

# ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION ISSUE SHEET

**Issue # 2** For the Architectural Commission Zoom Webinar Virtual Meeting on Monday, July 13 at 7:00 p.m.

**Prepared by:** Linnea O'Neill, Planner

**Location:** 436 Frontage Road  
The Warner Institute  
(2020 - 0061)

**Zoning:** O/R – Office Research

---

**Issue:**

The petitioner, Dr. Jeremy Warner, is requesting approval of renovations to the existing building for The Warner Institute at 436 Frontage Road. The request includes façade improvements, lighting, landscaping, signage and screening for the dumpster, generator and rooftop mechanicals.

The petitioner is requesting two (2) variances from the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 12; Signage:

- 1) A variance from Section 12-3 for a second sign not displayed on the principal street exposure side;
- 2) A variance from Section 12-4 for a sign placed higher than the second floor windowsill of a structure

The petitioner received approval from the Plan Commission for a parking variance on June 1, 2020.

**History:**

The original one story building was built in 1958 for the Hoover Company. In 1966, Murtell, Inc. added the second floor. The last company to occupy the building was Credential Solutions.

In 2007 the ZBA granted a variance for a north side yard setback less than allowed to allow for a generator.

**Proposal:**

The petitioner is proposing new façade details on all sides of the building such as the following:

- The first floor masonry will be stained a charcoal gray
- Second level cladding will be removed and replaced with a simple, rectilinear architectural plank fiber-cement-board cladding in a light, neutral color
- Accent cladding is proposed over each existing entryway
- Raised roof
- New windows and storefronts

- Screening for roof-top mechanical units
- Canopy over the Ash Street entrance main entry and Frontage Street
- Wall sconces will be installed at the Ash Street entrances along with the rear second level stair exit
- Signage is proposed over the Ash Street and Frontage Street entrances
- New composite fence / gate enclosures are proposed for the A/C condensers, generator and dumpster.
- Additional foundation landscaping with uplights

#### West (Rear) Elevation

1. First floor existing brick stained to Slate, a charcoal gray, with
2. Six (6) new Anderson windows; white interior and black exterior, Low-E glass
3. Second floor Equitone exterior fiber cement in gray with
4. Two (2) new Anderson windows; fixed, white interior and black exterior, Low-E glass
5. Raised roof with Pac-Clad aluminum coping in black
6. RTU roof mechanical screen, metal louver look

#### North Elevation

1. First floor existing brick stained to Slate, a charcoal gray, with
2. Seven (7) new Anderson windows; white interior and black exterior, Low-E glass
3. Second floor Equitone exterior fiber cement in gray with
4. Eight (8) new Anderson windows; fixed, white interior and black exterior, Low-E glass
5. Pac-Clad aluminum coping in black
6. RTU roof mechanical screen, metal louver look
7. Relocated wood staircase and railing in Ebony Gray to match the façade palette
8. Exterior second floor door in black
9. One (1) Tech Lighting Windfall exterior sconce in black installed near the second floor door

#### East (Frontage Road-Secondary Entrance) Elevation

1. First floor existing brick stained to Slate, a charcoal gray, with
2. Two (2) existing storefront multiplane insulated glass units; one with four (4) windows, the other with three (3)
3. The two-story entrance section is proposed to be Nichiha Vintagewood fiber cement wood-look in Bark.
4. The area to the right of the entrance door that separates the first floor storefront from the second floor storefront is proposed to be an insulated glass shaded to a dark charcoal gray.
5. Entrance includes:
  - a. Equitone fiber cement in gray surrounding
  - b. New front door
  - c. New canopy over front door: 9' tall, 11' 2" wide and extending 5' from the building
  - d. Two (2) Tech Lighting Windfall exterior sconce in black
  - e. Sign

6. Second floor Equitone exterior fiber cement in gray with
7. New Anderson windows; fixed, white interior and black exterior, Low-E glass and a new storefront multiplane insulated glass unit
8. Pac-Clad aluminum coping in black
9. RTU roof mechanical screen, metal louver look

South (Ash Street) Elevation

1. First floor existing brick stained to Slate, a charcoal gray, with
2. New storefront multiplane insulated glass entrance door and six (6) new Anderson windows; fixed, white interior and black exterior, Low-E glass
3. Entrance includes:
  - a. Equitone fiber cement in gray surrounding
  - b. New front door and new windows
  - c. New canopy over front door: 9' tall, 14' 2" wide and extending 5' from the building
4. Second floor Equitone exterior fiber cement in gray and Nichiha exterior fiber cement in bark color over entrance, with
5. Second floor to right and left of entrance Equitone fiber cement board in gray
6. New sign to left of entrance
7. Pac-Clad aluminum coping in black
8. RTU roof mechanical screen, metal louver look

Canopy.

