

**Montpelier Design Review Committee**  
**February 26, 2008**  
**Memorial Room, City Hall**

*Approved 3/11/08*

**Present:** Margot George, Chair; Stephen Everett, Vice Chair; Vicki Lane, Eric Gilbertson, Guy Tapper and James Duggan. Soren Pfeffer was absent.  
Staff: Clancy DeSmet, Planning and Zoning Administrator

**I. Design Review – CB-I/DCD**  
11 Main Street  
Applicant: Tyre DaVerray  
Owner: Jeffrey Jacobs  
Sign

Applicant was unable to attend the meeting person, due to a winter, weather advisory. An attempt was made to conduct the meeting via telephone. It became clear that this format was not going to work. The DRC and applicant agreed to table the proposal until they could meet in person to discuss the proposal.

**II. Design Review – CB-I/DCD**  
64 Main Street  
Applicant: Mark Smith  
Owner: Steve Lewistein  
Addition of a window on north side of building and removal of shed on rear of building.

Mr. Smith said there was going to be a demolition of the shed on the rear. The rest of the building has natural brick on the rear. They propose to expose the natural brick, so before the shed is removed they will make sure there is natural brick behind it. In the spring they will bring the ground level up because there is no foundation under the shed. Therefore, you can see the differences in the roof line. The door in the picture is sealed shut. Inside it is insulated sheet rock and hasn't been opened in years. The shed hasn't been used for the last 50 years.

He received a call today from the landlord and the perspective tenant is adamant that the existing two window openings that have been bricked in on the alley they would like them opened back up. His first application was to reopen the two windows. The landlord asked he include the windows with this application. He hasn't given him the price for the windows. In measuring the opening of the windows it is going to be \$5,000 per window for the new windows.

He would like to include the two windows that have been there before. This window will match what is in front of the building. The landlord has requested him to receive permission to not only do what would be classified as a storefront window but replace the old windows along the wall for daylight purposes.

Before the shed on the rear of the building is torn down, if he takes down that building, it has natural brick and the rest has a cream colored paint. While it is enclosed he wants to sandblast it. He has talked to the State and received permits.

Mr. Gilbertson said they couldn't sandblast it. Ms. George said they could use chemicals. Mr. Smith said he could lightly sandblast it because of the age of the paint and it would probably flake right off and then seal the brick. Ms. George said the Blanchard Block was completely chemical cleaned 15 years ago. Mr. Gilbertson said there is no way to sandblast that without eroding the brick. These older bricks are like a loaf of bread; they are hard on the outside and soft on the inside. If you start breaking up that hard outside, you increase the surface area. If you get through that you have made the brick a sponge for water. Mr. Smith thanked the committee for that recommendation.

Ms. George suggested they talk about the shed in the back of the building. Obviously, the DRC might have to talk about the project because the shed is not historically or architecturally significant. They have talked about the

exposed brick with paint and reached a conclusion that the paint should be chemically removed but under no circumstances sandblasted.

There are some windows in the rear that they want to restore. They are exposed and painted. Right now they are painted yellow. It was suggested it could be painted a brownish-red to match the windows. He would like to clean the wall and tear the shed off. Mr. Smith said they would prefer to have it all natural brick. The sealed door will match the windows in color. That should take care of the rear of the building.

Ms. George said with regard to the side of the building, the applicant is asking for a double window to match the front windows and is asking to open back up two windows but not the door on the side. There is another granite sill that is available in the basement so that could be installed in the opening.

Mr. DeSmet said procedurally the DRC should review the front window because the other windows weren't originally proposed, so that would be an option.

Ms. George said for the purposes of clarification the DRC should review what the application was originally proposed and deal with the side windows after the fact, which will be an optional change.

On the front side of the building it has been proposed that a window exactly matching the front windows be put onto the side. The DRC is going to need to know the distance of how far in from the street the windows will be. Mr. Smith said it is 2 feet. They are metal framed windows to match the existing front. It is insulated glass, double paned and has a center bar, which matches the existing storefront.

Mr. Everett said the whole front of the building has been changed, rebuilt and infilled. The front of the building that is there now is not the original storefront. Ms. George said this used to be the Montclair Restaurant. They have changed it all the way to the top.

Mr. Smith said the window itself is 9'6" in width and they are going to be put in steel to hold it. That is why they need the board over the top because they will be altering some of the brick. They will reuse the brick. The sign board will help cover any discrepancies they have with the steel over the top of the window. The steel beam will be above the window.

Mr. DeSmet said if someone came in and wanted to do something differently could they take the sign board off and would the brick still be there.

Mr. Smith said the brick could still be there.

Mr. Duggan said he feels this site has become a new corner that wasn't there before and in a location that can be viewed in a lot of different ways. How this corner looks is going to be important.

