

**Montpelier Design Review Committee**  
**April 3, 2007**  
**Memorial Room, City Hall**

*These minutes are subject to approval by the Design Review Committee. Changes, if any, will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which they are acted upon.*

**Present:** Margot George, Chair; Stephen Everett, Vice Chair; Vicki Lane; Dan Richardson, and Eric Gilbertson.  
Staff: Kathy Swigon.

**Call to Order:**

Ms. George called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**I. Design Review – CB-I/DCD**

79 Barre Street

Applicant: Fisher Auto Parts

- Replacement of one ground sign and one wall sign.

Interested Party: Norman Matton

Ms. George explained the process of presenting an application to the Design Review Committee, and the DRC plays an advisory role to the Development Review Board. Fisher Auto Parts is relocating to the old Barre Street Beverage Store. Mr. Matton said he plans to be moved into the new location and open for business on May 1<sup>st</sup>. The Central Vermont Community Land Trust is building the other building located on the corner of Barre and College Streets.

Mr. Matton said components of the sign being placed on the building the frame is aluminum with a plastic facing. These will be three panels. The sign they plan on putting on the street is going to be double-sided with 3' x 4' dimensions. It will probably be constructed from a sheet of plywood.

On the building the sign will be an aluminum framed with three panels of plastic. That will be illuminated with overhead lighting. The sign by the street, which is a double sided sign, is probably metal on pieces of wood. The colors would be the same as used in the logo on the present sign. The old sign says Fisher Auto Parts, and the new sign will be "Federated Parts Professionals" with Fisher Auto Parts underneath it. The sign will be the same size as the Barre Street Beverage sign, 3' x 4'. This will be replacing the existing Barre Street Beverage sign.

The DRC said as an option the frame of the street sign can be wood painted white, or left as natural wood.

The wall sign is aluminum framing. It is an aluminum edge where the plastic sign is beveled to project a little. The DRC discussed the concerns with the size of the sign. The height will be too much for the building. The old sign was 2' x 12'. Ms. Swigon said the applicant's sign meets the signage requirements.

Ms. George inquired about lighting. They are going to have overhead with four gooseneck lights. The applicant said if the permit is issued they have a two-year period to install them. It is possible they may not install any lights on the sign. Presently, there is just a little light to the left of the windows. It may be just used as a security or night light.

Mr. Richardson said the regulations are speaking more to a sign band and less of the sign. It has to be at least a minimum of 10 feet above the ground for a sign band.

Ms. George said her concern was that the building is in a historic district and Montpelier is slowly evolving the historic district to fit with the architecture and neighborhood. She personally finds the sign with the double logo and the name in the middle a little like what you would find in a shopping center. This might be the opportunity to select the one with just one logo and their name since you have the sign out on the street with the biggest logo. Mr. Matton said they like to have universal signage throughout the company.

Mr. Richardson said one of the regulations for CB-I are that 50 percent of the sign area is allowed on the ground. That is the sign limit, which is 75 square feet of signage that is the maximum size. The sign in the application is 54 square feet. All of the sign is on the ground floor. When you have a one story building you can't have a large sign because that becomes a visually imposing feature and it defeats the signage limitations. This has to be reduced, and just chopping off the extra logo reduces it to 39 square feet. If it is a 3 foot sign that fits within the standards, that is fine. He said he couldn't see how the signage limitations would allow a 3' x 18' sign on a ground floor area.

Mr. Gilbertson said the height matters to him just as much as anything because it completely obscures the wall. The sign begins to dominate the wall completely. Ms. George said a decent length would be 13'. Ms. Lane said she couldn't be comfortable with anything taller than 2'. Longer is fine as long as it is centered, but taller becomes too big for the building. The DRC reached a consensus that they preferred a smaller sign.

Ms. George said the committee would discuss a smaller sign. Otherwise, they could vote on the application as it stands, and then it would go to the Development Review Board. Mr. Matton said he agreed with the committee. He doesn't want to create any problems and do what they need to do.

Ms. George said it looked like a 2' sign would fit within the space okay, so it is just a matter of length. She thinks one log is enough for a sign and would be appropriate for the district. Ms. Lane said she would prefer two logos if the sign is going to be long because it balances. If it is a shorter sign, then one logo would be okay.

Mr. Richardson said if they are talking about a shorter sign, it would be more aesthetically pleasing to have just one sign because it makes for a smaller sign. Speaking from their function in the historic district as controlling the mixture of commercial as well as historic preservation, he would endorse the sign with one logo. However, he would support two signs if they fit. You are only talking now about 36 square feet as opposed to 54 square feet.

Mr. Matton said if they went that route he would have to get the sign made. It definitely would not be plastic nor have an aluminum frame, so it would look like something they would have on the road. By taking the foot off the height of the sign it really shrinks the logo that it might look distorted. As long as he knows the specifications he can get a sign made.

Ms. George said if the group agrees they could say the sign would be permitted to a length no longer than the outside casings of the windows. When the applicant arrives at the Development Review Board you can tell them what it will be. The Committee could say 2 feet by no greater than. She said her preference is for a single logo.

Mr. Gilbertson said he thought it was defensible on aesthetical grounds to having the one logo to match with the historic area and not overpower the sign. The DRC decided it would be a 12' x 2' sign, preferably with one logo.

The Committee suggested they talk about the lighting for the sign. Mr. Matton said now they have reduced the size of the sign, there would be no more than three 40 watt bulbs directed at the sign. Ms. George said the sign should be of matte' finish and made out of MDO plywood with vinyl lettering.

The DRC reviewed the sign criteria and found it to be compatible with other signs in the district. The applicant agreed with all changes made by the DRC. The application was approved 5-0.

## **II. Design Review – MDR/DCD**

13 Terrace Street

Applicant: Ellen Fein

- Design review of amended application for renovations to garage

Interested parties: Ellen Fein and Aaron Kyle, Builder

Mr. Kyle said this is an interior renovation of a barn, replacing the garage door and adding an entry door. There will be four double hung windows and one transom window. They are eliminating the windows on the hillside because the interior space was shrunk down. The Committee discussed options for lighting. The applicant said a

jelly jar type light would be used. The colors are the same as the house. Members of the committee said they liked the proposed changes better than the original application which was approved earlier.

The DRC reviewed the criteria and agreed the application met the criteria. The application was approved 5-0.

**III. Design Review – MDR/DCD**

17 Baldwin Street

Applicant: Stephen Everett

- Design review for window replacements

Stephen Everett abstained from the discussion of the application.

The application is for partial replacement of windows. There are eleven on the front of the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, and he is replacing one over one wood windows with Marvin wood clad one over one windows. They are Marvin clad replacement sashes with insert. The look of the arch on the windows will be restored. All of the other renovations are just replacing existing. The color of the window sashes are dark bronze.

The DRC reviewed the criteria. The application was approved 4-0.

**Approval of March 6, 2007 Minutes:**

The minutes of the Design Review Committee of March 6, 2007 were approved 4-0.

**Adjournment:**

The Design Review Committee was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Swigon,  
Administrative Officer

*Transcribed and prepared by:*

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City Clerk & Treasurer's Office*