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City of Asheville Staff Report

Design Review Committee Meeting Date: June 18, 2026

Staff Resources: Sam Starr-Baum, AICP, Planner III

Action Requested: Design Review for 281 Fairway Drive (PIN 9658-73-5145)

Project Location and Contacts:

- 281 Fairway Drive (PIN 9658-73-5145)
- Applicant: The Contineo Group/Edward Allen

Project Summary:

Project Site:

- The project site consists of two properties with multiple addresses, but is colloquially known as 281 Fairway Drive. The site, totalling 4.99 acres, was formerly used for personal and vehicle storage with one main structure and one secondary structure, both of which were historically used for personal storage. All former structures were damaged in Hurricane Helene. The current project proposes 4 new storage buildings and 3 canopied parking areas with similar materials. Given the extent of the damage from the storm, the applicant is required to bring the property up to current landscaping, transportation, and parking standards under full site compliance. This includes raising structures 2' above Base Flood Elevation.

Overall Project Proposal:

- The 4 proposed storage buildings and 3 canopied parking areas consist of stone veneers, wood accents, metal panels, and dark bronze metal trim with the design intent to produce a modern-mountain aesthetic in an organic palette to meet the architectural standards of Asheville.

Design Review and Guidelines

The project falls within the Swannanoa River East Design Sector of the River Design Review Overlay. While there is limited detailed guidance for the remainder district, the applicant's design interacts with the River Design Review Guidelines in the following ways:

- This project is *in alignment* with River Design Review Guidelines:
    - The Swannanoa River East Overview states: “The area is characterized by a mixture of existing operating light industrial uses, retail, commercial,and warehousing.”
        - Staff comment: The proposed project is consistent with existing uses of storage and commercial office space.
    - If buildings are painted, they should be in muted organic colors that do not in themselves attract attention or overpower the natural colors of the river environment.
        - Staff comment: The project proposes muted earth tone colors for the proposed siding and paneling.
    - All service areas (those spaces accommodating dumpsters, trash cans, HVAC, etc.) should be discreetly placed. This means they should be screened and located between buildings, or at the rear of buildings.
        - Staff comment: All currently detailed service areas are not designed to be visible from the public right-of-way.
    - Buildings should be located on the site such that they are open to and relate to the River. They should not be clustered in such a manner as to isolate themselves, their users or their occupants from the street, the river, or their neighbors.
        - Staff comment: Building 1’s primary facade faces the river and all buildings have been raised to minimum required heights.

- This project is in *partial or uncertain alignment* with River Design Review Guidelines:
    - All utilities should be placed underground.
        - Staff comment: The applicant should confirm plans for undergrounding utilities.
    - All sidewalks should be concrete with simple score patterns creating squares.
        - Staff comment: The required sidewalk is not currently shown on the site plan, but must be shown prior to receiving zoning approval. This was a condition of approval at TRC by both Planning and Transportation departments.

- This Project is *not* in alignment with River Design Review Guidelines:
    - Where new buildings are built, a distinctive character honoring the older and longer standing architectural traditions of the riverfront areas is encouraged.
        - Staff comment: The proposed building has minimal attachment to the architectural traditions of the riverfront area, which consist predominantly of brick and sheet metal. However, this is made more complicated by the fact there is minimal design guidance for the Swannanoa River– East Design Sector.

Staff Recommendation:

- Staff supports the proposed building design and recommends approval as the project is in alignment with requirements and guidelines.

Motion to Approve:

- I move to approve the self storage facility design at 281 Fairway Drive as presented based on elevations and materials submitted and discussions heard during this review and find that the project meets the intent of the Downtown Design Guidelines (subject to the following conditions, if any).

Attachment(s):

- This document contains the applicant's design narrative - Design Narrative
- This document contains the site plan - Site Plan
- This document contains the landscape plan - Landscape Plan
- This document contains the architectural drawings and elevations - Architectural Drawings and Elevations
- This document contains the Technical Review Committee Memo – TRC Memo
- This document contains the River District Design Guidelines – River District Design Guidelines