

Montpelier Design Review Committee
November 6, 2007
Memorial Room, City Hall

Approved

Present: Margot George, Chair; Stephen Everett, Vice Chair; Vicki Lane, Eric Gilbertson, Soren Pfeffer, and Guy Tapper, Alternate.
Staff: Clancy DeSmet, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Call to Order:
Margot George, Chair, called the meeting of the Montpelier Design Review Committee to order at 5:30 p.m.

I. Design Review – CB-I/DCD

89 Barre Street
Applicant: Patty and Steven Ribolini
Owner: Patty and Steven Ribolini
Painting of building exterior

The applicant is painting the building with a grey color and darker grey trim. The color on the doors is True Penny from Sherwin Williams. The color of the grey paint is called Horizon Grey. The trim around the window is Black Forrest Green, but it looks black. Mr. Ribolini said the block building did get primed grey five years ago when they applied for the last permit.

The Committee reviewed the criteria and found the application acceptable. The application was voted on favorably by a 5-0 vote.

II. Design Review – CB-I/DCD

79-83 Main Street
Applicant: Heney Family Ltd. Partnership
Replacement of 7 second story windows and sign.
Interested Party: Tim Heney

Mr. Heney said they are replacing the second floor windows on the front. The rest of the building has 2 over 2's. They don't match and are in lousy shape. They want to put in new 2 over 2's so it will look like the rest of the building. They will be Marvin windows like in the block next door and what they put in the Blanchard block with the wide muntin down the middle. The two windows on the East State side they want to match the office. They are 2 over 2's, but are in such bad shape that the air blows right through them.

Ms. George asked how many 2 over 2 windows he had on the building. Mr. Heney said everything but 5 are 2 over 2's.

Ms. George said the DRC cares about the muntin profile. Mr. Heney said the color of the windows is white to match the existing windows.

The committee reviewed the criteria and found the application acceptable as it related to the replacement windows.

The DRC reviewed the sign in the application separately.

Mr. Heney said he is just replacing the sign that is there with the same dimensions. It's going to be a nicer sign with a new logo. Ms. George said the color is Patriot Blue with Sun Yellow by Benjamin Moore Paints. The sign is a foam background with turned edges and carved.

The committee reviewed the criteria and found the application acceptable. Mr. Heney is replacing an existing sign. The application was voted favorably by the Design Review Committee on a 6-0 vote.

III. Design Review – CB-I/DCD

3 Pitkin Court
Applicant: John Kerin
Owner: Duane Wells
Sign for Edward Jones

Ms Lane was not present.

Mr. Everett said he believed putting a sign on the building would be a mistake. Ms. George reminded him that the sign was on the side door. It is the side facing East State Street. These people at Edward Jones have already moved. They moved out of City Center into an office that has actually has windows.

It is an aluminum sign with vinyl letter, 24 x 24. The letters are the standard Edward Jones green and white letters. It has a matte finish. There is no lighting involved.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the sign criteria and found it was acceptable. The application was voted favorably with a 5-0 vote.

Other Business:

Mr. Gilbertson reported he went to a meeting on building codes for City Building Inspectors with the Fire Marshall. There is a meeting on November 30th called Code College. They reviewed the draft guidelines for approving projects. There is not a leeway for the inspectors. There is a lot of leeway in the codes for state people. The new guidelines specify what inspectors can do so it is easier for inspectors to deal with. The less work you do on a building, the less code compliance you need to deal with. Generally, it speaks to rehabilitation. He hopes Glenn Moore can get to the training sessions because this gives them specificity. The new guidelines define the judgment calls. The guidelines establish prescriptive requirements for different categories of rehabilitation, change of use, additions, historic buildings and changes of occupancy. It spells out what is practicable. A building must meet the existing chapter from the Life Safety Code, which is more flexible than the National Building Code. The rehabilitation work must maintain and increase the level of code compliance. Rehabilitation has more leniency than new construction. They develop categories of uses of hazard, and as long as you stay in the hazard category you don't have to do anything. Even if the use changes, the hazard level does not change. It deals with smoke rather than fire itself. Some of the national code material establishes a one-hour rating for lath and plaster. This really makes it a lot easier to do a preservation conscious rehabilitation on a building.

Ms. George asked if they knew whether Glenn was scheduled to attend this meeting. Mr. DeSmet said he would follow up with Glenn on this.

Mr. Gilbertson said the State of Vermont is conducting it. It's a Code College: Fire Safety Summit held on November 30 and December 1, 2007 at the Holiday Inn in Rutland. It's a 2-day event, and it costs \$70.00 for the two days.

Ms. George said from a design review point the Committee would like to encourage the City of Montpelier to fund this for Glenn Moore to attend.

Mr. Gilbertson said this is giving the inspectors the backing they need for flexibility. This is a state training session. The state almost always amends and modifies the national building code. The national code deals with swimming pools and the protection of swimming pools. The state is not granted authority to regulate that, so they take that out of the code. Vermont has been very acceptable in recognizing that rehabilitation is important, and a lot of the codes got in the way of doing economical, reasonable or practical rehabilitation.

