

**Montpelier Design Review Committee Meeting
October 30, 2018**

Subject to review and approval

This public meeting was recorded, and the video will be available for viewing at:
<http://www.montpelier-vt.org/416/City-Meeting-Videos>

Present: Steve Everett, Eric Gilbertson, Seth Mitchell, Ben Cheney (alternate), Meredith Crandall - staff.

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Steve Everett.

Approval of the agenda: Eric made a motion to approve the agenda, Ben seconded. The motion passed on a 4-0 vote.

Comments from the Chair: There were no comments from the Chair.

100 State Street

**Owner: Capitol Plaza Corporation Applicant: City of Montpelier
Continuation of proposal for parking garage.**

Steve Everett stated that he's an abutting property owner, since he owns land next to the Heney Lot, but doesn't feel that will be a conflict. No one objected to Steve's continuing as Chair and voting on the project.

Greg Rabideau from Rabideau Architects and James Findley-Shirras from Wagner Hodgson, the landscape architects, were present. They had visuals for the audience to view on the screen.

Greg started with the concerns the DRC had at the last presentation – such as the arch feature not being relevant. He got back with the mayor and others in city government. It was decided to forego the arch in favor of a couple of things. The boardwalk that spans the bike path and the garage has been raised. There are some art panels that are smaller than the main ones but complement them. A ramp will be added coming up from the eastside of the garage and connecting to the boardwalk.

Elizabeth Parker had a question about the railing along the retaining wall and how far it would extend. The fence along the train tracks may be too much, DPW had a question about that given concerns of entrapping people between fences if there's also one on the Transit Center side of the tracks. DPW is following up on this issue.

There will be six ventilated walls (sculptural areas) and the idea is to keep the same design for all of them. Eric and Seth liked option # 1, with the trusses and screenprint. Eric mentioned doing a competition for the final screenprint design, maybe working with the Vermont Arts Council.

Bill Fraser spoke that council recently decided to create a City Arts Council that could be involved.

Even though it's not in the original budget, Greg showed the possibility of a solar array on the rooftop. He stated that it could probably be seen by a pedestrian on State Street.

Greg brought up that it had been mentioned in some public meetings that people can't understand how the garage can look taller than the railroad bridge, but looks shorter from other certain perspectives. He then explained that the floor plan of the garage is starting 10 feet below the western abutment of the bridge. The bridge is 25 feet tall but it starts at a point 10 feet higher than the garage's ground floor. Just by being in the foreground, the bridge therefore sometimes looks bigger. Greg then stated that Rabideau Architects is confident that the buildings are being accurately represented.

Meredith Kitfield asked about the lighting for the project. Greg and James indicated that it will be controlled photometrics, which is downcasting LED lighting. There will be no light creep, just a soft yellowish glow with no night sky issues. She also asked if temporary banners that promote some special activities in Montpelier could be hung over the artwork. Greg answered that some special fittings could be installed.

Laura Rose asked how many charging stations are in the budget for the garage. Greg responded that they came up with the number of 20, based on city regs that require so many charging stations per parking spaces.

Seth didn't care for the picket fence. Ben mentioned that if the fences had horizontals, people would climb on them as a ladder.

Elizabeth Parker asked about handicap parking in the northeast corner and the elevator in the northwest corner. Greg said that they are in the same corner, and indicated the marked locations on the floor plans. Elizabeth also asked if there would be the ability to have an opening in the fence on the east side for community events and was assured that it could be done.

Laura Rose asked about the width of the walkway between the hotel and garage and if it was wide enough to avoid pedestrian danger.

Sandy Vitzthum, from the Montpelier Heritage Group spoke next. She asked about the gateway views from Memorial Drive and the view from the Episcopal Church from ground level. She will look for the renderings. She also asked if balloons had been flown and Greg said no, the city didn't feel it was necessary as there are light poles that can be used as guides.

The point was made by the audience that solar panels are usually part of the original permit, even if it's a future phase.

Laura Rose mentioned that the stairwells were to have hoses for fire safety, so that would involve heating the stairwells, which would encourage people searching for warmth to congregate. Greg said that the stairwells would not be heated, but the roof would have heat to melt the snow.

The goal is to maintain the garage as open ventilation instead of mechanically ventilated.

Steve asked Meredith to bring the points raised tonight that are DRB related before that board during Monday's hearing.

The option will be open to have bike racks on the boardwalk and inside the garage.

Further review for next time will be northern elevation with landscaping, fencing/railings, and entrances to the gateway.

Mike Miller mentioned that Montpelier Alive! is working on a consistent pattern for wayfinding signs for downtown. It might make sense for the garage signs to fit into that design.

Eric made a motion to approve the project with the exception of the 3 items that need to be further reviewed. Meredith mentioned that you can't partially approve an application.

Instead of a formal motion, the Committee conducted a straw poll, approving the components of the application with the exception of the 3 items to come back, on a 4-0 vote, with the hearing continued until the next regular meeting of the Committee.

Other business: The next meeting will be Monday, November 5, 2018.

Adjournment: Eric made a motion to adjourn, Ben seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Tami Furry
Recording Secretary