

City of Montpelier
Design Review Committee Meeting
January 20, 2004
Memorial Room, City Hall
Subject to Review and Approval

Members Present: Margot George (Chair), Vicki Lane, William Russell, Soren Pfeffer, William Russell, and Eric Gilbertson.

Others Present: Leslie Nulty, Hunger Mountain Co-operative; John Osgood and Alan Lendway, River Station Properties III, LLC; Patrick Mullikin, Riverwalk Records.

The meeting was called to order by Margot George at 6:10 p.m. Ms. George deferred comments from the Chair to the end of the meeting.

Design Review—RIV/DCD
623 Stone Cutters Way
Applicant: Hunger Mountain Co-op

Ms. George explained the process to the applicants.

Ms. Nulty explained the project to the committee, as a 208 square foot refrigerator addition on the east side of the building. It is on the Allen Lumber side of the building at the far side of the loading dock.

Staff showed the committee the proposed exterior material. The committee noted that the pre-finished metal siding is different than the existing finishes on the building. Ms. Nulty noted that the architect proposed the material. The foundation is proposed to be constructed of concrete.

Mr. Pfeffer asked how tall the proposed structure would be? It was determined that it would be approximately 12 feet tall, no taller than the loading dock. It would have a shed roof and cover up an existing concrete block wall. The access to the fridge would be from the interior of the building. There is no proposed outside access.

Ms. Smith asked if the proposed refrigerator would create any additional noise. Ms. Nulty replied that she did not think it would and that it would tie into the existing compressor unit on the roof of the building.

Ms. George reviewed the criteria with the applicant.

1. Preservation or reconstruction of the appropriate historic style if the proposed project is in the historic district or involves an historic structure: **N/A.**
2. Harmony of exterior design with other properties in the district: **Acceptable. Utilitarian shed (loading dock) is already in place on southeast side of building. This location is suitable and the design is acceptable.**
3. Compatibility of proposed exterior materials with other properties in the district: **Acceptable. Metal siding is currently present on the building and is present on other properties in the district.**

4. Compatibility of the proposed landscaping with the district: **N/A.**
5. Prevention of the use of incompatible designs, buildings, color schemes, or exterior materials: **Acceptable. The color choice and design blends with existing materials and style of building.**
6. Location and appearance of all utilities: **N/A. No major changes.**
7. Recognition of and respect for view corridors and significant vistas including gateway views of the city and State House: **The proposed addition will not significantly impact the view corridor or vistas.**
8. Spatial relationships: Spatial relationships between individual structures shall be designed to provide for a well-landscaped, harmonious district with compatible materials, building elements, and signage: **N/A**
9. Directional expression & sense of entry: New development shall be oriented so that both river and street side facades are primary. Materials on the riverside of a structure shall be of equal character and quality as those on the street side. Both facades should incorporate fenestration, detailing and other building components that are dimensionally proportional and are pedestrian friendly: **Acceptable. Same material is proposed on all sides of the addition, the material expresses a utilitarian nature. No fenestration noted on existing elevation or proposed addition.**
10. Materials and details: Artificial, composition type materials (including simulated wood or masonry) lacking strong evidence of durability and compatibility with traditional types of building materials are discouraged. Structures should create an attractive and interesting exterior form through variation in surface, colors, textures and materials which carry through on all sides. **The proposed addition does not share any design elements of the adjacent loading dock It incorporates a steeper pitch and does not intend to continue the existing roofline.**
11. Screening: Loading docks, service entrances, dumpsters, propane tanks, utility cabinets, and other similar above-ground structures shall not be located on either the street side or river side of the structures and should be screened from view with landscaping or building materials in such a way so to be integrated into the site and building design. The design is such that is a finished and attractive addition. **N/A**
12. Solar gain: Building designs are encouraged to take full advantage of solar gain for purposes of energy conservation. **N/A**
13. Lighting: Light levels should provide for safety and security, should enhance the building and site design, and should not create glare for neighboring properties or streets. The number, location, and appearance of light fixtures should be compatible with building design and landscaping. **N/A**
14. Rooftop appurtenances: Rooftop mechanical equipment and appurtenances to be used in the operation or maintenance of a structure shall be arranged to minimize visibility from any point at or below the roof level of the structure. Such features, in excess of one foot (1') in height, shall be either enclosed by outer building walls or parapets, grouped and screened in a suitable manner, or designed in themselves so that they are balanced and integrated with respect to the design and materials of the building. **N/A New mechanical equipment will be tied into the existing appurtenances.**
15. Signs: See Article 6.

