

Montpelier Design Review Committee
May 26, 2009
Council Chambers, City Hall

Subject to Review and Approval

Present: Stephen Everett, Chair; James Duggan, Vice Chair; Eric Gilbertson, Nancy Mears and Jay White.
Staff: Clancy DeSmet, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Call to Order:

The May 26, 2009 Montpelier Design Review Committee was called to order by Stephen Everett, Chair, at 5:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

I. 2 Mather Terrace – MDR/DCD
Applicant: Carolyn & Daniel Desch
Owner: Carolyn & Daniel Desch
Replace porch ceiling.

Carolyn Desch told the DRC they are replacing the ceiling on their porch. They are located in the Historical District so that is why they are present. They are replacing the material with a natural material.

Mr. Gilbertson asked if they were going to use the same bead board.

Ms. Desch said they only have bead board in pine and fir. They have problems with mold and mildew so they are trying to figure out what wood would be the best for that purpose.

Mr. White said he believed fir would be better.

Mr. Everett said fir with a ceiling all around would last a long time. It would be a good quality ceiling.

Mr. White asked if it would be a natural wood finish.

Ms. Desch replied yes.

Mr. White said a polyurethane finish would be a good one to use.

Mr. Everett said they could actually seal the material before it is put up and it would avoid a lot of the moisture issues.

Mr. Gilbertson said a good traditional color for a ceiling is a light blue.

Mr. Everett said they could have the choice of doing it natural or blue.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the criteria and found the application acceptable. The application for 2 Mather Terrace was approved on a 5 to 0 vote. The optional change the applicant may pursue at their discretion is either natural color fir or commonly used blue historic porch ceiling color.

II. 207 Barre Street – CB-II/DCD
Applicant: Crystal Maderia – Kismet
Owner: Trevor Cole
Outdoor seating and screening.

Crystal Maderia said they are looking to change the empty lot that is right next to the building into an area for outdoor seating and also looking to screen the dumpsters located there.

Mr. White asked with the dumpsters screened could the trash haulers still access them.

Ms. Maderia replied yes. They come on Mondays, and the restaurant is closed on Mondays.

Mr. Everett inquired what material she was using for the screening.

Ms. Maderia replied cedar planks of a natural color.

Ms. Mears asked if she was proposing a deck.

Ms. Maderia said there is gravel there now and they are going to add a very light layer gravel to even it out.

Mr. White inquired how tall they wanted the screen to be.

Ms. Maderia said 8 feet at the tallest point. It will be a scalloped top.

Mr. White said he would ask them to put the supports for that on the back side so they won't see them from the public side. He thinks it is a good use for this side lot.

Mr. Everett inquired what kind of planters they would be using.

Ms. Maderia said they have some round planters drawn and she is flexible about that portion of the design and is open to suggestions by the Design Review Committee. They haven't purchased any yet. The landscape architect they are working with suggested a longer and taller planter. They want to make sure there is wheelchair accessibility so they would leave a 3 foot space.

Mr. Duggan asked if this would be seasonal.

Ms. Maderia replied yes and they would be removed during the winter.

Mr. Gilbertson said he felt the tall pots would tip.

Ms. Maderia said they wanted to give the illusion from the road that a patio had been built so the landscaper said having it all covered from the sidewalk perspective they would see little gaps and see the pebbles there. Her addition to that was to have the pots painted a gray color that matches the Land Trust building across the street.

Mr. Gilbertson said they could put a sealer on the fence to keep it a neutral nice color because after it weathers for a few years it turns gray.

Mr. Everett said oil based paint would work better on cedar. He thinks the planters are fine, either square or round. It would be nice to have something like that on Barre Street.

Mr. White asked what the surface of the patio was going to be.

Ms. Maderia said the stone that is there now. They aren't actually building a patio so it is just the gravel that is presently there. They will be adding to the stone that is already there.

Mr. Everett inquired what the tables and chairs were made of.

Ms. Maderia said the picture shows wood with umbrellas.

Mr. Gilbertson inquired if the umbrellas were plain with no logos.

Mr. Everett said being on the street a suggestion would be something other than white.

