



***LEESBURG BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT***

PUBLIC HEARING: JULY 2, 2012
AGENDA ITEM 6.a

THLP-2011-0051 Leesburg Toyota
1-3 Cardinal Park Drive, H-2 Overlay District
Miguel Yelos San Martin, YSM Design, Applicant
Leesburg Motors, LLC. Owner
YSM Design, Architect

Issue: The purpose of this memo is to (1) explain the options the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) may exercise regarding the Leesburg Toyota appeal at its public meeting scheduled for July 2, 2012, and (2) provide an analysis and recommendation on the new information provided by the Appellant.

Background: On March 27, 2012 Town Council opened the public hearing for the appeal of BAR case TLHP-2011-0051, a request by Appellant Leesburg Toyota, LLC to amend a previously approved new showroom building at 1-3 Cardinal Park Drive, S.E. The Council opened the public hearing, but deferred a decision until April 10, 2012 and sent the application back to the BAR for reconsideration based on new information presented by the Appellant.

On April 9, 2012 the BAR entertained a motion to rescind its decision on case TLHP-2011-0051. As a result of its discussion, the BAR decided to hold open its motion to rescind in order to afford the Applicant additional time to address concerns about the proposed building that had been raised by the BAR. The Appellant/Applicant (described as "Applicant" hereafter) in this case has extended the timeline for consideration of the appeal by the Town Council until July 24, 2012. On June 22, 2012 the Appellant submitted revised drawings to address issues raised by the BAR regarding building materials in an effort to achieve conformance with H-2 Design Guidelines.

BAR Options: In order to entertain the new information, the BAR must first vote on whether or not to rescind their previous decision made on November 21, 2011. The BAR has held that motion open from April 9, 2012. From that starting point, the BAR has the following options:

1. The BAR may refuse to rescind their previous decision, which will mean their previous decision stands and the new information will not be considered.
2. The BAR may vote to rescind their previous decision, then the BAR may consider the new information and either:
 - a. Act to approve the application; or
 - b. Act to deny the application.

In the event that the BAR approves TLHP-2011-0051 as revised, the appeal will be withdrawn. If the BAR approves the application with conditions or denies the application and the Applicant wishes to pursue the appeal, the public hearing will be held on July 24, 2012. Staff will supply Council with any additional information made available by Appellant to the BAR for Council consideration. The Council will be informed of the outcome of the BAR meeting.

PROJECT STATUS. The information below is concerned with the latest submission. Please refer to the folder in Sharepoint designated “TLHP-2011-0051 Toyota” and click on the subfolder “Appeal Report” for background materials regarding both the previous actions of the BAR and the staff report for the appeal and the previous designs. Also, look in the same subfolder for the *draft* Council minutes regarding the appeal hearing. The discussion below focuses on the changes proposed by the Applicant since this item was last before the BAR (referred to as the Third Design) and the Fourth (New) Design below.

Third Design. For the April 9 meeting Appellant submitted revised elevations for consideration by the BAR (*Figure 1*). In a letter dated April 4, 2012 the Appellant’s representative Christine Gleckner summed up the changes as follows:

The primary revision made to the proposed showroom is that the entrance portal is no longer to be illuminated in order to comply with the Zoning Ordinance definition of what constitutes a sign. Since the Town Council public hearing, Leesburg Toyota has further revised its elevations to provide a gray stucco wall material on the southern and western elevations, in addition to the stucco proposed for the eastern elevation, thereby greatly reducing the amount of composite metal panel material on the building. . . . Additionally the composite metal panel that is being used contains a matte finish, not a shiny or reflective finish.

