

Montpelier Design Review Committee
September 4, 2007
Memorial Room, City Hall

Approved 10/1/07

Present: Margot George, Chair; Stephen Everett, Vicki Lane, Soren Pfeffer and Guy Tapper.
Staff: Clancy DeSmet, Planning & Zoning Administrator.

Call to Order:

Margot George, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Ms. George explained the advisory role of the Design Review Committee.

I. Design Review – GB/DCD

5 Green Mountain Drive
Applicant: Vincent Blaisdell
Owner: State of Vermont
Accessory Structure

Ms. George said they are installing a smoking shelter. The materials are primarily metal, and it will be placed on a concrete pad. It is going to be at the rear of the building along the walkway. Mr. Blaisdell said the smoking shelter is exactly like the bus shelter, which is located near Shaw's. It is dark bronze aluminum with a white plastic domed roof. There is glass on three sides. There is a partial front panel so there are two doorways, one on each end. It would contain a short bench.

Ms. George inquired why they needed a shelter. Mr. Blaisdell said people can't smoke within 50 feet of the rear entrance.

Ms. George inquired if there were landscaping plans. Mr. Blaisdell replied it sits on the lawn with apple trees on each side of it. Ms. Lane inquired if there was going to be a cigarette receptacle inside the shelter. Mr. Blaisdell said the Department of Labor would furnish it if they wanted it in there. There is one of those placed at the rear entrance now.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the criteria and found the application was acceptable. The application for 5 Green Mountain Drive was approved 5-0.

II. Design Review – CB-I/DCD

70 Main Street
Applicant: Mark Smith
Owner: Bill Shouldice
Removal of second story shed and continuation of existing roofing and siding.

Applicant was not present so Board didn't consider the application.

III. Design Review – GB/DCD

7 Green Mountain Drive
Applicant: Fountains America
Owner: Fountains America
Wall sign.
Interested Party: Diane Holland, Office Manager

Ms. Holland said Fountains America is a group of companies – Fountain Forestry, Fountains Real Estate and Fountains Spatial, which is a GIS mapping company – that all work together to help people manage their forest lands. Ms. George said they used to be located on Barre Street.

Ms. Holland said their signs are going to be over the doorway. The sign is dimensional and 4' wide x 8' long.

Ms. George inquired if there were other signs on the building presently. Ms. Holland said at the front of the building there are the individual letters of Green Mountain Power at the top. That is the only exterior signage on the building. There's an awning a little further down the same side and they are putting this sign where the Vermont Mutual Insurance sign used to be. Fountains America is located in the same space the bank was in and putting the sign in the same place. The bank's sign was slightly longer but the same height. The sign is made out of Dibond, which is corrugated plastic with metal on the sides. Ms. Holland said she is assured by Great Big Graphics in Morrisville the material is up to the task for holding up for several years on the outside of a building.

Ms. George asked how she intended to attach the sign to the brick. Ms. Holland said the sign company is going to look at the brick surface to see what would be the most appropriate. She assumed they would most likely use bolts. They will bolt right into the holes presently on the brick. Ms. Holland said they are using a cut vinyl to affix the letters onto the sign. She couldn't get any of the hardware companies to provide a chip of the exact color, and it is important that it be the exact color because of the branding corporate identity.

Ms. George inquired how big the border around the sign would be. Ms. Holland said it would probably be between 3 and 4 inches wide.

Mr. Pfeffer inquired how far the sign was going to be from the Green Mountain Drive. Ms. Holland said it was approximately 15 feet. From Green Mountain Drive the sign is very visible, but coming off the highway it is on the wrong side of the road to see at all. It wouldn't be a huge sign that catches your attention because it is a simple blue and white.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the criteria. Ms. George said it would be good on the application to decide what Dibond is. Ms. Holland said it is aluminum with a corrugated plastic. Basically, it's an aluminum sandwich. The letters are vinyl. The application met the criteria and the Design Review Committee voted favorably on the proposal 5-0.

IV. Design Review – CB-I/DCD

1 School Street

Applicant: Sharon Allen – The Uncommon Market

Owner: Mathew Dwire

Projecting sign.

Ms. George said it is a sign application for replacing the last of the internally lit plastic signs within the district. The sign is oval shaped, with black border and green and black lettering and colored graphics. It will be made of MDO plywood to a thickness of one inch. This will be 2 ½ inch sheets that adhere together with two metal tangs affixed between the two layers to allow for proper hanging. The plywood will be primed and painted, and the lettering will be vinyl as well as the small graphic at the top of the sign. There will be two signs sandwiched together. The current light will be removed and once the oval sign is installed a licensed electrician will use that power source to mount two small lights on the building at the roof line of the shingles at approximately the angled corners of the entrance way. The colors on the sign are "green meadows" and "acadia white." Ms. Allen said the acadia white will be used for the background and the green meadows will be for the lettering.

Ms. Allen said the sign is going to look tiny because of the Coke sign having been there so long. The Coke sign was enormous. It is the size sign that is allowed in the district for an overhanging sign. They are going to use the original bracket.

