

Montpelier Design Review Committee
August 22, 2006
Memorial Room, City Hall

Subject to Review and Approval

Present: Margot George, Chair; Stephen Everett, Vice Chair; Vicki Lane; Guy Tapper; and Daniel Richardson
Staff: Kathy Swigon

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Margot George at 5:30 p.m.

Comments from the Chair:

Ms. George explained the role of the Design Review Committee to the applicants appearing before the committee. She explained they were advisory and their recommendations would be passed on to the Development Review Board for final review of their proposal.

I. Design Review – MDR/DCD

13 Terrace Street

Applicant: Ellen Fein

- Renovation of a barn, replacing garage door, adding one entry door, four double hung windows and one transom window

Interested Party: Aaron Kyle and Ellen Fein

Mr. Kyle said there is a change to the proposal. Instead of the four windows in the front, they also want to add three windows on the side. There would be a total of three new windows a couple of feet apart. Ms. George told him he would have to have a plan of this change when the project gets to the Development Review Board. Mr Kyle stated that a 6 light 2'6" x 2'6" single sash Marvin window model Marvin WAWN 3232 would be used. It's a wood window, but it is clad outside in white aluminum. There would be awnings on top. The windows would be 3 over 3. Ms. Fein said the windows are rotten, crooked and skewed.

Ms. Fein said as you are facing the barn on the left hand side there are these enormous bi-fold doors, which are completely unmanageable especially in winter. The doors are made out of plywood. The one on the left is a bi-fold garage door that was hand made and was put there in 1980 or 1981. The right door is cut in half. The people before them had a boat and they didn't want to open the whole door all of the time and the top section have been screwed tight, and the bottom opens. Ms. Fein said the door worked for a boat, but it is useless to her trying to get her car in and out of the garage therefore they are replacing the door with a new insulated steel garage door. It will have an electric door opener. Mr. Kyle is going to apply wood to the door.

Ms. George asked if there was additional trim around the windows. The trim around the windows is 1" x 4" pine painted. It's a flat stock pine.

The door will be a painted wooden door. It will have one light and two vertical panels below.

The windows are going to be Marvin ultimate simulated divided light 2 over 2 double hung. The window up above will remain, and the triangular window will remain. The trim over the windows is the same clad stock.

The hood over the door will be a 12:12 pitch with knee braces back to the wall. It will be fairly simple with a bevel on the bottom. Ms. George inquired if the applicant had considered any exterior lighting. It is going to be a recessed downcast light. There will be a jelly jar type light fixture on the wall. Mr. Everett said they could have an option for a recessed can or jelly jar light fixture. Ms. Lane inquired if there was going to be a light on the garage door. Ms. Lane said sometimes people put floodlights on a timer. Mr. Kyle said the garage door

opener will have a light that will stay on all of the time. Probably a motion detector light on the garage door would be a good idea.

The applicant proposes putting in a flat slate walk from the garage to the door and taking out the round flower garden with the concrete wall. They plan on re-landscaping where the concrete is now. Ms. Fein plans on having a garden under the windows. The applicant said they will replace the clapboard where the old sliding barn door was. They are going to repaint the barn the same color as the house.

Ms. George inquired if members had questions or concerns about the application. Mr. Richardson said he was concerned about the loss of the structure of the barn. It is basically turning it into an accessory building. It's going to lose a lot of its original historic features. He asked the applicant if they had considered any kind of design that would incorporate this barn door. Mr. Kyle said they had thought about using the sliding door, but there was no way to keep it active. He said he didn't think it made sense to put windows in the door.

Mr. Kyle said he planned on putting floodlights above the garage door, which would light up the whole pathway to the house. They want to have a jelly light next to the door, also.

Ms. Lane said she shared Mr. Richardson's concern about losing the door. Ms. George said she, too, had some concerns and would like to explore with the applicant the concept of at least retaining that opening. Ms. George said she believed their building is on the National Register, and the barn is a separate property on the register. She said she was pretty sure the upper part of Terrace Street is on the Register, and there have been numerous uses of barns recently that retain the elements of the garage barns. We can point to Barre Street and the garages behind buildings on Main Street. Mr. Kyle said he didn't have a problem with it. He could actually frame the bands around the windows to match the garage door he is putting in. Mr. Kyle said the delineation of putting three windows in the door and retaining the door frame does a couple of things. It retains its historic character; it's a reference to the old barn door. It gives the successor owners a feel of where it exists. It does its duty to the historical requirements and yet gives you light and a modern space that is functional.

Ms. George said three of the four windows will be placed within the existing sliding garage door opening with the original garage door casing remaining, with infill of opening to the right and beneath the right and beneath the vertical boards of a width the same as the existing garage door.

Ms. George said let's run through the adjustments to the scope of the proposal. Mr. Kyle said these are the two over two windows, Marvin # CUDH 2422. These are the two over two's instead of the six over six's.

