

Montpelier Design Review Committee
March 22, 2005
Memorial Room, City Hall

Subject to Review and Approval

Present: Margot George, Chair; Stephen Everett, Vice Chair (arrived during discussion of item I); Eric Gilbertson (left during item II); Vicki Lane; Soren Pfeffer; Guy Tapper (voted on items II and III)
Staff: Stephanie Smith

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Ms. George.

I. Design Review

Property Address: 7 Main Street
Applicant: Hazel Wood Hopkins
Zone: RIV/DCD

- Installation of three signs: a 10 s.f. ground sign, a 10 s.f. wall sign and a 1 s.f. informational sign.

Interested Party: Ray Denault, Twin State Signs

Ms. George noted that the proposed signs are for a Citizens Bank. The DRC members discussed the proposed ground sign. Ms. Smith said that there needs to be at least 5' of clearance from the ground level to the bottom of the sign for sight clearance. Mr. Denault said it did not appear that the previous sign met that requirement. He said that the existing 8.5' high sign post will remain and will be painted green to match the sign that will be hung on it. Ms. Smith said that the clearance might not be an issue if the proposed sign was improving the situation.

Ms. Lane said that she was concerned with the color of green that was to be used on the signs and with the amount of green that was proposed. Ms. George asked whether the post could remain white. Mr. Denault said that it could and that, if necessary, the sign colors could be reversed to a white background with green lettering. Ms. Lane said that would be what she would want to see. Mr. Denault said that the corporation wanted to retain the green color of the proposed wall sign as that is the corporate color. Ms. Lane suggested that the Committee give the applicant the option to reverse the wall sign colors. Mr. Denault said that the signs will have a matt finish. Ms. Smith said that the proposed method of attaching the wall sign was to use lag bolts. Mr. Gilbertson said that the lag bolts should be installed into the mortar joints.

Ms. George noted that the ATM sign and directional and parking signs that were not included in the original application materials are also to be replaced. Mr. Denault said that all of the signs are replacement signs.

Ms. Smith said that the ATM sign may not be illuminated. Ms. George asked whether the green ATM surround was considered to be a sign. Ms. Smith said that anything with the corporate logo on it should be considered to be a sign. Ms. Lane said that she felt that there was too much green on the site.

Ms. George said that the Committee could either work with the applicant on the additional signs that night or ask the applicant to come back to the Committee for the signs that were not part of the original submission. Ms. Smith said that the Committee could require that Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices signs be used for the 'no parking', 'tow zone' types of signs. She said that signs without a logo and less than one square foot in area are considered to be informational and not subject to review. Ms. Lane said that the signs will all use the corporate green color which really is a logo. She said that she did not think that the DRC would want people to create their own color schemes for no parking type signs. Ms. Smith read the definition

of informational signs and noted that some of the signs qualify as informational.

Mr. Gilbertson suggested that the ATM be white with green letters, that the informational signs be MUTCD signs without the green background, that the customer parking signs may be green and that all free standing signs should have radius corners. Mr. Denault said that the new ATM surround is shipped as an entire unit. He said that the unit is fiberglass and aluminum and he did not know if the green color could be changed. Ms. Lane said that she thought the surround should be white with green letters. Ms. George said that the ATM is on the least noticed side of the building. She said that the ATM units will change with each new bank and she thought that the proposed ATM surround color could be accepted. She said that the customer parking signs could be green, but should have radius corners. She said that she would prefer a black color or galvanized metal for the posts. Ms. George said that all free standing signs should have radius corners. She said that she thought that the "no parking" sign and the "do not enter" sign should be MUTCD compliant.

Ms. George summarized the Committee's adjustments and options for the application as follows

- The ground sign would have a white post and a white sign with green lettering. The sign will have as close to 5' of clearance as possible.
- The wall sign may have the option of reversing the colors to a white background with green letters
- There will be radius corners on all of the signs.
- The "no parking" and "do not enter signs" will be MUTCD compliant.
- All other signs will have the green background and black or galvanized posts.

Mr. Denault said that he could agree to those changes that night, but would have to describe them to the corporate client.

The Committee voted 5-0 to recommend approval of all of the signs except the ATM surround with the options and adjustments. The Committee voted to recommend approval of the ATM surround by a vote of 4-1 (Ms. Lane voted against the recommendation).

Ms. George advised Mr. Denault that any changes to the painting of window trim or exterior doors will require design review. Mr. Denault said that he would let the client know.

II. Design Review

Property Address: 41 Elm Street
Applicant: Lisa Rutherford
Zone: CB-I/DCD

- Installation of a 4' x 4'6" fixed pane window in the facade of an existing building

Interested Parties: Lisa Rutherford, David Blumenthal, and Eileen (?)

