted a set of site development plans, colored building elevations, proposed lighting details, and photographs of existing Walgreen stores in other locations.

A master sign plan is not required for this project. The proposed detached sign as shown on Sheet A5.1A is not code compliant because it contains a LED display area; however, the proposed sign on Sheet A5.1 is code compliant with a changeable copy area. No detached incidental signage (entrance, exit, drive-thru_ has been shown on the submitted plans. The proposed attached signage (awnings, wall and window) exceeds the 75 sq. ft. maximum allowed because of the pharmacy drive-thru canopy signage, which counts toward the total. If the canopy signage was changed to "Entrance" and "Exit" and did not exceed 2 sq. ft., it would be permissible as incidental or informational signage, and thus be Code compliant.

The site plan as shown is Code complaint. The entrances have been redeveloped at a full 30' width. The current Hawthorne Drive entrance has been moved eastward, which will relieve traffic conflicts with the entrance to the CVS. The new Hawthorne Dr. entrance will serve both the Walgreen site and the Baptist church property to the east, reducing the number of curb-cuts and inherent congestion with turning vehicles. One of the existing entrances on Route 301 has been removed entirely. The required number of parking spaces, standard and accessible, have been provided, and the two required loading spaces have been shown.

A guardrail will be required on top of the proposed retaining wall across any portions where the height of the wall exceeds 30". This term will be added to the construction drawings prior to issuing the grading permit.

Shawn Frost, Bohler Engineering, Sterling, VA and Mike Castellitto, Phillips Edison, Baltimore, Maryland.

Mr. Frost stated that they will change the signage on the drive-thru to be 2 sq. ft. so that it won't be counted as signage.

Concurrence: The Board agreed that they should come back with more innovative designs. They had no problems with the site plan, just the signage. They will be coming back with revisions and that they meet all the requirements of the guidelines.

La Plata Shell, 6305 Crain Highway

The Commercial Highway District Community Design Guidelines apply to this project.

The applicant has submitted a design review application, written response to the guidelines, building elevations, preliminary site plan, and sign permit for your review and comment.

The landscape plan has been submitted to the Beautification Commission for review and comment.

The proposed "attached signage" is not Code compliant and will need to be reduced to meet the maximum 75 sq. ft. allowed.

The proposed "detached signage" appears to be code compliant. Please note that the gas price section of the sign is exempt per Town Code Section 191-64(M).

A hearing was held on May 25, 2006 before the Board of Appeals on the application for a special exception for "automobile filling station" and "convenience store" uses. Approval to grant the special exception was given, conditioned on final direction from the Town Attorney regarding the split ownership of the two lots.

James Erdman, Ben Dyer Associates, Jerry, SMO, Mike Ebersson, SMO, Mike Pelligrino, PAS Architects was present for this meeting.

Concurrence: The Board is looking for a more traditional looking building as an option to look at. They recommended that they come back without the Monolith and

toning down the color and real masonry and not materials that appear to look like masonry. The eyebrow could be smaller in taste.

Mrs. Baierlein made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Berres seconded the motion. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.