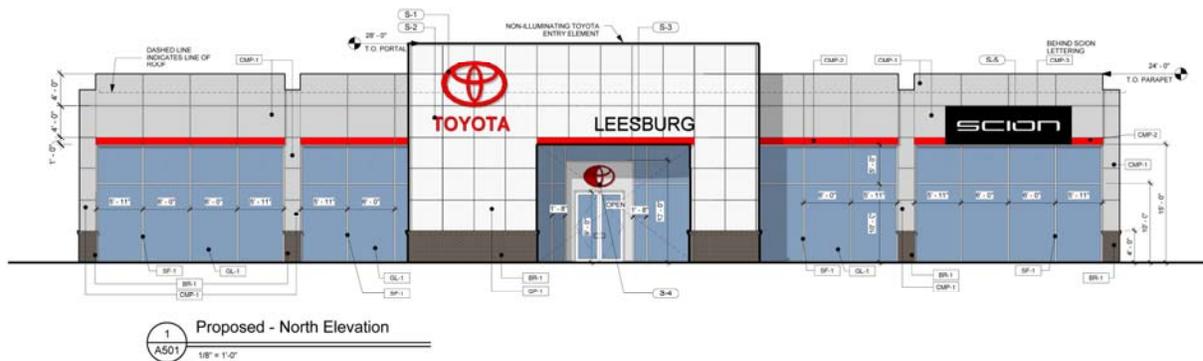


Figure 1. Third Design

The Applicant presented this design to the BAR on April 9, 2012. The BAR indicated the Third Design as submitted could not be supported by a majority of the Board, and it appeared the Motion to Rescind would fail. As a result of discussion at that meeting, the BAR decided to hold open the motion in order to give the Applicant time to revise the design and return to the BAR for consideration of the additional information. The discussion below concerns that revised design.

Fourth (New) Design. Applicant submitted revised elevations for consideration by the BAR on June 22, 2012 (*Figure 2*. See Attachment 1 for all four elevations) . In a letter dated June 22, 2012 (Attachment 2) the Appellant’s representative Christine Gleckner details the changes by each elevation. When reviewing this proposal it is important to review issues raised about the Third Design and to examine how they have been addressed in this Fourth (New) Design.



Figure 2. Fourth (New) Design

STAFF ASSESSMENT. In this evaluation staff used the H-2 Corridor Design Guidelines as the basis for determining the appropriateness of the project.



Figure 3. Translucent Glass

Translucent Glass as an appropriate Material. Applicant wishes to retain the translucent glass panels on the front façade. Whether or not non-illuminated translucent glass panels are an appropriate material under the H-2 Design Guidelines was held to be a matter for the BAR to consider. Staff believes the translucent glass panels as proposed here do not meet the standards set forth in the H-2 Corridor Design Guidelines and should not be approved as submitted. Specifically, the H-2 corridor design guidelines state on page 21 “*Extensive use of reflective or tinted glass enameled or decorative metal wall panels or other similar anonymous or non-traditional wall materials should be avoided*”. In this case, the entire entry portal, the prominent feature on the main façade, is made up of this material that has not been applied in this manner in the district before. The BAR has approved some use of translucent glass before in the case of Commerce Bank in 2006 [now known as TD Bank] which included translucent panels over the entrance. Note that in that case the translucent area is over the entranceway to let in more natural light (see *Figure 4*) and traditional masonry materials were used for the main building.



Figure 4. Translucent panel on TD Bank

Additionally, this feature is part of Toyota’s latest trademark design. The guidelines state on page 24:

Trademark buildings—those which have a distinctive exterior appearance and are readily identifiable with a franchise or chain business—do not necessarily reflect the historic building character of Leesburg and should be discouraged. If such buildings are used, they should be modified to relate both to the specific site and local building traditions, particularly regarding the building’s siting, scale, construction materials, and color.

In this case the use of the translucent glass is intended to capture that trademark design. That in itself does not create non-compliance with the Design Guidelines, but the use of a non-traditional material in a new manner does stray too far from the intent of the guidelines. It is a matter for the BAR to decide whether use of this one material in this way constitutes extensive use of non-traditional materials given what is now proposed for the rest of the building.

Composite Metal Panels/Materials. The Fourth (New) Design has eliminated the composite metal panels that featured prominently on the previous two designs except for an area on the North Elevation facing Route 7 which Applicant describes as “an accent feature above the storefront windows” (Attachment 1, p. 1). The panels have been completely replaced on the other three elevations with either brick or stucco material. Taking each elevation in turn, the following materials are now proposed:



Figure 5. North Elevation Fourth (New) Design

- North Elevation (Main Façade facing Route 7) – See Figure 1 for a comparison to the Third Design:
 - Retains the translucent glass portal but with four feet of dark brick “wainscoting” at the portal base.
 - The metal panel on the columns has been replaced with light grey brick.
 - A brick cornice is proposed along the top of the façade.

- At the storefront base 18” of dark brick has been added along the façade.
- Metal accent panels have been retained above the storefront windows as mentioned above.