16. Landscaping: Landscaping must be integrated with the building and site design, including any screening required in §1309.C.(4) above, and enhance the appearance of the project. N/A

The committee moved a recommendation for as submitted.
The motion passed 5/0 in favor of the motion.

Design Review—RIV/DCD

535 Stone Cutters Way

Applicant River Station Properties II, LLC

Alan Lendway and John Osgood represented the application. This came before the board because a violation existed. The Acting Administrative Officer determined that the numbers “535” were a substantial exterior alteration to the property, which requires design review. There are also two satellite dishes on the southern elevation that require design review. The satellite dishes were not on the application, but staff suggested the DRC incorporate it into the application as an adjustment.

Mr. Osgood said that as part of the original application for the building, the architects intended to balance the windows on the south side of the premier façade with a “super” graphic. They thought they could also create an identifier for the building as it is located somewhat far from the entrance to Stone Cutters Way. The committee asked staff why this was not considered a sign.

Ms. Smith stated that even though it draws attention to the building, it does not advertise anything and it is an address number.

Ms. Lane said that the numbers were not a graphic, and the numbers were very large. Mr. Pfeffer felt that the “535” was not pedestrian oriented or friendly. The numbers were oriented to the vehicular traveler.

Ms. George said that it was unfortunate that the numbers were installed on the building without going through the process. Because the change was installed already, there maybe less flexibility in the process.

Mr. Russell said that the numbers were appropriate, because it satisfies the E911 requirement and the building is unique. This portion of the building is a monolithic surface that is not broken up by windows or other elements, and that the numbers work because a Helvetica cut off font is in-keeping with the building’s style. It is pedestrian neutral, the numbers can be seen from Main Street, and Memorial Drive. The numbers are quiet, and not a sign. They serve the function the same as the Main Street Middle School. Mr. Russell thinks the numbers work with the building. Mr. Gilbertson’s first impression of the exterior change was that it was an appropriate addition with regard to the scale of the building and the contemporary design. It is experimental, different, and not offensive.

Mr. Russell said the “535” is like Main Street Bar & Grill “restaurant” sign. The numbers provide a sense of place and design sensibility. They have branded themselves with a number rather than a slogan.

Mr. Pfeffer thought if a building downtown had a name it would be a sign. “535” is an identifier.

Mr. Osgood commented that a building in New York City has “555,” and they were going for something similar

Ms. Lane doesn’t think the numbers enhance the building. This change is noticeable.

Ms. George is concerned that if approved the Committee maybe setting a precedent.

Mr. Pfeffer. Felt that the #'s were not pedestrian friendly despite what Mr. Gilbertson and Mr. Russell say.

The discussion continued on whether the #'s were pedestrian friendly or not. The applicant's were made aware of the standard process for projects which include substantial alterations to exterior of buildings, and that it was unfortunate that an application wasn't made prior to "535" installation.

The discussion of the "535" was tabled and the committee addressed the satellite dishes that were installed without approval. The satellite dishes were added to the design review process as they are a substantial alteration to the exterior of the building, however the application that staff received does not reflect this request. Mr. Osgood stated that the dishes are part of a lease agreement with their tenant, and that vegetation would cover the satellites May-October.

Ms. Lane thought screening the satellite dishes might help. Mr. Pfeffer felt that screening may only draw attention to the area where the satellite dishes were located.

Ms. Lane is concerned that other dishes might pop on the building with no discussion of where it is appropriate for such devices to be located.

Ms. George reviewed the design review criteria.

