

**Montpelier Design Review Committee**  
**October 28, 2008**  
**City Council Chambers, City Hall**

*Approved*

**Present:** Margot George, Chair, Eric Gilbertson and James Duggan  
Staff: Clancy DeSmet, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Call to Order:

Margot George, Chair, called the meeting of the Design Review Committee for October 28, 2008 to order at 5:30 P.M.

Ms. George explained the advisory role of the Design Review Committee to the Development Review Board. The Committee will look at his application as it pertains to the design review criteria because he is in the Design Control District.

9-11 West Street – HDR/DCD

Applicant: RKG, LLC

Owner: Marcel Rocheleau

Retaining wall in rear parking lot.

The applicant wants to install a retaining wall on the hill. There is some erosion going on between the two buildings and the parking lot may be disappearing. Mr. Rocheleau said his building is set back on West Street; it is called Rugg House. The application will connect both buildings essentially. He owns both buildings.

Ms. George said this is the parking lot they worked on a few years ago redoing. The material he proposes to use is a simulated stone. Is that used somewhere else on the project?

Mr. Rocheleau said he had subsequent pictures showing that. It's really nice material.

Ms. George asked if he was in charge of the wall that went in further down that backed up to a property on First Avenue. Is this the same material used there?

Mr. Rocheleau said they used concrete forms and blocks. These are smaller and look just like concrete.

Mr. Gilbertson said on this picture, since the drawings are sketches, that wall is going to extend from the concrete. Mr. Rocheleau said it will go from the higher point to the one over there. It is going to prevent some problems and snow removal. It is going to be a lot more costly for him to haul it out. The material adds about 30 percent of the cost of materials for the project, but it is so much nicer.

Ms. George asked if he was trying to mimic in some way the stone on the building.

Mr. Rocheleau said yes. It is granite on the building.

Ms. George asked if there was a new snow plan that leaves this open.

Mr. Rocheleau replied no. In the past the snow was moved up on top of the hill where the erosion is. Now they have the wall there is very little place to put the snow.

Ms. George said when they worked on the project in the past there was a fair amount of review on the parking lot. She remembers at that time he was concerned about where snow was going to go.

Mr. Rocheleau said he just met with the person who has the contract for the snow removal. It will get done, but it will cost them more money.

Ms. George said people do take the shortest distance to get wherever, but the reality is if you just put in a retaining wall and left out the steps and were still able to put snow up against the retaining wall, or above the retaining wall, has he thought through that whole idea?

Mr. Rocheleau said in order to keep kids walking there the retaining wall is only 3.5 to 4 feet high. They are going to jump off that and try to climb it. There is more danger of that becoming a public nuisance so the stairs are the way to go.

Mr. Gilbertson said he didn't have a problem with the stairs. They break the wall up. The snow removal is their problem.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the criteria and found it acceptable. The application for 9-11 West Street was approved on a vote of 3 to 0.

## **II. One National Life Drive – OP/DCD**

Applicant: Solar Works, Inc.

Owner: National Life Group

Additional solar collectors on West roof for solar hot water.

Interested Party: Leigh Seddon

Mr. Seddon said the previous system was a solar electric system, and that is about finished and they will commission that in a week. It had solar electric modules. National Life wanted to put up a small hot water system to use solar energy to heat hot water. They have been able to fit in 20 of the thermal collectors. They are a bit larger than the solar electric ones. These are very similar to what is on 2 Barre Street. 2 Barre Street is at 45 degrees so they are quite a bit higher, and they are going to keep these at 30 degrees to be lower. The third page of the application shows the two black lines as the two rows of collectors on the west roof of National Life. It's to the north of the cooling tower. The smaller modules to the north of it are the solar electric ones that are already in place. They are hidden behind the penthouse so they are not visible from any view unless you are able to get up to the west and on a high point of land. He took photographs from the High School and you can't see them. They are tucked behind the cooling tower.

The picture with a view to the west shows the cooling tower, and then tucked right in behind will be two rows of collectors.

It has associated piping with it which runs across the roof. The collectors are made with tempered glass covers, but it is a non-reflective glass that is pebbled inside so it doesn't reflect out the sunlight. The frames of the collectors are black anodized so they don't shine.

Ms. George asked if they had collectors in a similar location now. Are you replacing them?

Mr. Seddon said these are brand new. National Life had no collectors and after they redesigned the solar electric system they asked if they had a little more space for solar and hot water, and it was decided they did.

Mr. Gilbertson said you really can't see them.

Mr. Seddon said the other collectors just stick up a little over 13 inches off the ground. These would be 5 feet, but you can't see them because you can't see over the edge of the building.

The DRC reviewed the criteria and found it was in harmony with all of the other stuff they have on the roof of that building. The DRC found the application met the criteria and was approved on a favorable vote of 3 to 0.

**Adjournment:**

The Design Review Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Clancy DeSmet  
Planning & Zoning Administrator