Steeple at Trinity United Methodist Church:

Ms. George reported there was going to be a legal opinion sought from the city attorney regarding this. Mr. DeSmet said no legal opinion would be sought. Historically, there have been instances where slate shingles were used and they used the geometric pattern you can use different colors with slate. What is being proposed is to use a design, which is a cross and a flame that is

8 to 10 feet tall. Jay Southgate, who is doing the steeple, tends to be the type of person who likes to leave his signature on the buildings he works on. The church accepted the design.

Ms. Lane said the church wants it. The Cross and Flame insignia is the Methodist Church.

Ms. George said her concern is she doesn't know if it is going to be executed to the point it looks like on the drawing because slates are little squares.

Mr. DeSmet said the drawing is an example of what he did in New Hampshire.

Mr. Gilbertson said he thinks we lose on the design. What he worries more in terms of process is they are replacing a wood shingle roof with a slate roof. The committee may approve that, but if anybody else comes in and wants to change roofing materials, which has nothing to do with inhibiting their practice of religion but a change of materials on a building, it should come before the DRC.

Ms. Lane said the main roof is slate.

Ms. George said when she looks at the history of when the building was built they never talked about slate.

Mr. DeSmet said one of the problems he had was they just started doing work without consulting the city at all.

Ms. Lane said she knew there had been discussion at the church about the steeple and it was in bad shape. It was going to cost a lot of money to repair. When she saw the scaffolding in place, she remembered they were repairing the steeple and it is maintenance. Churches act on a committee basis. Somehow somebody got the idea they didn't need a permit.

Mr. DeSmet said one of the only regulations they have for design review on churches and state facilities is landscaping.

Ms. Lane said when the church removed the trees they contacted the city before they took the old ones out and put the new trees in.

Mr. Gilbertson said he didn't think they could do anything about the design, but the change in materials on the roof should have come through the Design Review Committee.

Ms. Lane said originally they had planned on just replacing the shingles until they discovered it would be cheaper in the long run and longer lasting to use slate.

Mr. Gilbertson said they need to repair the rest of the roof as well.

Ms. Lane said the church is working with very limited funds. Mr. Gilbertson said the church should have applied for a grant through the Historic Division to do the steeple. He has administered the program for 25 years.

Environmental Court Update:

Mr. Gilbertson said he wanted to talk about the city's court appearance with Judge Wright and Vince Illuzzi, which was an 8:30 a.m. site visit until 4:00 p.m. Vince was ill prepared. Sandy Vitzhum represented Vince Illuzzi, and Joe Illuzzi appeared. They said they did everything in the Efficiency Vermont letter. They put insulation in the attic, interior storm windows on, and everything that was suggested. Joe McLean asked if they received a letter from Efficiency Vermont, and they replied yes but never filed it as an exhibit. Mr. McLean asked Joe Illuzzi if the letter included anything about the storm entrance, and Joe didn't remember. It wasn't included in the letter as a recommendation from Efficiency Vermont. That came out in court pretty clearly. Joe Illuzzi had misled Sandy Vitzhum to say that the rear entrance did not access the whole building, and it does. That changes the whole perspective because that is an alternative.

Ms. George said she had always known that because she used to manage the building.

Mr. Gilbertson said that all came out in court. Vince Illuzzi represented himself at the hearing.

Mr. Gilbertson said the issue Vince Illuzzi pressed him on was the use of materials. When you look at the compatibility of materials you start close to the building and work out into the neighborhood. The Design Review Committee's criteria says district, so they ran downtown and talked to all people with aluminum and glass windows on downtown buildings.

Mr. DeSmet said one of the things that defeated that in the way they framed the argument is if you look at what it says about CBII or CBI it talks about neighborhoods and district objectives. It would be nice to have that better defined. A significant factor of that district is that there is a group of homes that were residential, but also a group of buildings that aren't residential. It still has the residential feel. Mr. Gilbertson said it is ludicrous to apply these standards to a residential building. The buildings that are immediately adjacent are more important than the ones in the district but two or three blocks away.

Ms. George said Cityscape I and II were created solely for the purpose of helping the city with managing the historic district. Maybe it is time to get re-voted in some capacity that the Cityscape documents are what our guidelines are in relationship to the district. These criteria are the state statute criteria. This is from the statute that enabled the historic district to happen. The state says this will be your criteria unless you decide you want to come up with your own criteria.

Mr. Gilbertson said Judge Wright probably got it that Vince Illuzzi's building doesn't compare to the front of Aubuchon's or the NECI building.

Mr. DeSmet said comparing a storm entry that was designed as part of the original construction is much different from something he is proposing.

Approval of Minutes of October 2, 2007:

A request was made to have members read the minutes of previous meetings prior to approving. The minutes of the October 2, 2007 meeting of the Design Review Committee were approved favorably 4-0.

Adjournment:

The Design Review Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Clancy DeSmet
Planning and Zoning Administrator

Transcribed by:
Joan Clack, City Clerk's Office