Two (2) canopies are proposed at the main entrance of the south elevation. The canopy extends 5' from the building and is 9' tall. The canopy and tension rods are black aluminum.

Roof Top Mechanical Screening.

The petitioner is proposing to screen the roof top equipment with a 5' tall metal louver manufacturer is CME Custom Mechanical equipment in black. The mechanical screening cannot be seen from Frontage or Ash as shown on the 3D views of A8-0.4.

Dumpster Enclosure and Generator/Condenser Enclosure.

The dumpster is proposed to be located adjacent to the northeast corner of the building with access off Frontage Road. The existing generator and new condenser will be placed where the existing generator unit is at the northwest corner of the building. Both will be screened with seven foot (7') Certainteed Galveston vinyl in black.

**Landscape Design:**

The existing plant material consists of: yews at the south end of the west façade, foundation yews at the east façade, parkway trees, yews at the east end and a few declining entrance shrubs at the south façade and no plant material at the north façade.

In addition to the existing plant material, the petitioner will be adding the following:

- Walker's Low Catmint on the south side to replace the declining shrubs
- Ornamental grass and hostas on the north side is proposed to replace existing asphalt

- Adjacent to the new staircase location and the generator pad, the asphalt will be replaced with a new compacted stone walkway

Staff recommends:

- An ornamental tree or tall ornamental shrub in the area of the blank wall surrounded by the ornamental grass and hosta on the north side and,
- An additional green space with additional plantings in the area where possible in the staircase area. Additional shrubs can buffer the staircase and add green to an area of asphalt.

### **Lighting:**

The petitioner has proposed the following lighting:

- Sconces – Three (3) sconces are proposed on the building; two at the front east entrance and one at the rear upstairs entrance. The sconces are two feet (2') long Tech Lighting Windfall in black.
- Uplights – A total of 14 Kichler LED ground mounted uplights are proposed around the building: Four adjacent to the building along the south, east and west with two on at the north elevation.
- Canopy Can Lights – The canopies will both contain two (2) can lights.

### **Signage:**

The petitioner is proposing two (2) wall signs that include the Warner Institute logo. The wall signs are backlit and are blue and white. The logo and WARNER in baby blue and the word INSTITUTE in white. The sign material is fabricated metal shell with an acrylic insert.

The south main entrance façade sign is 48 square feet. The east façade sign is 32 square feet. The second sign on the east façade requires a variance. Both signs are above the second floor window sill and therefore require a variance.

### **Comprehensive Plan Evaluation:**

In the Northfield Vision Plan's Long Range Plan, 436 Frontage Road is located in the Office Research area. The Plan emphasizes continued high quality construction and extraordinary site design at highly visible locations. The Plan also calls for development that improves and upgrades the image and appeal of commercial areas.

Under Employment Area improvement and Conservation Guidelines the following is encouraged:

1. *Office, business park and office research areas should have adequate off-street parking.*
2. *Encourage coordinated site and urban design improvements sensitive to surrounding land-use and development.*
3. *Encourage property owners to maintain and enhance the overall existing development.*

The façade and site improvements being proposed will foster the achievement of the Northfield Vision Plan's goals and objectives by transforming a vacant building into a well-designed and viable business.

### **List of Attachments:**

Application received May 15, 2020

Letter from Warner Institute dated June 29, 2020

Architectural Drawings by Apex Design Build dated June 25, 2020, includes:

- A 8-0.1 to A 8-0.3 Renderings
- A 8-0.4 3D Views
- G 1-2 Site Plan
- G 1-3 Pictures of Surrounding Properties
- G 1-4 Landscape Plan
- A 8-1 Exterior Materials
- A 8-2 to A8-4 Exterior Elevations
- Merriville Canopy
- Kichler Uplighting

**Staff Recommendations:**

Staff is pleased to see a new use and high quality façade improvements in this highly visible location. In addition, the proposed plan is in keeping with the Northfield Vision Plan. Staff recommends approval of the two (2) signage variances:

- 1) A variance from Section 12-3 for a second sign not displayed on the principal street exposure side;
- 2) A variance from Section 12-4 for a sign placed higher than the second floor windowsill of a structure

In addition, staff recommends approval of the façade improvements, lighting, landscaping and screening for the dumpster, generator and rooftop mechanicals at Warner Institute, 436 Frontage Road, in conformance with latest plans submitted June 25, 2020 and the following recommendation:

- Include a small tree or ornamental shrub on the north façade, and include additional plantings in the staircase area for screening.