

BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
ACTION ITEM

SUBJECT: CDA22-02 Guidepost Montessori @ 130 Main Street E

DATE OF MEETING: May 17, 2022

STAFF CONTACTS: Andrew Conlon, Senior Planner

SUMMARY:

The subject child day care center is an affiliate of Guidepost Montessori and/or Higher Ground Education Inc. The project is located at 130 Main Street, E., which was the former site of the Dragon Hops Brewery. The 1.23-acre property is currently owned by M&T Property Holdings of Loudoun, LLC, a Virginia limited liability company, but will be sold to the applicant.

The property occupies a prominent location on Main Street, with an existing building area of 7,679 square feet. The building was constructed in 1960 as a grocery store (Safeway brand). The building is designed in red brick, with a shallow front-gable roof, and plate glass store front windows on the front facade.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of Certificate of Design Approval 22-02, with conditions.

BACKGROUND:

The applicant is requesting approval of CDA22-02 to redevelop the on-site building for a child day care center for children ranging in age from infant to six year old. The maximum enrollment will be 112 children daily. The age range of these.

The underlying zoning district for the property is C4, Central Commercial. It is also within the Historic Corridor Overlay District, as the parcel has frontage along a designated entrance corridor to the Town (Main Street). At the time the Town conducted a historic resources survey of Purcellville in 2006, the building was not 50 years old, and was therefore deemed to be a non-contributing resource to the Purcellville Historic District.

The applicant is only proposing minor changes to the facades of the building, consisting primarily of two additional door openings on the side facades. These additional doors are to match the existing aluminum style exterior doors. The plan proposes wooden decking, railings, and ramp along the entire eastern façade of the building.

The accompanying site plan is currently under staff's ministerial review. The proposed site improvements will have to be approved through both the site plan review process (separate from this BAR application) and this certificate of design approval.

Licensing requirements for the child care center dictate that there be 75 square feet of usable outdoor recreation area per child. To accomplish this, the site will have three enclosed outdoor play areas, with two in the rear yard and one in the front yard. The minimum recreational area requirement cannot be satisfied solely with the two outdoor play areas located behind the building. It requires space in the front yard as well. However, the two outdoor play areas behind the building are to contain the active playground equipment. The applicant/operator anticipates the rear yard spaces will be used more often than that in the front yard play area.

Typically the Board of Architectural Review focuses their analysis on the building façades. Due to the prominence of the enclosed playground in the front yard of the building, staff believes the proposed front yard fencing warrants special attention.

The Purcellville Zoning Ordinance Article 6, Section 4.7(4) states as follows:

§ 6.4.7 Accessory buildings and structures.

(4) Except as provided in development standards for particular uses, an ornamental fence, wall, hedge or shrubs not more than 3½ feet in height may project into or enclose any required front or side yard to a depth from the street line equal to the required depth of the front yard. Ornamental fences, walls, hedges or shrubs may project into or enclose other required yards, provided such fences and walls do not exceed a height of seven feet. This provision shall not be interpreted to prohibit the erection of an open-mesh type fence enclosing any school or playground site or business or industrial activity for security purposes.

The Board of Architectural Review Design Guidelines, Section G, express a general preference for fencing to be wood, stained or painted, and in the color white. The Guidelines do acknowledge “fencing or screening should be designed to stand the test of time” (§ G.2(a)). Staff recommends against the use of wooden fencing, as a more durable aluminum fence is proposed.

The applicant has proposed the following for all of the fencing, both in front and behind the building:

“Ornamental aluminum ‘picket-style’ fencing will be provided surrounding the play areas as necessary. The gates in the playground fencing will include emergency panic bars and latches as necessary to meet egress requirements.”

The fencing is to be similar to that black metal fencing used in the Main Street front yard diagonally across the street at 211 Main Street E. It should be noted that there is an error on the “site plan” sheet of the applicant’s plans, wherein the proposed fence is identified as “wooden” instead of aluminum.

The fencing in front of the building is proposed to be located approximately 7.63 feet back from the edge of the sidewalk, with an additional clear site distance triangle of at least 15 x 15 feet for the eastern “right-in/right-out only” entrance to the property.

The height of the perimeter fencing behind the building is to be six feet (with a four-foot high fence between the two rear yard play areas). The height of the front yard fencing was initially proposed to be six feet as well. However, based on pre-application input from the BAR Chair, the height was reduced to four feet to be in keeping with the character of Main Street. However, staff is concerned that a four feet high fence does not provide sufficient security for the safety of children within the play yard from criminal activity. Another concern is for errant balls/play equipment that might be tossed over shorter fence onto Main Street. Lieutenant Dufek of the Purcellville Police Department was consulted on the matter by staff. However, he did not object to a four foot high fence as being inappropriate for child safety concerns.

The site plan process does not permit conditions to be placed on the Zoning Administrator's approval of an application, but the Certificate of Design Approval process does allow the BAR to include conditions. In regard to the front yard fencing, the BAR is asked to balance aesthetic concerns with the functional aspects of the use and impacts to the community. Staff believes a minimum five-foot high fence is more appropriate in this instance than the proposed four-foot fence.

The projects exterior light fixtures and their location are being addressed in the site plan review process. The accompanying site plan requires the lights to be of a "dark sky cut-off" design.

The landscape plan is being considered through the separate site plan review process. Although pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Article 7, Landscaping, there is a provision for the BAR to review the landscape plan, this has not been the Town's practice in the past.

The full submission of CDA21-02 Guidepost Montessori consists of:

- Certificate of Design Approval application form;
- Project Narrative; and
- Architectural Plans and Site Plan (three sheets).

GUIDELINES ANALYSIS:

The following aspects, as described in the Design Guidelines for the Town of Purcellville, should be considered by the BAR in evaluating CDA22-02 Guidepost Montessori:

Design Category	Sub Category	Applications Conforms to Guidelines?	Explanation/Notes
Submission Requirements		Yes	Complete CDA application form,
Site Development		Yes	Site Plan (under separate review) depicts proposed improvements.
General Design Requirements		Yes	Design Guidelines considered.
Signage		N/A	Monument sign location shown, permit subject to separate approval.
Lighting		No	Exterior lighting is being addressed in the separate site plan review.
Landscaping; Fencing; Demolition Guidelines		No	Fencing to be considered in CDA review, landscaping is being addressed in the separate site plan review.

FINDINGS:

- I. CDA22-02 (Guidepost Montessori) is a request to rehabilitate and re-use the property at 130 Main Street E for a child day care center, which satisfies the requirements of the C4, Central Commercial, and Historic Corridor Overlay District.

- II. The proposed design is consistent with the Design Guidelines for the Town of Purcellville.

SUGGESTED CONDITION(S):

1. The proposed project shall be implemented in substantial conformance with the BAR's approval of CDA22-02. Failure to do so shall require an amendment to CDA22-02 by the BAR prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the building.
2. The corresponding site plan (TP22-01) for the applicant's project must be approved prior to the issuance of any building permit for on-site construction. Failure, for any reason, to obtain approval of TP22-01 shall render approval of CDA22-02 null and void.

MOTION(S):

I move the Board of Architectural Review approve CDA22-02 Guidepost Montessori as presented.

Alternatively:

I move the Board of Architectural Review approve CDA22-02 Guidepost Montessori subject to the following condition(s) and/or the following recommendations.

1. _____
2. _____

Alternatively:

I move the Board of Architectural Review deny CDA22-02 Guidepost Montessori, due to the following findings: _____

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Certificate of Design Approval application form
2. Project Narrative; and
3. Architectural and Site Plans (three sheets)
4. Design Guidelines, Section G.