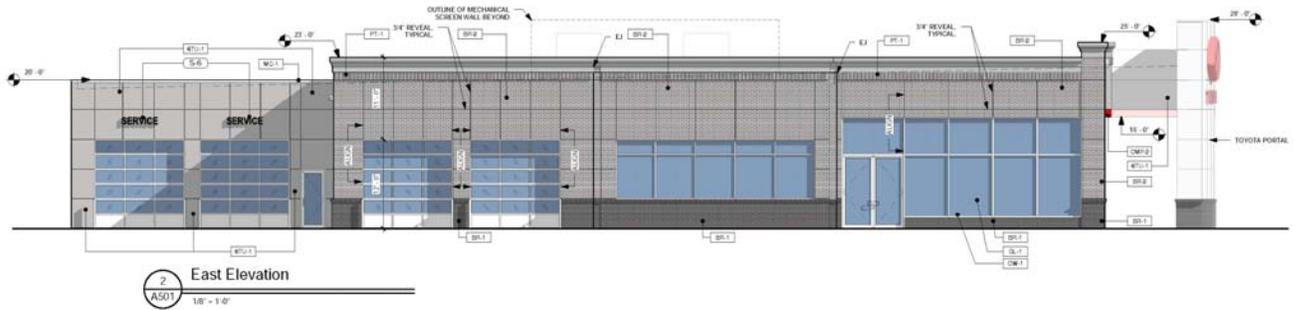


Figure 6. East Elevation –Fourth (New) Design

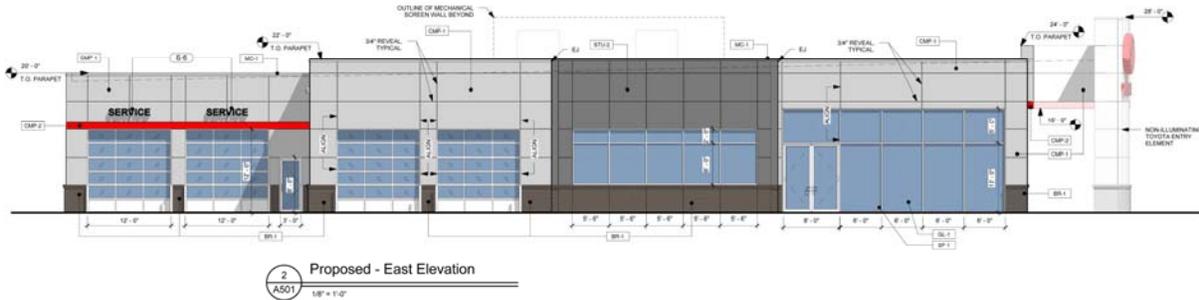


Figure 6a. East Elevation – Third Design

- East Elevation (side facing Cardinal Park Drive)
 - Metal panels have been entirely removed and replaced with light grey brick along ¾ of the façade length.
 - The remaining 1/4 recessed portion of the façade around the service bays is replaced with light grey stucco.
 - At the storefront base 18” of dark brick has been added.