Mr. Richardson inquired what color the siding was going to be. Mr. Kyle said the body is tan with maroon highlights. It will be a darker tan around the windows and the light tan on the body. The red highlights are around the shutters and a band around the roof. Mr. Richardson asked if he would like an option for a different color other than the white cladding. A tan cladding might fit in with your color scheme.

The optional changes are:

- The exterior light can be recessed or wall mounted;
- The window cladding can be tan or white.

The adjustments are:

- There is going to be a recessed can or jelly jar mounted light by the door;
- On the right wall side of the building one window will be removed and three 2'6" x 2'6" will replace them.
- There's a motion detector two-bulb floodlight that is going to be mounted over the garage and the maximum light will be 60 watts each.

- The door will be light wood with two vertical panels.
- There is going to be slate tile walkway to the door.
- The old driveway is going to be removed up to the old garage door and replaced with gardens.
- The front of the porch roof will be clapboard with metal galvanized roofing.
- The barn will be painted the same color as the house.
- Three of the four front windows will be placed within the existing sliding garage door opening with the original garage door casing remaining with infill of the opening to the right and beneath the windows with vertical board the width of the same as the existing garage door.
- The windows will be two over two white aluminum clad Marvin.

The DRC went over the evaluation criteria with the applicant.

Evaluation Criteria:

- 1) *Preservation or reconstruction of the appropriate historic style if the proposed project is in the historic district or involves and historic structure.* Not applicable.
- 2) *Harmony of exterior design with other properties in the district.* Acceptable. Sensitive adaptation.
- 3) *Compatibility of proposed exterior materials with other properties in the district.* Acceptable. Wood and metal used professed desire to reuse existing materials.
- 4) *Compatibility of the proposed landscaping with the district.* Acceptable.
- 5) *Prevision of the use of incompatible designs, buildings, color schemes, or exterior materials.* Acceptable. The original sliding garage door outline is an important architectural feature of this historic barn. Redesign attempts to retain the basic elements of that feature while allowing building to be functional for the current owner. The existing garage doors on the new addition are not historically significant. The opening is now treated with materials that will assimilate the surroundings.
- 6) *Location and appearance of all utilities.* Acceptable.
- 7) *Recognition of and respect for view corridors and significant vistas including gateway views of the city and State House.* Acceptable.

The Design Review Committee approved the application for design review for 13 Terrace Street with adjustments and options unanimously 5-0.

II. Design Review – CB-II/DCD

209, 215 & 221 Barre Street

Applicant: Central Vermont Community Land Trust

- Minor changes to existing permit pertaining to condo portion only including:
- Changes to exterior material, colors and access door to mechanical and sprinkler rooms

Interested Persons: Will Giblin

Dan Richardson recused himself from the discussion relating to this application.

Mr. Giblin presented a memo outlining changes to the River Station Condominiums to the Design Review Committee.

Mr. Giblin said the significant changes you will note are the elimination of the transoms over the sliders. A number of doors have been added. Each building has an additional door on the south side. These need to be in there for a number of reasons: access, mechanical, sprinklers. They are eliminating the returns on the front of the buildings. The committee reviewed the plans and proposed changes.

They are proposing substituting a different material for the stoops, which is a split-face block concrete. It is a type of material you see used a lot now. It is a cost saving item versus brick. Ms. George inquired if that was going to come into contact with any chloride salt. Mr. Everett said it would. Mr. Giblin said it would be unavoidable. Ms. George said it crumbles after five years if you use it anywhere near chloride salt.

He said they were substituting some of the decking materials. Originally, pressure treated was permitted and we changed to a different product, which is now too expensive, so we are going back to the use of pressure treated decking materials.

Ms. George said now you are eliminating the vinyl siding over the foundation on the north, west and east elevations. Mr. Giblin said it would just be exposed concrete. Mr. Giblin said this has been a very challenging project.

Ms. George inquired if any of the condominiums had been sold. Mr. Giblin said three were sold, and there are a total of 18. Six are going to be subsidized and the rest will be at fair market value.

Ms. George said there are no changes to the application so they reviewed the criteria.

Evaluation Criteria:

- 1) *Preservation or reconstruction of the appropriate historic style if the proposed project is in the historic district or involves an historic structure.* Not applicable.
- 2) *Harmony of exterior design with other properties in the district.* Acceptable.
- 3) *Compatibility of proposed exterior materials with other properties in the district.* Acceptable. The materials are now going to be simulated stone, rubbed concrete, and pressure treated lumber, which are used in the district.
- 4) *Compatibility of the proposed landscaping with the district.* Not applicable.
- 5) *Prevention of the use of incompatible designs, buildings, color schemes, or exterior materials.* Acceptable.
- 6) *Location and appearance of all utilities.* Not applicable.
- 7) *Recognition of and respect for view corridors and significant vistas including gateway view of the city and State House.* Not applicable.