Ms. George said they would normally specify wattage on the light bulb as being no greater than 60 watts.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the sign criteria and found the sign for The Uncommon Market met all of the criteria. The application with the adjustment to 60 watts maximum for the wattage on the lights was voted favorably 5-0.

- V. **Design Review – CB-I/DCD**
44 Main Street, The Black Door
Applicant: Sign Design
Owner: Jeff Jacobs
Wall sign.
Interested Party: Jon Miller, Sign Design

Ms. George recused herself from participating in the discussion of this agenda item. Steve Everett assumed position of Chair.

Jon Miller from Sign Design said the letters are covered in gold leaf. The letters are a reproduction of an antique letter. They are going to stud the letters into the bricks and attach a couple of halogen spotlights for nighttime to give The Black Door a little more class. They talked about installing a hanging sign over the doorway, but they are too small for Main Street. Mr. Miller thinks that this should be changed in the ordinance.

Mr. Pfeffer inquired how tall the letters were. Mr. Miller said they are 9 inches. Visually it is sized perfectly. There are only a couple courses of bricks to hold it flat. From the ground it won't be noticeable that it isn't flushed on the wall.

Ms. Lane said she was concerned about putting a sign up there. It is not a sign band, and she is concerned about putting an additional sign there. That is part of the architectural features of that building and the building next to it.

Mr. Everett said in the Cityscape book they specifically refer to second, third and fourth floor businesses.

Second, third and fourth floor businesses should be identified primarily by a street level Information directory. However, second floor businesses should be permitted to display Signs which are placed either directly beside or immediately above a related window.

He said they are actually using a space below a window, which would look better than putting it above a window because of the arches. If it was a sign board with lettering on it he would feel it was a little strange, but the fact there is fairly thin letters. Mr. Miller said it is only going to be a mood piece at night. You won't even see it in the daytime. It has such a low impact.

Mr. Everett said they aren't allowed to put it any higher than the second floor window, but it is in a spot that doesn't hide or cover any architectural details.

Ms. Lane asked about the signage that is already there for the Black Door with the lights. Mr. Miller said the problem is they have no street presence. The sign is great from the sidewalk, but there is nothing a car can see driving by. They need the sign. The Black Door is an asset to the town and it doesn't have much identity, at least not for somebody driving through. They can see Sarducci's, Capitol Plaza, Main Street Bar & Grill, but they can't see The Black Door.

Mr. Everett said it does meet the Cityscape standards.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the sign criteria. Mr. Everett asked members if they had any further comments.

Mr. Tapper said he thought they needed to talk about doing the attachment in the mortar rather than allowing drilling in the brick. Ms. Lane said she felt they needed to know how the letters are attached. Mr. Everett said they would be pinned into mortar joints. The attachment of letters shall be achieved with pins located in mortar joints only. The lighting should be attached through mortar joints as well.

Mr. Miller said the lighting won't even be attached to the brick. It will go to a mortar joint. He doesn't believe the electricians will actually affix the plate to the brick. The plate will be affixed to the rod that goes through the shaft of the light.

Ms. Lane said if Cityscape recommends that signs be placed either above or adjacent to a window, did he think about a sign similar to the sign that they have now placed adjacent to one of the windows instead of the centered letters on the building. Mr. Miller said the graphics would not have been legible from the street level. You could read the sign pretty well from about 10 feet, but at the point which you are trying to see the sign from a car going by it wouldn't be visible. The sign in front has 2 ½ or 3 inch letters.

Ms. Lane said she I having a hard time with the application. It seems not appropriate for this building to have letters up there. With all of the buildings on either side, none of them have lettering similar to that. Mr. Everett said the building to the left has nothing upstairs; it's empty. The building to the right has small offices. The Black Door occupies the entire floors on the second and third floor. Mr. Miller said it is a minimal sign. Mr. Everett said he believed it is as subtle as you could possibly make it and still identify it. It is under the center window. There is a panel there obviously for something. The Cityscape book recommends those potential locations for second floor businesses.

Mr. Pfeffer said Cityscape says under the window or adjacent to it. Mr. Everett added it could be over the window. There was obviously at some point a provision to put something there. It doesn't hide anything.

The Design Review Committee voted favorably for the application 3 yes to 1 no, with 1 recusing.

Approval of August 21, 2007 Minutes:

The Design Review Committee approved the minutes of the August 21, 2007 meeting with minor changes.

Update of Candy Moot's Application for Replacement of Windows:

Mr. DeSmet said he discovered that the seven (7) windows were put in last year. He said the Applicant sent him a letter in response to his notice of violation and confessed to it. They are trying to work it out. Mr. DeSmet said he needs to talk to the city's attorney. Ms. George asked him to alert members of the Design Review Committee so if there is a meeting and it comes under discussion they would want to have participation. Mr. DeSmet said a meeting would be publicly warned.

Adjournment:

The Design Review Committee adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Clancy DeSmet
Planning and Zoning Administrator

Transcribed & Prepared by:
Joan Clack, City Clerk & Treasurer's Office