Ms. George said it sounds there is some concern about whether or not there is a necessity to ring around the window and have it match the front when the front isn't even something that has any historical reference. Then, the windows on the side are more the double hung 6 over 6 setup. One window might be the compromise she could live with that gives the element of coming around the corner but doesn't

suddenly continue to keep duplicating the big picture window, plate glass which is a very 50's element. One single window is a compromise she could live with. As far as destroying brick just to get an I-beam in to accommodate the window is over and above what they should be allowing for the city's historic buildings to succumb to when indeed the building functions just fine without this window.

One of the most tragic things every happened in Montpelier was what they did with the Howard Bank building now known as TD Bank North. They originally had these cutoff corners where you could walk around the pole and go in. The bank came in and asked to fill them all in. They filled them in with glass and proceeded to put potted palms in and found them to be a hassle on the inside. She is worried they will have a window with stuff sticking in front of it, and it doesn't really solve any problem.

Mr. Gilbertson said Rhapsody down the street doesn't use that window for anything. Ms. Lane said they have tables in there. The Drawing Board uses their window as display.

Ms. George said her vote is not to do it at all.

Mr. Gilbertson said there is no reason to do it. He would suggest the DRC table this part of the application which would mean we wouldn't act on it until the owner and his tenant get resolved about it and there is a use for the window. At this point there is no use for the window and you are doing damage to an historic building for something that nobody even knows how they are going to use it. Tabling that part of the application will avoid paying another application fee.

Mr. DeSmet said Mark Smith is acting on behalf of Steve Lewinstein as his agent, and Mr. Lewinstein proposed to put a window on that side of the building. The tenant has not signed a lease yet.

Mr. Gilbertson said that is why he said to table it until we have a use.

Mr. DeSmet said he is hearing that the committee doesn't want to continue the 1950's style 9' 6" window but would permit something smaller. Ms. George said it should mimic the windows that are further down the road.

Mr. Everett said in both cases the comparisons they draw with Rhapsody and the Drawing Board both have double windows in the front and a single on the side. In the case of the Drawing Board, theirs is actually slightly recessed with a wood frame around it. They have a separate sign band.

The DRC tabled this part of the application but recognized they would entertain a single window of this style but it wouldn't include chopping into the brick and sign band that runs on top of it. Mr. Smith said he would agree with the recommendation on behalf of the landlord.

Ms. George said in the discussion on the side of the building the committee has started to recognize there are some windows that could be opened up and restored, and this could be an addition to the application. Mr. Smith said the landlord has requested as of earlier today. His original permit he submitted was for the two windows, and he changed his mind. Mr. Smith said he has already priced windows to match the 6 over 6 above, and measuring

the window to the right the cost of one window is over \$2,000 and it has to be custom made. The landlord has decided to use two of the windows, and they are to match exactly what is overhead as far as looks. They are Marvin windows, insulated glass, true divided light and top of the line custom made windows. The windows are 7 feet high.

Ms. George said she wanted to visit the muntins for a moment. He should mimic the existing muntin profile as best as possible in the windows. The granite sills in the basement will be used.

The Design Review Committee reviewed the criteria and found the application met the necessary criteria.

The adjustment to the proposal is reopening of two windows on the north side of the building.

The DRC tabled the installation of window close to the street and sign band.

The application as amended and changed was approved 6-0-1.

#### **Approval of February 12, 2008 Minutes:**

The Minutes of the February 12, 2008 Design Review Committee were approved unanimously with one minor change.

#### **Solar Panels:**

They have talked about the possibility of just exempting rooftop solar panels less than 10 feet high if mounted on complying structures. Mr. Gilbertson said he didn't know why the 10 feet is significant. If you have a 20 foot roof face why not put a 20 foot solar panel up.

Mr. DeSmet said he is just using the existing ordinance. Those are exempt from review outside the design review district. There is nothing in section 305.F that would allow solar collectors to be evaluated. Ms. George said it is a utility, and that is how the DRC gets to review it.

Mr. DeSmet said any mitigation that you propose might impede the performance of the solar collector. He doesn't see a lot of solar collectors popping up just because there is an exemption. They need to be able to harness sun's energy, so if you propose something to screen it. One of the members said he would want it to comply with the existing roof line.

Mr. DeSmet said he needed the DRC to help him craft language for the ordinance, or come to the Planning Commission and help them craft it.

Mr. Gilbertson asked if this was going to be a burden in design review they are going to have to mess with. Mr. DeSmet said that is the reason he wants an exemption. The whole issue is visibility and how compatible they are with the building design. If it is visible but lying on a flat roof that is black anyway, isn't highly visible or doesn't interfere with the architectural features of the building it would be okay. But, if it does do those things, then it would have to come to the Design Review Committee. That's not an exemption but an administrative decision.

Mr. Duggan said there is new technology emerging with new solar collectors.

Mr. DeSmet said in order for a person to install a solar panel they can't be mitigated.

Mr. Everett said they are going to be looking for maximum efficiency. He said he is comfortable with administrative review. If there is only one application a year that comes in why not bring it to the Design Review Committee rather than set up a whole new process to deal with it.

**Adjournment:**

The Design Review Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Clancy DeSmet  
Planning & Zoning Administrator

Transcribed by: Joan Clack