

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

Subject to Review and Approval

Present: Eric Gilbertson; Guy Tapper, Vicki Lane
Staff: Stephanie Smith

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Gilbertson

I. Design Review and Variance Request - Sign Permit Application

Property Address: 101 Northfield Street
Applicant: Kuldeep Sharma, Capitol Inn
Zone: CB-II/DCD

- Replacement of an existing 32.5 square foot ground sign with a 37 square foot ground sign

Mr. Gilbertson explained the design review process. He reminded the other committee members that the previous sign on this property was replaced with one of the same size, but the original sign had exceeded the size that was allowed in the sign permit that was issued in 1991. He said that was why the applicant was applying for a larger sign. The committee expressed concerns about a 37 square foot sign in what is adjacent to a residential neighborhood. Ms. Smith said that a permit was required for the sign replacement and was not obtained before the work was done.

Mr. Sharma said that the sign might be changing as a new name was being considered for the hotel. He said that the sign would still be white with red lettering. Ms. Lane said that the application might have to be tabled until the new sign design is finalized. Mr. Tapper said that the committee should still address the issue regarding the size of the sign. Ms. Smith said that the applicant may reduce the size of the sign to the old permit size of 32.5 square feet, but then the existing metal sign surround could not be used. She said that the alternative was to request approval for the increased size of the sign to fit within the metal surround.

Mr. Gilbertson said that he would have an easier time with the application if the colors were more subdued. He noted that the neighborhood is predominantly residential. Mr. Sharma said that the proposed colors are the same as the colors in the previous "Econolodge" sign that was in place for five years. He said that he wanted people to be able to see the sign. Ms. Lane said that a sign that better fit in the residential area would be better. Mr. Gilbertson said that it would be better to use colors that were more toned down, and maybe with a dark background with lighter text, or maybe a sign constructed of wood.

Ms. Lane made a motion to table the application. Mr. Tapper seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

II. Design Review and Amendment to an Approved Planned Residential Development

Property Address: 191-221 Barre Street
Applicant: Housing Vermont and Central Vermont Community Land Trust
Zone: CB-II/DCD

- Replacement of majority of siding with vinyl siding;
- Reduction in window size and elimination of windows on carport building;
- Change in color scheme and elimination of awnings; and
- Site plan modifications

Will Giblin Central Vermont Community Land Trust, representing the applicants, said that the applicants have proposed a number of changes to the condominium part of the site. He said that the changes were proposed in order to keep costs low enough that the units could be offered at reasonable prices. Mr. Gilbertson urged the applicant to

get a sign-off from the Office on Historic Preservation for the changes.

Mr. Giblin described the proposed changes:

- Eliminate individual curbing associated with the garage entries at Buildings A and C.
- Interior sidewalks to be asphalt
- Consolidating the carports into one structure for four spaces
- Change the grading of the interior park to eliminate the retaining wall and steps.
- Reduce the size of the windows from 7'0" to 5'6"
- Eliminate windows on the carport building
- Replace the majority of the siding with vinyl siding
- Change the color scheme due to the change in the siding product
- Eliminate awnings

Mr. Giblin said that the buildings in the neighborhood use a variety of sidings. He said that about one fourth of the buildings have asbestos siding, another one third of the buildings have vinyl siding and the rest is clapboard sided. Mr. Gilbertson asked whether the shingles would still be used on the upper portions of the buildings. Mr. Giblin said that they were also a vinyl product that was previously approved and would not be changed. He said that the color changes were based on the slightly different colors offered for the proposed vinyl product. He said that the color scheme for the condominium building was always different from the color scheme for the apartment building.

Ms. Smith noted that the previously approved siding material was textured and the proposed vinyl siding also had a texture. Mr. Gilbertson said that he preferred vinyl siding that did not have the texture rather than trying to make it look like wood. Ms. Lane said that the texture might hold dirt on the walls. Mr. Giblin said that the texture was very slight. Mr. Gilbertson said that he did not feel strongly about the issue.

Ms. Lane asked whether the grading was designed so that the retaining wall could be added at a later date. Mr. Giblin said that the condominium association could add the retaining wall back in if it desired to at a later date. Ms. Smith noted that the proposed windows would now be vinyl windows instead of aluminum clad wood. Mr. Gilbertson said that they will also be single hung rather than double hung.

The Committee reviewed the evaluation criteria. The DRC voted 3-0 to recommend approval of the application as submitted.

Other

Ms. Lane asked why the age of 50 years is considered to be the threshold for historic structures. Mr. Gilbertson said that it was chosen as a guideline for when to begin to look at buildings for historic issues.

Adjournment

The Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Smith
Administrative Officer