Ms. Maderia said in the picture it shows gray, which is her preference. She is having an interesting time finding umbrellas that are guaranteed not to fade or have a fade resistant fabric.

Ms. Mears inquired how many square feet the patio area is.

Ms. Maderia said it is 14 x 12 or 10 x 12.

Mr. Everett said it is about the size of a single parking space, or slightly larger. It is probably less than 200 square feet.

Ms. Mears said they are changing the deck to make steps with the same material that is presently there.

Ms. Maderia replied that was correct.

Ms. Mears inquired if they are going to keep it for just people eating at the restaurant.

Ms. Maderia replied yes, with the exception of a roped off entrance for the wheelchair accessibility.

Mr. White said he would be a little concerned that from the sketch they are showing much tables than what would actually be there. He would want to make sure all three tables fit comfortably.

Ms. Maderia said it is deceptive because it is slightly larger than their dining room which seats 20. She asked if there was flexibility if she needed to stay with the same 12 seats but divide them up into two round tables.

Mr. Everett said that would be fine.

Mr. White said they wouldn't have an issue with that.

Ms. Maderia replied when they actually did the square footage they thought they could fit 18 but would rather keep it at 12. The intention of this isn't to double their business but to improve the quality of the space. The space presently is an eyesore. They would also like to have a place for people to sit outside in the summer.

Mr. White inquired what kind of plants they were going to plant in the planters.

Ms. Maderia said every other planter right now they are planning on large blueberry bushes and they are going to have an assortment of all edible flowers and herbs, so there would be strawberries, lavender and rosemary with nasturtiums.

Mr. Everett said regarding the plants do they want to leave the option open for either cedar or terra cotta.

Mr. Gilbertson agreed.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the criteria and found the application acceptable. The application as proposed was passed on a vote of 5 to 0.

III. 47 Barre Street – CB-II/DCD

Applicant: Central Vermont Community Land Trust

Owner: CVCLT – Eileen Peltier, Laz Scangas & Alison Friedken

Multiple exterior renovations including color, roofs, windows, doors, porches, etc.

Eileen Peltier, Executive Director of the Central Vermont Community Land Trust; Laz Scangas with Arnold & Scangas Architects; and Alison Friedken, Project Manager for the Central Vermont Community Land Trust appeared before the DRC.

Mr. Scangas said at 47 Barre Street they are doing roof replacement, window replacement, clapboard replacement, repaving the driveway for exterior. They are also adding solar panels in the rear of the building. They will be facing the garage, which is in the back. There are also some external light fixtures they are replacing as well. The windows are currently one over ones and a couple that are four over fours. They are going through the Historic Tax Reinvestment Credit Program. Originally, they were four over fours and they want them put back in. When you see the new building they will have four over fours instead of one over ones.

Mr. Duggan asked if that would hold true for casement windows.

Mr. Scangas said there is one casement. The casement is for egress. There is one area they have to meet egress so the only way they can make it work is in an existent dormer. They only show it as a one light, but they may make it a four light. It is on the side opposite the driveway side but towards the rear.

Mr. White asked if they were custom made windows.

Mr. Scangas said they are using Marvin windows. They are new windows and in some places they have to replace the jam liner. The sashes are okay. It is a whole new window. One of the reasons for this is the original building the studs are laid flat, but they are full 2 x 4 studs.

Mr. Duggan said 242 Elm Street is like that.

Mr. Scangas said it was just stacked lumber, and in some places it is plaster on the outside and in other places it looks like craft paper that has been put on. They are going to re-clapboard the building and that is why they are going to replace the windows in their entirety. They are going to put sheathing on first and attach that to the studs and then do the insulation. Housing Vermont has hired a mechanical vapor guru and decided not to do that. They didn't want to trap any moisture; that was their concern.

Mr. Gilbertson said this is a real problem with insulating historic buildings, the whole condensation piece. Unless you are doing something in the basement to control the moisture, which is where most of the moisture is generated, he would think about leaving a space in there so it can vent a little better. He thinks the energy analyst is looking for the energy piece, but they are running a risk with that system.

Mr. Scangas said Housing Vermont is one of the partners.

Mr. Duggan asked if they are putting in new windows.

Mr. Scangas replied yes. These aren't original windows. They were replaced in the early 1990's when the building was renovated.