The application for Design Review of 209, 215 & 221 Barre Street, known as River Station Condominiums, was approved by the Design Review Committee 4-0. Dan Richardson recused himself from the vote.

III. Design Review – CB-II/DCD

41-45 Court Street

Applicant: James Blouin

- Replacement of an existing wood retaining wall with concrete blocks and paving of parking area.

Interested Party: James Blouin

Ms. George said he has a parking lot and an existing partial concrete foundation. Mr. Blouin said this whole project stems from the City of Montpelier becoming increasingly annoyed at the property owners because of gravel in the street and they have suggested there are environmental laws prohibiting us from doing so. They need to pave, or they are going to be in trouble. There is a storm drain off the back side of his property that they want to move water to. The retaining wall was put in about 20 years ago and you can't even see that it is there.

He was impressed when he saw Union Mutual's use of this stone for their wall, and it would be more attractive than replacing with pressure treated 6 x 6's. The wall needs to be replaced and we felt it was appropriate before the paving was completed.

Ms. George inquired who was doing the stone work for him. Mr. Blouin said his name is Nick Tebbetts. He is a senior at Johnson State College and relative inexpensive.

Mr. Blouin said he would like the DRC to know that the concrete that is there was an original barn. The original part of that foundation that Anthony Otis removed when he jacked up his house, he used our side of the parking lot. Mr. Tebbetts suggested he could keep it on the property line and tuck it back under his stairs and actually create a support. Mr. Otis thought as an adjoining property owner you would feel he had concerns about that and he said he's okay with it. It looks like it is sticking out several feet from his railing, but the intention is to have it underneath so it's a straight line. At some point we talked about doing some shrubs that don't grow tall.

He put up gutters so there isn't a water issue any more. The water just goes into the ground. Mr. Blouin said when he removed the garage he put in tile and drainage work because there is literally a spring up there. He said he has access to the city's storm drain. Tom McArdle sold him a concrete sewer four or five years ago. It's packed with gravel. In order to do this, we are going to have to excavate. When we opened it up the last time with the city it was all red clay. On either side where drainage is coming in from Mr. Otis' property and where it connects to the city's storm drain, we'll excavate that. Whenever there was any amount of rain it became a monsoon on the Bar Association side.

Ms. George asked if Mr. Blouin and Mr. Otis are doing the paving and if the Bar Association folks going to do any paving as well? Mr. Otis and Mr. Blouin were going to set up a meeting and had agreed to solicit bids for the paving, but were concerned given the time of year, that it won't get done this year. Given the whole shared entrance and right-of-way, the job will only be half done if not all parties participate and they are hoping they can do everything amicably. In the letter he sent he cited about five or six environmental statutes that were being violated and we had the option of ceasing and desisting the clogging of his city's drains or he was going to find us in violation of the statutes.

The Bar Association told them in the spring they had received a bid for \$9,000. You aren't going to pave that size of a space for that amount.

Mr. Blouin said he would like to construct the wall before they pave.

Ms. Swigon said right now they aren't going forward with the paving because it doesn't make sense until the wall is constructed. All three, he, Anthony Otis and the Bar Association, need to pave.

Ms. George said the other problem you run into with a property like this is that the hill behind you keeps moving.

Ms. Swigon said they could get the DRC to approve the retaining wall tonight. To get the paving issue to the DRB they might have warning issues. Ms. George said the DRC has never reviewed paving parking lots.

As far as the stone for the retaining wall, the cut sheets describing the stone are included. Mr. Blouin said it is the same material that Vermont Mutual used for their wall.

The DRC reviewed the Evaluation Criteria.

Evaluation Criteria:

- 1) *Preservation or reconstruction of the appropriate historic style if the proposed project is in the historic district or involves an historic structure.* Not applicable.
- 2) *Harmony of exterior design with other properties in the district.* Acceptable. It is consistent with the office parking lot designs in the city.
- 3) *Compatibility of proposed exterior materials with other properties in the district.* Acceptable. It is made of simulated granite look stone. It blends with the natural environment better than solid concrete.
- 4) *Compatibility of the proposed landscaping with the district.* Acceptable.
- 5) *Prevention of the use of compatible designs, buildings, color schemes, or exterior materials.* Acceptable.
- 6) *Location and appearance of all utilities.* Not applicable
- 7) *Recognition of and respect for view corridors and significant vistas including gateway views of the city and State House.* Not applicable.

The Design Review Committee unanimously approved the Design Review application for 41-45 Court Street by a vote of 5-0.

Adjournment:

The DRC adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen M. Swigon
Administrative Officer

Transcribed and prepared by:
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City Clerk & Treasurer's Office