

Montpelier Design Review Committee
August 16, 2005
Community Room, Police Department

Subject to Review and Approval

Present: Margot George, Chair; Stephen Everett, Vice Chair; Guy Tapper, Vicki Lane, Soren Pfeffer
Staff: Kathleen Swigon

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Ms. George.

I. Design Review - Sign Permit Application

Property Address: 70 Main Street
Applicant: Jeffrey Jacobs
Zone: CB-I/DCD

- Canvas awning with a 3.54 square foot sign on the awning

Ms. George explained the design review process and said that she was recusing herself from participating in this and the following application. David Slay described the proposed burgundy colored awning. He said that it would be identical to the awning on the Country Store building. He provided a sample of the awning material. He said that the awning was proposed to improve the look of the building and to cut down on sun in the front windows. Ms. Lane noted that the photo-simulation showed a straight edge on the awning. Mr. Slay said that the edge would be scalloped. He said that the applicant prefers white lettering for the sign, but the other options available are gold or fawn. He proposed a change to the application to include changes to the existing wall sign. He said that the lettering on that sign would be moved up two inches and the two smaller signs within the sign would be moved out toward the edges of the sign and upward. Mr. Slay said that these changes would allow the proposed awning to be at the same height as the Country Store awning. Ms. Lane said that she was not comfortable with the changes to the existing sign based upon the description. Mr. Tapper said that the changes will make the existing sign seem cramped. He suggested rethinking the size of the lettering on the wall sign. Mr. Pfeffer suggested removing the sign that says "World Famous" since that wording will also be on the awning.

Ms. Lane said that the area of the wall sign is recessed and the awning might look odd if it is extended across the recessed area. Mr. Everett said that this proposed change should be added to the application. He said that the application could be tabled so that it could be added. Mr. Pfeffer said that the drawings should reflect the proposed change. Mr. Everett explained the time frames for the application process. Mr. Slay asked what might happen if he requested a vote on the application. Mr. Everett said that he could do that, but, based upon the discussion, it did not appear that the Committee would recommend approval of the application with the proposed change. Ms. Lane said that she could not vote for the application based upon the information provided that night.

Mr. Slay requested that the Committee table the application. The DRC agreed to table the application to their next meeting in order to allow the applicant to provide additional information.

II. Design Review

Property Address: 70 Main Street
Applicant: Jeffrey Jacobs
Zone: CB-I/DCD

- Rear awning and approval for vinyl siding on southern elevation

Mr. Slay referred to the project narrative that was submitted with the application. He explained that the

application is for the repair of an overhang over the rear exit and for permanent approval of the siding on the southern side of the building. He said that it is the applicant's intention that the siding will remain until such time as other work is done on that side.

Mr. Everett read a portion of the minutes of the February 3, 2004 DRC meeting where the Committee authorized the temporary use of the vinyl siding. In those minutes, some members of the Committee expressed concern about the inappropriateness of the vinyl material and concern that the siding would remain in place for a long period of time. Mr. Pfeffer said that he remained uncomfortable with vinyl siding in the historic downtown. He said that if the work is not going to be done at this point, wood siding should be installed.

Mr. Slay said that the issues that were being raised were the same issues raised when the original application was approved. Mr. Everett said that the difference was that permanent approval was now being requested. He said that the permanent use of vinyl siding did not appear to meet the design review criteria related to compatibility of exposed exterior materials. Several committee members suggested an extension of the temporary authorization for the siding. Mr. Slay said that he was willing to continue the discussion if the Committee wanted to discuss extending the temporary approval, but otherwise he would ask for the application to be tabled. Mr. Everett said that the siding is in place now. He said that vinyl siding has never been approved for permanent use in the district. He said that an option might be an extension of time for the temporary use of the siding.

Mr. Slay said that he was willing to modify the application to request a two to three year extension of time for the use of the vinyl siding. He said that he would request permanent approval for the rear awning. Mr. Everett said that the awning is functionally better and does not look any worse than the awning that was replaced. Mr. Tapper said that a two-year extension would be acceptable to him. Ms. Lane said that any extension should be limited to a two-year time period. Mr. Pfeffer said that he did not see a rationale for an extension and it seemed like the extension would just prolong the use of the vinyl siding. He said that he might feel differently if there was a proposal for construction on the adjoining lot, but that was not the case. Ms. Lane said that there should be no more extensions after this two-year extension.

The Committee considered the review criteria and voted 3-1 (Mr. Pfeffer opposed) to recommend approval of the application with the following adjustment:

The applicant requests that the existing vinyl siding that was previously approved on a temporary basis be again approved on a temporary basis for a two-year period as a straw poll of the Committee indicated that the recommendation for approval of the permanent use of the siding was not a possibility.

III. Design Review

Property Address: 35-37 Court Street
Applicant: Vermont Bar Association
Zone: CB-II/DCD

- A 5.8 square foot ground sign

Tom Quinlan represented the applicant. Mr. Quinlan described the proposed wooden ground sign which would have a dark green background and gold lettering. He said that the applicant wanted its logo shown on the sign and that limited the options for the lettering. He said that the sign will not be lighted. He said that the sign will be angled slightly toward the street corner to make it readily visible. Ms. George said that the proposed 40" height was an improvement over the 60" sign that was previously located on the property. She said that she would like to see more variety in the signs in the district. Mr. Quinlan said that he would consider that in the future, but the client wanted the design that was proposed in this sign.

The Committee considered the review criteria and unanimously voted to recommend approval of the application with the following adjustment:

The sign may be tilted 10 to 15 degrees toward the corner of Governor Aiken and Court Streets.

IV. Design Review

Property Address: 90 Main Street
Applicant: NW Sign Industries for Banknorth Group, Inc.
Zone: CB-I/DCD

- Two 7.5 square foot wall signs within the sign band (one on the State Street side and one on the Main Street side)

Ms. George noted that the applicant was not present. She suggested that the Committee proceed with its review since the application was fairly straightforward. Ms. George noted that the proposed aluminum signs would be placed over the existing signs on the building. The Committee considered the review criteria and voted unanimously to recommend approval of the application as submitted.

V. Design Review

Property Address: 9 School Street
Applicant: NW Sign Industries for Banknorth Group, Inc.
Zone: CB-I/DCD

- Six wall signs (one 22 s. f., two 3.78 s.f., two 1.65 s.f. and one 7 s.f. wall signs)
- One ground sign (2.69 s.f.)

Ms. George noted that the applicant was not present. She suggested that the Committee proceed with its review since the application was fairly straightforward. The Committee discussed the proposed ground sign and the placement of the aluminum signs over the existing wall signs on the building. The Committee considered the review criteria and voted unanimously to recommend approval of the application as submitted.

Adjournment

The Committee agreed to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Smith
Administrative Officer