1. Preservation or reconstruction of the appropriate historic style if the proposed project is in the historic district or involves an historic structure: **N/A.**
2. Harmony of exterior design with other properties in the district: **Acceptable. In Harmony with modern building; not a permanent building element.**
3. Compatibility of proposed exterior materials with other properties in the district: **Acceptable. Metal is appropriate.**
4. Compatibility of the proposed landscaping with the district: **Acceptable. Existing plant material helps screen the satellite dishes.**
5. Prevention of the use of incompatible designs, buildings, color schemes, or exterior materials: **N/A.**
6. Location and appearance of all utilities: **N/A. Low position on building. It is a technological necessity. The satellites are not a permanent alteration to the building.**
7. Recognition of and respect for view corridors and significant vistas including gateway views of the city and State House: **N/A.**
8. Spatial relationships: Spatial relationships between individual structures shall be designed to provide for a well-landscaped, harmonious district with compatible materials, building elements, and signage: **N/A**
9. Directional expression & sense of entry: New development shall be oriented so that both river and street side facades are primary. Materials on the riverside of a structure shall be of equal character and quality as those on the street side. Both facades should incorporate fenestration, detailing and other building components that are dimensionally proportional and are pedestrian friendly: **Acceptable. The satellite dishes are placed low on primary façade. They are centered and similar in color and materials to trim on building.**
10. Materials and details: Artificial, composition type materials (including simulated wood or masonry) lacking strong evidence of durability and compatibility with traditional types of building materials are discouraged. Structures should create an attractive and interesting exterior form through variation in surface, colors, textures and materials

- which carry through on all sides. **Acceptable. Materials similar to other exterior materials already present on building.**
11. Screening: Loading docks, service entrances, dumpsters, propane tanks, utility cabinets, and other similar above-ground structures shall not be located on either the street side or river side of the structures and should be screened from view with landscaping or building materials in such a way so to be integrated into the site and building design. The design is such that is a finished and attractive addition. **Acceptable. Existing vegetation along riverbank will help screen the satellites.**
 12. Solar gain: Building designs are encouraged to take full advantage of solar gain for purposes of energy conservation. **N/A**
 13. Lighting: Light levels should provide for safety and security, should enhance the building and site design, and should not create glare for neighboring properties or streets. The number, location, and appearance of light fixtures should be compatible with building design and landscaping. **N/A**
 14. Rooftop appurtenances: Rooftop mechanical equipment and appurtenances to be used in the operation or maintenance of a structure shall be arranged to minimize visibility from any point at or below the roof level of the structure. Such features, in excess of one foot (1') in height, shall be either enclosed by outer building walls or parapets, grouped and screened in a suitable manner, or designed in themselves so that they are balanced and integrated with respect to the design and materials of the building. **N/A**
 15. Signs: See Article 6.
 16. Landscaping: Landscaping must be integrated with the building and site design, including any screening required in §1309.C.(4) above, and enhance the appearance of the project. **N/A**

The DRC voted to recommend approval of the satellite dishes as submitted. However they tabled the application to further discuss the “535,” and requested new materials from the applicant.

**Design Review—CB-I/DCD
4 Langdon Street
Applicant : Patrick Mullikin**

Mr. Mullikin stated that he would like to light his sign, for better visibility at night. He proposed to use lights that don't allow for any bleed of illumination beyond the edges of the sign.. Mr. Gilbertson thought that the lights might actually obscure the sign.

Margot reviewed the design criteria

1. Preservation or reconstruction of the appropriate historic style if the proposed project is in the historic district or involves an historic structure: **N/A.**
2. Harmony of exterior design with other properties in the district: **Acceptable. Gooseneck lights are common method for lighting signs in the district.**
3. Compatibility of proposed exterior materials with other properties in the district: **The proposed fixture is acceptable.**
4. Compatibility of the proposed landscaping with the district: **N/A.**

5. Prevention of the use of incompatible designs, buildings, color schemes, or exterior materials: **Acceptable. The DRC suggested the applicant choose a flat black finish for the fixture.**
6. Location and appearance of all utilities: **Acceptable.**
7. Recognition of and respect for view corridors and significant vistas including gateway views of the city and State House: **Acceptable. The addition of the fixtures should be unobtrusive.**
8. Conformance with *Cityscape* placement and design recommendations: **Acceptable.**
9. Compatibility with subject property and adjacent properties: **Acceptable.**
10. Shall not obscure significant architectural details: **Acceptable.**
11. Consistency and uniformity of multiple signs in CB-II and OP districts: **N/A.**
12. Illumination: internally lit plastic signs are prohibited. **N/A.**
13. Pennants and banners are prohibited, except as public announcement in §811.B(e). **N/A.**
14. Individual letters affixed, painted or engraved directly on the building or structure, are encouraged: **N/A.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.