

**Montpelier Design Review Committee**  
**March 7, 2006**  
**Planning and Community Development Office, City Hall**

*Subject to Review and Approval*

**Present:** Margot George, Chair; Stephen Everett, Vice Chair; Guy Tapper; Vicki Lane  
Staff: Kathleen Swigon

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Ms. George.

**I. Continuation of Design Review**

Property Address: Willey Construction

Applicant: RKG, LLC

Zone: HDR/DCD

- o Construction of a five space parking lot at the rear of Howland Hall for use by occupants of 9 and 11 West Street

Phil Willey described the changes that had been made to the plan since the last meeting. He said that the entrance width was reduced to 18' and the existing curb cut was shown on the plan.

It will be necessary to re-slope part of the existing sidewalk at the curb cut. Snow storage areas were indicated on the plan and the plan now proposed three crab apple trees (7' to 8' high). The owners would have to address the protection of the trees with the snow plow contractors. Mr. Willey said that the owner did not want to plant a cedar hedge along the southwest property line because there are no problems with the neighbor and because the damage from salt and plowing of snow might kill any vegetation planted at that location. Ms. George asked whether the neighbors had seen the plans. She said the committee was trying to anticipate any potential issues so that they would not have to be addressed later in the process. Mr. Willey said the neighbors had not seen the plans. He said there also was the option of creating a soil berm along that edge of the property. Mr. Everett said that options for future planting and the berm could be included in the committee's action on the application.

Ms. George asked whether the bike rack was still proposed. Mr. Willey said he would like to keep it in as an option. Ms. George asked why five spaces were proposed instead of three spaces. Mr. Willey said the owner wants more spaces available on the property. Ms. Lane said that Dan Richardson had provided comments in an e-mail message. The committee reviewed those comments. Ms. George said one of the comments was that any landscaping will have to be protected from cars using the adjacent driveway. Ms. George noted that the proposed trees will help delineate the driveway entrance.

Mr. Everett said he had no problems with the proposal. He was concerned that there be options for the raised berm, a raised planter or a fence on the west boundary. Ms. George said she remained concerned that there is a loss of the residential look of the property for a minimal gain in parking. She added there had been no showing that the owner has a real need for the additional parking. Mr. Everett said that the visual effect would not be different from the current situation. He said he observed six vehicles parked on the site that morning. Mr. Willey said the proposed parking lot would clean the area up. It is very muddy in the spring. Mr. Everett said the proposal would be an improvement because the parking is currently disorganized. Mr. Pfeffer said it looked like it would be difficult for a vehicle in the last parking space to turn around. Mr. Willey said the required aisle width of 20' was proposed. Ms. George said a sign could advise drivers to back into the spaces.

Ms. George reviewed the options that had been discussed, which were:

- A berm on the western boundary
- Protection for the trees
- One sign on the west face of the garage telling drivers to back into the spaces.

Ms. George asked whether there would be a ground cover around the trees. Mr. Willey said bark mulch would be slightly mounded around the trees. Mr. Everett said there should also be options for a landscape planter or raised bed in the berm does not work. Ms. George added a shrub border could also be an option. She suggested that there also be the option of installing a motion detector light on the western facade. She said the adjustments to the scope of the project were the addition of the berm and the protection of the trees. Mr. Willey said the adjustments and options were acceptable.

The committee reviewed the evaluation criteria and voted 5-0 to recommend approval of the application with the following adjustments and options:

**Adjustments:**

- Tree guards or wrapping will be placed around the proposed trees to protect them from snow plow damage.
- The tree bed will be bark mulch or groundcover.
- A two to three feet high, earthen berm will be created on the west side of the parking spaces and planted with grass.

**Options:**

- The applicant may encourage backing into the parking spaces by adding a 20" x 20" (more or less) sign stating "Please Back In".
- The earth berm may be enhanced or replaced by a landscape timber raised planting bed of shrubs or plants.
- Downcast motion detector light may be installed on the southwest corner or west facade on Howland Hall.

**Minutes**

The committee reviewed the minutes of the February 21, 2006 meeting. Ms. George noted that there was a typographic error on page 2 where the word "tress" should actually be "trees." The committee voted 5-0 to approve the minutes with that change.

**Adjournment**

The Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Capels  
Director of Planning and Community Development and  
Acting 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.*