Mr. White said he noticed yesterday there is insulation in the back portion of the building. It looks like they have done some excess removal.

Mr. Scangas said they looked and it is old mineral wool so it is going to be removed and the local weatherization group is going to do and do dense pack.

Mr. White asked if they were going to remove all of the existing cellular insulation there.

Mr. Scangas said that was correct. Mr. White asked if they would be blowing in new dense pack from the outside. Mr. Scangas replied that was correct.

Mr. Everett asked if there was a picture of the solar panel that would be used.

Mr. Scangas said it isn't shown on the elevation.

Mr. White said they put in their rigid insulation without any vapor barriers on the outside to increase the insulation, and then they are putting new wood clapboards around it.

Mr. Scangas said they will match everything that is there in terms of size, spacing, exposure, etc.

Mr. Everett inquired how they were going to fasten the wood clapboards to the rigid.

Mr. Scangas said they would have strapping. They are going to do rigid insulation and in certain areas there will be blocking inserted and a vertical piece of plywood as strapping and clapboards are attached to the strapping. The clapboards are going to come off.

Mr. Duggan asked regarding the windows that come out of the house will there be a chance to recycle them. Are they going to end up in the dumpster or could they be recycled.

Mr. White said they might be able to go to a place like Recycle North, and as a nonprofit it might make a lot of sense to give them the opportunity to remove them because it could be a savings to the project. Mr. Scangas said if the owner is willing to do that he doesn't have an issue.

Mr. White said there are people who want historic wood windows and rather than just throwing them out perhaps they could be recycled it might be good. This has nothing to do with the design approval but just a way to recycle the materials.

Mr. White asked if the colors were going to be the same.

Mr. Scangas said they are going to be a little different. It is going to be Concord Ivory with Montgomery White trim, and a Boston Brick.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the criteria and found the application acceptable. They are restoring to the original detail the exterior building. The optional changes are that the applicant may pursue at its discretion. The electric meters may be relocated to the side of the building. The application was passed favorably for 47 Barre Street on a vote of 5 to 0.

IV. 87 Elm Street – CB-II/DCD

Applicant: Central Vermont Community Land Trust

Owner: CVCLT – Eileen Peltier, Laz Scangas, Alison Friedken

Multiple exterior renovations including color, roofs, windows, doors, porches, etc.

Mr. Scangas said for 87 Elm Street they are replacing windows, selective clapboard replacement and trim replacement, and replacing exterior doors. There are actually four existing historic entry doors they will restore. They are replacing some pressure treated railings on the rear of the building. There are some wooden railings on the front they are going to put galvanized painted metal instead. They are around the entries. The existing stair on the front is going to stay. They are replacing the hand rails at the ramp. They have rusted and deteriorated. The other pieces on the center building, this building originally had 2 over 2's, and they are currently 1 over 1's, so as part of the historic tax credit they recommended we go with 2 over 2's. They are removing the existing chimneys. They are not being used and they are going to do a new prefabricated metal chimney.

Mr. Everett inquired if they were brick chimneys.

Mr. Scangas replied they were. There is an existing bulkhead door that goes down to the basement to the right of the stair that is currently wood, and they are going to replace it with a metal one. All of the existing storm windows are going to be taken off and they are going to put insulated windows back. There are going to solar panels on the roof.

Mr. Duggan asked what building the solar panels went on.

Mr. Scangas said the solar panels are going to be elevated and not quite facing the river but about 45 degrees to the river to give the right orientation. They are not going to be very visible from anywhere. Up on the cliff if you are across the river you may see them because you may be far enough back where the angle is right, but if you are coming down Elm Street going towards the building by the time you clear 89 Elm Street you wouldn't see it because the angle wouldn't be right. 89 Elm Street is the new building where the courtyard separates the two buildings.

Mr. Everett asked how long ago this project was done initially.

Mr. Scangas replied in the early 1990's.

Mr. Duggan said the new metal chimney, where will it be located?

Mr. Scangas said it won't be visible from the street. It is towards the center of the building so it is pretty far back. It is flat with a cornice.

Mr. Everett said one of the notes here is removing the connecting stairs on the back porch system and fill openings and deck. Which stairs are those?