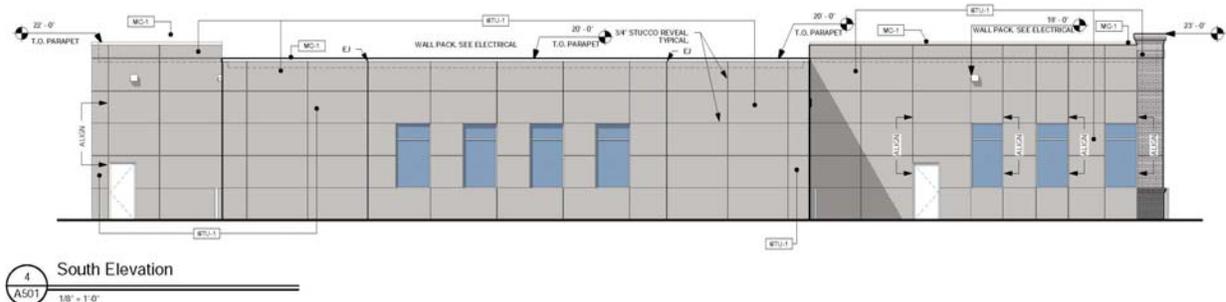


Figure 7. South Elevation – Fourth (New) Design

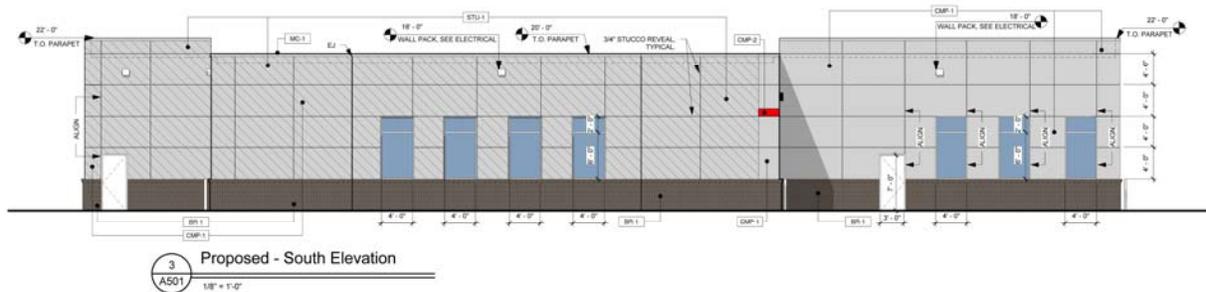


Figure 7a. South Elevation – Third Design

- South Elevation (rear facing Southern Electric)
 - Stucco has replaced composite metal panels along the entire wall except for brick as a transition element at the southeast corner.
 - The four-foot tall dark brick wainscoting has been dropped from this elevation.

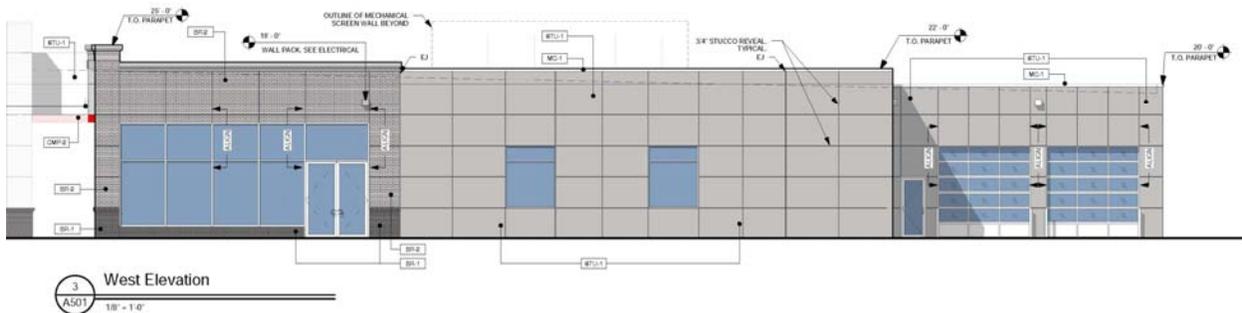


Figure 8. West Elevation – Fourth (New) Design

- West Elevation (side facing Jerry's Ford)
 - The storefront portion of this elevation is now characterized by light grey brick instead of stucco.
 - At the storefront base 18" of dark brick has been added.
 - The remainder of the elevation (approximately 3/4) is covered in stucco.
 - The four-foot tall dark brick wainscoting has been dropped from this elevation.

Excepting glass windows, the building is now more than 1/4 covered in brick, with approximately 1/2 covered in stucco and the remainder comprised of composite metal panels or translucent glass. Staff notes that the two elevations that are most visible face Route 7 and Cardinal Park Drive. The Cardinal Park Drive or East Elevation is now 3/4 brick and 1/4 stucco. Staff believes these are appropriate materials and proportions for this façade.

The South and West Elevations are now a combination of brick and stucco, with stucco predominating on each façade. However, the four-foot tall brick wainscoting around the foundation has been removed from these elevations where stucco walls are used. Staff recommends that this defined foundation brick area be restored below the stucco walls as shown on the previous (Third) design.

With regard to the North Elevation facing Route 7, the addition of brick to the columns, cornice and storefront base is an improvement over the previous design under the guidelines. However, staff has concerns about the North Elevation. The guidelines state "Extensive use of reflective or tinted glass

enameled or decorative metal wall panels or other similar anonymous or non-traditional wall materials should be avoided". Between the metal accent panels that have been retained and the translucent glass portal, both non-traditional materials, Staff believes that the use on this facade can be considered "extensive" and should be further reduced to comply with the intent of the guidelines.

