

Montpelier Design Review Committee
Minutes of May 4, 2004
Memorial Room

Members Present: Steve Everett, Soren Pfeffer, Margot George, Chair; Stephanie A. Smith, Planner

Others Present: Emma Winthrop and Sarah Merritt, Damsels; Kris Hammer, David McGraw, Ben Cheney, Tom Sabo, Karen Boltax, and Kim Hagen, Jay Ancel, and Eric Seidel

The meeting was brought to order by Steve Everett, Vice Chair at 5:55 p.m.

There were no comments from the Chair.

Ms. George explained the Design Review process to the applicant's that were present.

Design Review-LDR/DCD

20 Corse Street

Applicant: Kristopher Hammer and Nancy Chickering

Application to install solar panels on the roof of an existing structure.

Kris Hammer presented the application. The panels are proposed to be located on the upper portion of a gambrel roof.

The DRC recommends approval of the design review application with the following adjustment that the frame of the solar panels will be dark or black factory finish to blend with existing standing seam roof, or applicant will paint to blend. The vote was 3/0 (see attached recommendation sheet).

Design Review for a Sign Permit - CB-I/DCD

108 Main Street

Applicant: Emma Winthrop and Sarah Merritt

Application to install a wall sign and ther minor exterior alterations including painting the front door, painting the single red stripe in the awning pink, and resurfacing entryway floor.

Emma Winthrop and Sarah Merritt presented the application to the committee. The sign is constructed from MDO plywood and sign foam. The "d" would be approximately 20" tall. The bottom of the circle to the top of the "d" is proposed to be 30". The sign is proposed to project from the face of the building 3½", with the depth of the letters at 2". The committee had a long discussion that the depth of the letters may prevent the sign from being readable. The proprietors said it is design that way to be readable, because the silver on the face of the letter will contrast with the black on the side.

Ms. Smith commented that the maximum projection permitted for a sign in the CB-I district was 12", and that the applicant met this requirement.

Ms. Winthrop indicated they had additional materials samples to further illustrate their proposal for the entryway and the repainting of the canvas awning.

Mr. Everett stated that the blue based color of the sign, would not look good against the yellow based color of the building. Steve also felt that this would hold true for painting the front door and the awning pink. Ms. George stated that all the doors in that block of buildings are painted red, and she could not

support such a change in the front door. She felt it is was important to maintain continuity between the different store fronts on the block. However, she felt that if the applicant's wanted to individualize their front door, they could do this with an accent of pink on the trim around the glass on the door.

Staff had questioned the wear-ability of painting the canvas awning. They got supporting documentation that it is possible to paint the awning and it last. They also would like at sometime to replace the existing awning, but it is not in their budget at this time.

The flooring material was determined to be suitable for an outside application. The applicants intend to wax the floor after installation with a wax product mixed with sand, to give the floor texture and prevent against it becoming slippery.

The DRC recommended approval of the design review application with the following adjustments:
that 1¼ inch sign foam be used for lettering on sign; and that the door will remain red.

Optional changes the applicants may pursue at their discretion are that the molding around glass in the door may be painted pink, and two black gooseneck lamps with 60 watts bulbs may be installed, similar other fixtures in neighborhood. The vote was 3/0 (please see recommendation form)

Design Review - GB/DCD
5 High School Drive
Applicant: Montpelier High School

This application is for the construction of a 24' x 48' solar greenhouse to be used for educational purposes by Montpelier High School students. The greenhouse will be used for the continuous production of food for consumption in the cafeteria, as a research facility for science classes.

David McGraw presented the application to the committee. He and Ben Cheney spent much time working out how to design and build a greenhouse.

There was discussion about what appeared to be random placement of the synthetic slate material, and the location of the intake vents. Mr. Pfeffer felt greater attention should have placed on the exterior design elements. Ms. George concurred. Tom Sabo felt that the building should be evaluated for it function and use, which Mr. McGraw and Mr. Cheney spent a long time researching. The committee agreed that the building should function, but that it should also be attractive.

The Design Review Committee recommends approval of the application with the following adjustments:

- a. The west and east wall penetrations will have bottom edges that line up horizontally.
- b. Synthetic slate applied panels will be a continuous wainscot band around building with top edge on level with the window sills.
- c. Corner boards and rake boards will be painted or stained green to match the color on the main building.
- d. Roof will be charcoal gray and siding will be barn red.

Preliminary discussion for proposed construction at 56 College Street.

Jay Ancel, Black River Design, and Eric Seidel, NECI, presented the application. They are proposing to link the two existing buildings with a two-story connector. The new building would also serve as the main entrance. They also proposed to lift the carriage house and move it about 10 feet forward and away from an existing ravine.

Mr. Ancel pointed out that moving the carriage house would not impact the carriage house's relationship to the neighboring building, 110 East State Street. By lifting the carriage house and making the first floor on the same plane as the other buildings' first floor, and adding an elevator the entire property would be handicap accessible.

The flat roof on the proposed addition is lower than the main house roof line and ties into the carriage house's roof line. They are potentially proposing skylights to get additional light in the upper floors of the carriage house.

Ms. George commented that the carriage barn no longer looks like an outbuilding, due to the addition of windows. The relationship between the two buildings as main house and outbuilding is no longer present with the proposal.

The committee felt that the addition was massive, and asked if a two story building was necessary. Mr. Ancel stated that they are required to make the building handicap accessible, and that the addition will house the elevator. Another member asked if the entry could be modified to appear less dominating, could it be minimized? The committee agreed that the two story entryway with the two story portico was dominating all the structures.

Mr. Ancel said that an addition to a historic building should be a product of its time, and should not be designed to mimic the historic structures. Another option for the addition is to do a glass style addition, he was reluctant to do that kind of treatment because the property is in a residential area.

Ms. George commented that the structure was built as a residence. It will no longer look like a residential structure if the addition is added. Ms. Smith said that NECI is before the committee because they would like to adapt the historic residence to an institutional/office use, which is a permitted use under the existing Vermont College Master Plan.

Other Business

The committee approved the January 20, and the April 20 minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.