Ms. Peltier said currently what happens is you have the decks across and then stairs which take you down to the next level so people are able to not only travel horizontally but also up. What they want to do is have people have a little bit more sense of privacy and ownership of the decks so they are going to remove the stairs that link the levels. You will still be able to travel horizontally but not be able to go up and down. The building will be sprinklered and it has been a request from tenants to cut down on some of the undesirable travel because there are common doors.

Mr. Everett asked if they were okay with the fire codes on that.

Mr. Scangas said the Fire Department also suggested taking them out because they don't want to encourage people going back there in an emergency. They really want them to go out towards the street.

Ms. Peltier said Glenn Moore has already reviewed this and signed off on that.

Mr. Scangas said there are four townhouses.

Mr. Scangas said they are replacing the doors. They are currently aluminum doors with half glass and two panels underneath. They are replacing them with a fiberglass insulated door, but it matches the pattern. The other doors are currently hollow metal doors so they are going to use the same type of door with a half glass and two panels.

Ms. Peltier said the windows on the inside have fire shutters, and since they are sprinkling the building those will go away.

Mr. Everett asked how they are going to fasten the railings on the front. Isn't there a brick sidewalk there?

Mr. Scangas replied they are fastened into the timber wall. There will be new metal handrails.

Mr. Everett said he isn't sure what they mean by composite windows.

Mr. Scangas said they are a fiberglass window.

Mr. Gilbertson inquired if that was the Marvin line.

Mr. Scangas replied it is a Marvin line. They call it "composite" but it is fiberglass and not vinyl.

Mr. White inquired if they were true divided light windows.

Mr. Scangas replied they aren't true divided light, but they will have the spacer bar in it so it will be simulated divided light.

Mr. White said they make two kinds of simulated divided lights. One of them has the bar recessed between the insulated glass, which gives you the pattern on the glass but it doesn't give you the shadow depths that you get if you use the simulated divided light that is actually attached to the outside of the insulated glass.

Mr. Scangas said there are attached to the outside.

Mr. White said it is still simulated divided light, but it is more realistic. Also, with the Marvin line it is brand new this year. The Marvin dealer in Burlington didn't know it even existed and the last applicant brought it to his attention.

Ms. Mears said when he says selective replacement of the cladding, is it the same material?

Mr. Scangas replied yes. Either it is damaged. When they insulated the walls they used plugs so they will take those clapboards off. There are some places they need to take clapboards and sheeting off to insulate the walls because there are tubs or kitchen cabinets on the inside and can't access the wall from the inside. There is some trim that is rotted and needs to be replaced.

Mr. Gilbertson said the exterior lights look like bare bulbs screwed into sockets, and there aren't very many of them. Are they going to do more lighting?

Mr. Scangas said there won't be much more lighting. Most of them are up in the ceiling so you can't see them. Where the vertical stairs the lights are on the wall and they are going to move those under the framing. They are adding two new lights at the entry in the center building, which will be a down shielded box light.

Mr. Everett said he noticed they aren't going to let people have clotheslines.

Mr. Scangas said they decided to take them off.

Ms. Peltier said these clotheslines are currently metal mounted into the side of the building so they rot the clapboards. They have no rules about people having drying racks out there.

Mr. Everett said the intercom panel is going to be a little panel on the outside.

Mr. Scangas said it is just a little panel by the door. There will be two of them, one at each of the historic doors in the center of the building.

Mr. White said he mentioned they wanted to have energy efficient lighting. Can they do those with compact fluorescents so they are an incandescent coloring and not like a bright metal allied?

Mr. Scangas replied they are fluorescents.

Mr. Everett inquired if the building was insulated before when it was renovated.

Mr. Scangas said in some areas. They found some areas don't have any and a lot of it is settled.

Mr. Everett inquired about the sprinkler system, whether it is going to be a wet or dry system.

Mr. Scangas replied it would be a wet system. There is a 6 inch main on their side of the street that they were going to connect to. Now the city has come back and told them they are going to abandon it, so now they have to go across the street to a 12 inch pipe.

Ms. Mears asked if all of the windows were getting replaced.

Mr. Scangas replied they were.