Note that in past cases the BAR has permitted buildings that reflect a corporate trademark to some degree so long as the building used traditional materials and design that supported the character of Leesburg. In order to achieve a façade that is not extensively composed of a non-traditional material, Staff recommends that the metal panels be deleted. The metal panels on front could be replaced with brick or with the light grey tile that was proposed as part of the original submission approved by the BAR. For the portal staff suggests that the white tile used on its sides could be used on the front as well to lessen or eliminate the use of translucent glass. Note that Applicant has described the portal as a "reversible" feature in that it is free standing and if Toyota leaves the address it will be removed to protect their corporate identity. That means it will not be there should the building get an adaptive reuse. The metal panels on the façade would remain.

Color. The H-2 Design Guidelines are concerned with colors: "All colors selected for a building should be compatible with the traditional building colors found in Leesburg as well as to those of the surrounding natural environment" (p.23). With the removal of the composite metal panels from most of the building, this concern is greatly lessened. However, the remaining metal panels on the North Elevation are proposed to be painted "Toyota Silver" which appears to have a metallic sheen as seen in *Figure 3* above, even though Appellant contends that the paint is in fact a matte finish. Staff believes the color is too reflective and out of character with traditional building colors found in Leesburg and should be addressed. The brick colors and the color of the stucco are consistent with other colors in the H-2 corridor. If the metal panels are removed, no color issue will remain.

Definition and Depth. Staff noted in the previous report that the Third Design lacked much of the detail of the original design as reflected in the loss of the defined cornices and the ceramic tiles along various elevations. This loss of articulation removed features that are characteristic of traditional buildings in Leesburg. The Fourth (New) Design eliminates this concern from the staff perspective by the inclusion of a well defined cornice with a soldier course along approximately ½ of the building, particularly along the North and East Elevations. This serves to give the building detail and depth while adding more masonry than the original design. It completes the tri-partite design of cornice, wall and foundation that breaks the building down to a more human scale. However, staff recommends that the brick foundation wainscoting be restored along the West and South Elevations.

Summary. Guidelines are by their nature subject to interpretation, and are not intended to be literally applied to the letter. Staff was mindful of this when reviewing the Fourth (New) Design but comes to the conclusion that the building as currently proposed strays too far from the overall intent of the guidelines. Specifically, some of the materials proposed for the current application are, in staff's opinion, non-compliant with the design guidelines. The monumental entry portal is translucent glass, which is not consistent with traditional design and materials in Leesburg. Similarly, the use of composite metal panels and the color for the metal panels also does not meet the standard set. However, the building overall is much more in accord with the H-2 Guidelines because most of the composite metal panels have been eliminated and replaced with brick or stucco. Also, a well-defined cornice has been added to those facades of the building most visible from the public rights of way. It is for these reasons that staff recommends that the amendments to TLHP-2011-0051 be approved subject to conditions.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION/DRAFT MOTION

(Based on the BAR's discussion at the meeting, any changes to the language of either part of the motion should be incorporated as necessary.)

Based on the findings that:

- The Applicant's proposed design includes substantial portions of brick and stucco and a defined cornice along approximately ½ of the structure which are traditional materials and building details found in Leesburg and acceptable under the H-2 Design Guidelines; and
- The proposed design still incorporates an element of metal panels and translucent glass on the North Elevation facing Route 7; and
- The H-2 Corridor Design Guidelines state on page 21, "Extensive use of reflective or tinted glass, enameled or decorative metal wall panels, or other similar anonymous or non-traditional wall materials should be avoided."

Staff recommends approval of TLHP-2011-0051 subject to the elevations entitled "Leesburg Toyota" and undated prepared by YSM Design submitted as part of this application material set and as modified by the following conditions:

- The dark brick foundation wainscoting four feet tall shall be continued on the West and South Elevations.
- The composite metal panels on the North Elevation shall be deleted and replaced with either light grey brick or light grey ceramic tile.
- A significant portion of the face of the portal on the North Elevation shall be composed of white tile similar to that used on the sides of the portal.

DRAFT MOTION

I move that TLHP-2011-0051 be approved subject to subject to the elevations entitled "Leesburg Toyota" and undated prepared by YSM Design submitted as part of this application and subject to the findings and conditions of approval as stated in the July 2, 2012 Staff Report (or as amended by the BAR on July 2, 2012).

Attachments: 1. Letter from Christine Gleckner dated June 22, 2012
 2. Leesburg Toyota Revised Elevations by YSM Design