Ms. George asked the applicant if she had any knowledge of whether there was previously a window at the location of the proposed window. The applicant did not have any information to that effect. Ms. Smith said that the most recent use of the space was an office.

Mr. Gilbertson raised concern about a structural issue with the lintel sagging over the alcove. He was concerned that the addition of the window would decrease the amount of wall left for support. The applicant indicated that the window would be installed properly.

Ms. George said that the building was the subject of previously reviewed changes. She said that the recessed

area was added to improve the cut-up look of the building and the door of the right side was added. Mr. Gilbertson said that two major changes to the building facade have already occurred. He said that he did not have a problem with the proposal, noting that the existing windows on the first floor are fairly random. Ms. George said that she did not want that look to be perpetuated. She said that a window similar to the others on the first floor would be more appropriate.

Mr. Pfeffer said that he had a problem with the square shape of the window. Mr. Gilbertson said that the appearance would be improved if the window was centered between the door and the alcove. Ms. Lane suggested that the window be more rectangular in shape. Mr. Pfeffer said that double-hung windows could be used. Ms. Rutherford said that she did not want to use the double-hung windows because she wanted the space to look more like a store than a residence. Mr. Tapper said that he was bothered by the fact that the window was not centered. Mr. Everett said that he would like to see the window balanced with more clapboard showing between the door trim and the trim around the recessed area. Mr. Pfeffer suggested that the new window be narrowed and the frame be lined up with the other windows on the facade.

Ms. George said that she was not comfortable with the Committee trying to redesign the window by sketching at the meeting. She said that the Committee had an option to table the application so that the applicant could bring back alternatives. Mr. Blumenthal suggested that, rather than tabling the application, the applicant would agree to reducing the width of the window, providing a symmetrical clapboard margin on each side of the window and aligning the window vertically. Ms. George said that she was not comfortable voting on the application with the materials currently available. Mr. Gilbertson said that he was comfortable with the proposal conditioned on the window centered in the clapboard. Ms. Lane and Mr. Pfeffer said that they did not want to table the application.

Mr. Pfeffer said that the window will be plate glass, so the proposed size of the glass was all that was needed. He said that he would want the frame of the new window to be the same height as the frame of the other windows on the left of the facade.

The Committee considered the evaluation criteria. Ms. George reviewed the adjustments to the scope of the project as follows:

- The width of the window will be decreased by 5" and it will be centered between the door and the recessed area with the clapboard width being equal.
- The top window jamb will be equal to the double-hung windows on the far left and the bottom edge will match to bottom of the window in the recessed area.

The Committee recommended approval of the application with the adjustments by a vote of 4-1 (Ms. George voted against the recommendation).

II. Design Review and Sign Permit Application

Property Address: 41 Elm Street
Applicant: Lisa Rutherford
Zone: CB-I/DCD

- Installation of a 3.48 s.f. projecting sign

Interested Parties: Lisa Rutherford, David Blumenthal, and Eileen (?)

Ms. George noted that the proposed wood sign would hang from a painted bracket. Ms. Smith said that the sign must allow for 8.5 feet of clearance over the sidewalk. Ms. George asked whether a metal bracket had been considered. Mr. Blumenthal said that there were many types of brackets used on the building and adjacent buildings. Ms. George said that she would rather see a metal bracket. Ms. Lane said that most of the sign brackets in the town were metal. She said that a black metal bracket would enhance the sign. Ms.

Rutherford said that she liked the look of the wooden bracket. Mr. Blumenthal said that the fact that the bracket would be painted the same color as the clapboard would make the sign stand out. Ms. George said that the Committee could give the applicant the options of a metal bracket or to paint the wood bracket black. She said that another option could be to paint the light fixtures matt black or gray.

Ms. Smith asked about the wattage of the light fixtures. Ms. George said that they should be 60 watts.

The Committee considered the evaluation criteria. The Committee voted 5-0 to recommend approval of the application with the following options and adjustment:

Options:

1. The sign bracket may be painted black or changed to a metal bracket similar to the existing bracket.
2. Lighting fixtures may be painted flat black or the dark gray trim color.

Adjustment:

1. The light fixtures shall be 60 watts.

Minutes of March 8, 2005 and October 19, 2004 meetings

The Committee voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2005 meeting as submitted with Ms. George abstaining. Ms. George said that the bottom of the first page of the October 19, 2005 minutes should be corrected to say "a two-sided ground sign". She said that she would also like those minutes to note in the Cheshire Cat application that she said that the location of the existing parking spaces was once a driveway leading to the back of the site.

Election of Officers

The Committee nominated and voted unanimously to reelect Ms. George as Chair. The Committee nominated and voted unanimously to reelect Mr. Everett as Vice Chair.

Adjournment

The Committee adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Smith
Administrative Officer

Transcribed by Kathleen Swigon

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.