Mr. Everett said the windows were probably replaced in the 1990's. That building was a wreck.

Mr. White said they said they were concerned about the budget. Are there things they are proposing for a review they may not be able to afford and have to come back with something less than this?

Ms. Peltier said they are fully funded at this point and are in good shape. They have done well with the grants and done well with the economy on the bid process. A combination of different things has come together. It takes years to pull this all together.

Mr. White asked if they had other projects in line they are waiting for stimulus money for.

Ms. Peltier said the stimulus money is really hard to get one's hands around. Their strategy has been to prepare a bunch of different types of projects, and then depending on what the funding looks like match it up to the project.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the criteria.

Mr. Scangas said regarding the landscaping they are taking down some trees that are in the planters. They have gotten oversized for the planters and for the building. There are planters in front of the building and they are proposing shadblows which will be keeping more of the scale of what is in the courtyard. They are smaller and rounder. They are also proposing plantings in the planters. Some of the planters don't have anything and they are going to put shrubs and flowers there. They are also going to be trimming the trees in the courtyard because they have overgrown and some are touching the buildings. There is going to be hardy low maintenance shrubs and ground covers.

Mr. Everett asked when they would start the project.

Mr. Scangas replied they have bids back and his hope is that by the time shop drawings are done they may see some activity within 6 to 8 weeks.

The DRC found the application met the criteria and was acceptable. The application as proposed was approved on a vote of 5 to 0.

V. 89 Elm Street – CB-II/DCD

Applicant: Central Vermont Community Land Trust

Owner: CVCLT

Multiple exterior renovations including color, roofs, windows, doors, porches, etc.

Mr. Scangas said they are replacing the asphalt shingles on the roof. They are replacing again selective clapboard and trim. They are replacing the windows. They are currently aluminum clad windows and they are going with composite windows. There are 8 window openings on the Elm Street side of the building they are going to enlarge. The existing windows they are enlarging are currently larger than the other windows. One of the reasons they have to enlarge them is their funders do not allow for casement windows so they are putting sliders in. In order to meet egress the windows need to get larger. It is just on the front they have to enlarge them. It is for the bedrooms on the front.

Mr. Everett asked what was wrong with the windows that are there.

Mr. Scangas said they are casements and they don't close. They have dropped and the tenants have tried to close the windows so they stripped the cranks. That is one of the reasons funders don't want casements. You are asking the hardware to hold the sash out, and there is a lot of weight being pulled on it.

Mr. White asked if all of the replacement windows were insulated glass.

Mr. Scangas replied yes. He said they are removing all of the siding on the rear and that is where they are going to put some clapboards. It provides a longer life. It is difficult to get out there and paint being located on the river side. There is an existing chimney that will be re-pointed. They are adding intercom panels at the three entries. There are solar panels going on the building, but in this case they will be pretty well concealed because they are going on the roof where you won't see them.

Ms. Mears asked if the solar panels were part of the requirements of having some kind of renewable energy.

Mr. Scangas said they are just looking to save energy costs.

Ms. Mears asked if it would supply that much energy.

Mr. Scangas replied yes. It's solar hot water. He said they are changing the gable vents on the front. Those are being replaced. On the courtyard side there is a little side porch with a stair. They are removing that. It's no longer going to be an office but a laundry room and they will access it from the porch side.

Mr. Scangas said they are doing some landscaping. There are four or five planters in front of the building. They are going to put a trellis up and have some vines growing to soften the concrete wall that is there. They are going to plant honeysuckle vines and another vine. There will be other colorful plants planted in the planters.

Mr. Duggan inquired if there was one contractor for the windows.

Mr. Scangas replied that there is one supplier of the windows for all four projects.

Mr. Duggan said he would just like to reiterate a strong encouragement to try and find a place for the windows and doors to be recycled.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the criteria and found the application for 89 Elm Street acceptable. The application was approved on a vote of 5 to 0.

Approval of May 12, 2009 Minutes:

Mr. Gilbertson moved approval of the May 12, 2009 minutes. The minutes of the May 12, 2009 Design Review Committee were approved on a vote of 5 to 0.

Adjournment:

The Design Review Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Clancy DeSmet
Planning & Zoning Administrator