

ADRC Meeting Notes October 17, 2019

The Bottle Shop, 20 South Main Street, Unionville

Bruce and Pam Urso appeared to revisit the sign design the ADRC approved at their last meeting. The ADRC was given two designs and the one they chose was not to the liking of the owner. The owners explained why, and the parties agreed to a hybrid of the two signs where the posts would be black on the outside edge of the sign instead of sandwiched between two sign boards. In addition, the balls (finials) would be removed from the top of the posts. The sign colors and layout would remain as preferred by the owners.

Ion Bank, 79 Main Street, Unionville

The applicants represented by ion Bank President, David Rotatori; Richard Korris, developer; and Gregg Rosen, NES Group, presented the bank site plan, design inspiration, and architectural elevations and renderings.

Mr. Kooris introduced the concept and emphasized that while the application does not require a visit to the ADRC, that they'd like to avail themselves of the guidance the committee has to offer. His client, ion Bank, wishes to site a retail location in Unionville and finding space has proven very difficult. The chosen site does have great potential but is somewhat limiting in terms of the layout.

Mr. Rotatori explained ion bank's current presence in Farmington and stated that they wanted to expand into Unionville and continue to be a part of the community. Examples of ion Bank's ongoing community support were discussed. The Bank's primary goal is to be a part of the community and to fit into the setting regarding the building's character as well.

Mr. Rosen then went through the site layout, the examples drawn from for inspiration, and the rendering and architectural designs. He then asked for input, critique, and suggestions the ADRC might have to help them come up with a design that fits the community.

- The ADRC discussed the possibility of swing the bank structure so the long side of the structure faced Main Street. It was then decided that the site presented constraints that would not permit that layout without variances and would adversely affect traffic flow and parking. It was stated that the building as articulated was in keeping with adjacent and nearby residential structures and was not necessarily a bad thing.
- It was decided that the front door should be on Main Street. Some of the stronger design elements of the side door could be brought to the front as well. This might result

in a bit more of a walk from parked vehicles, but not to a degree causing great inconvenience.

- It was felt that the brick should run under the windows and much of the ornamental trim could be lost. The corner moldings could go as well. More brick, less trim. “More brick will add the substantiality and richness that a bank institution deserves.” Chairman Eagles also mentioned running the brick into the gables.
- “Design the attached sign and portico together so they fit.” (and do not appear as an afterthought).
- Concentrate on appropriate brick coursing. Consider adding some minor detail in brickwork to enhance appearance.
- Please, no cupola.
- Please consider shortening the canopy over the drive-through (it only serves a window on the building) and match it to the dormer on the other side. Cantilever construction was recommended in order to avoid having obstruction in the drive-through and exit lanes.
- Windows. They should appear (at least) to be double hung windows. Real or simulated meeting rails should appear heavier.
- “Simpler is better.”

Chase Bank, 784 Farmington Avenue

Site

- The species of mounding grass was changed, but the new species gets much larger, perhaps 3' X 3'. The number remained the same, which will result in severe overcrowding. Either reduce the number of the larger grasses or go back to the smaller species. The ADRC still believes these grasses will be difficult to maintain. The committee favors the lawn area shown in the rendering and encourages that design, with foundation plantings. Irrigation is recommended.
- The Abelia species in front and on the eastern side of the building will not likely do well. We recommend replacing with something along the lines of a species appropriate boxwood.

Building

- The ADRC is still convinced that the small roof line in the rear (main entrance) is incongruous. In order to repair this issue, the committee recommends continuing the brick façade along Farmington Avenue all the way across. The entrance can be left where it is resulting in an asymmetrical appearance. The sign can then be located over the front door by removing the two upper windows.
- Tie the rear entrance (short) roofline directly to the extended front roofline. Again, this issue has been discussed since the beginning of the review and it was the consensus of the ADRC that this issue must be corrected given the building's prominent location.
- It was also felt that the rear clapboard "addition" would look much more realistic if it were inset on both sides as opposed to jutting out from the "original" structure.
- The committee realizes this is a big change but ultimately feels that it will result in a superior design. The primary details can be left so no extensive redesign in material or material detail is required.
- There are still some questions relating to details that were not addressed from the initial comments as follows:
 - The windows should be the same "flavor" as all others. This would include trim save the differing trim for brick vs clapboard locations.
 - There should be real or simulated checkrails (aka meeting rails) in the tall windows facing Farmington Avenue and at the rear entrance. It may be necessary to redefine the # of panes to a 9 over 9 configuration in order to gain symmetry. 9 over 12 might not work well.

- NEW – the stone window lintels appear too short. They should be increased in all locations. This may necessitate moving the windows on the rear entrance further away from the door to allow room for the expansion.
- What is the obscure glass? Frosted, Spandrel?
- Did you give thought to the suggestion of using horizontal rectangles in lieu of the round gable vents? This was previously discussed.

The ADRC made it clear that the detail work done thus far is greatly appreciated and feels that the primary changes will result in a product that deals well with the issue of the short roofline that no-one really liked. This, in addition to some minor details will result in a building that the Town of Farmington can hold out as a case study in what can be done to not only maintain but enhance the character of the village district.