

Montpelier Design Review Committee
December 15, 2009
City Council Chambers, City Hall

Subject to Review and Approval

Present: Stephen Everett, Chair; James Duggan, Vice Chair; Jay White, Steven Burkholder and Muffie Conlon.
Clancy DeSmet, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Call to Order:

The meeting of the December 15, 2009 Montpelier Design Review Committee was called to order by Stephen Everett, Chair at 5:30 P.M.

I. 8 Langdon Street – CB-I/DCD
Applicant/Owner: Andrew Brewer
Addition of Storm Windows.

Mr. Brewer said they would like to install some storm which would be permanently affixed vertical sliding storm windows on the outside of the building. He doesn't think he is going to do them all at once for cost reasons. They plan to work on the second floor first and work their way up to the third floor. The windows they have chosen are Kas-Kel storm windows. They will use ladders and staging on wheels to install them. They haven't figured out what they are going to do on the river side. They will wait until spring or summer when the river is low when they get on ladders or mount them from the inside. They come in white and brown. His preference is brown. He looks around town and sees white storm windows and doesn't care for the look of them. They stand right out.

Mr. Everett asked what color the sash was.

Mr. Brewer replied what was left of them is white. The sash itself on the new storm windows is green. The storm window will hide the sash quite a bit.

Mr. White asked if he planned on painting the sash and wood molding around the windows.

Mr. Brewer said he would think he would have to paint. His old windows are in terrible shape. The new windows will be vertical sliding storm windows. They aren't double hung so just the bottom one opens. He could have used an internal window but they don't open and they have a 100-year old building with a single thermostat. In order to keep the lower levels warm the upper rooms are saunas in the late afternoon. The tenants need to be able to open the windows to vent and get some air.

Ms. Conlon inquired if the upper floors were all apartments.

Mr. Brewer replied there is a mix of offices and apartments. There are two apartments on the second floor, three apartments on the third floor and the dance studio. Then, there is another apartment way in the far corner. There are five apartments total.

Mr. Duggan asked if he planned on installing storm windows on all of the second and third story windows.

Mr. Brewer replied yes, eventually.

Mr. Duggan said there are 24 just on Langdon Street. He asked if his new if the replacement storm windows had been rated or is eligible for the current energy efficiency tax credit.

Mr. Brewer replied he didn't know.

Mr. Duggan said if he was going to put out that amount of money that might be a potential rebate of interest. There are some aluminum that are eligible.

Mr. White asked if he had considered using a tilt out traditional storm window that hangs at the top and tilts out so he could leave it open a lot if he wanted to. The rain wouldn't come in and it actually gives very good ventilation. He wouldn't have the difficulty of keeping an exterior storm window that actually functions well sliding up and down. This climate can be a huge problem. Personally, he thinks sliding storm windows work much better in a warmer climate and they are a problem here. He thinks they have a huge amount of air infiltration that you don't solve with a double sliding storm window. It would be better to use a one over one, a one piece storm window that is hinged at the top and just tilt it out. The whole thing tilts out. It is an exterior storm window. They had some made for the depot in Barre and they were made locally. He might find the ease of installing them and ease of maintaining the original window would work better in that situation and he could more easily paint and repair the window. What he would find if he put exterior aluminum storm windows on this building, especially on the river side, he would have the same problem they encountered when they did the Aubuchon Hardware that when they took the security screen there that there was gunk trapped in against the wood that it began to deteriorate. They are going to be installing exterior fixed storm windows. A better solution for this building is to use locally custom made wood storm windows that would give better energy insulation than this would provide, primarily because he would stop the significant infiltration that he won't stop with the double or single hung sliding storm window.

Mr. Brewer asked how it would affix on the bottom.

Mr. White replied it just has a couple of hooks and eyes. Typically, these storm windows don't have any built in weep holes. You need to have some way to let the condensation drip out or else you will trap water against the wood sill.

Mr. Everett replied they do have weep holes on the bottom. He put Kas-Kels in a building on Main Street 10 years ago. He has the baked paint finish and they work slick. When he installed them he coated the frame with silicon. They work fine and are nice and tight. With tenants you want every advantage possible.

Mr. Brewer said his only concern about a big window is with their opening. He asked Mr. White who the manufacturer of the locally made windows was.

Mr. White replied Alan Lumber made the windows. They can make them custom size to fit the windows.

Mr. Burkholder asked if there would be a safety issue with the bottom swing out type window.

Mr. White replied they swing out about 8 or 10 inches so it isn't a significant problem.

Mr. Brewer asked how they do they seal tight when it is closed.

Mr. White said they can be weather stripped. You can pull them tight and pull the hooks over and that will seal them tight.

Mr. Brewer asked the DRC to give him some guidance because he is happy to look into them.

Mr. Everett said they could give him the option of doing that as well. It is up to the committee members.

Mr. White said he would vote for the wooden storm window concept. He would vote against the aluminum or vinyl storm window concept.

Ms. Conlon asked them to explain the screen part of the window.

Mr. White said the expandable windows work fine. You usually don't open every single window. They work fine, look fine and functional, and they are very cheap. It gives you the ability to get the window screened pretty easily.

Mr. Burkholder asked if these particular windows were designed so they can remove the glass for cleaning.

Mr. Brewer said he didn't believe so.

Mr. Everett replied that they could.

Mr. Burkholder said his only concern is that he is at the second and third floor and there is some difficult egress to get to these windows. He would want to make it as easy to maintain, including cleaning, any exterior portion of the building.

Mr. White said they have tilt in inserts.

Mr. Everett said it says in the description all inserts tilt in for ease of cleaning.

Mr. Brewer said speaking of egress, these windows that tilt out, can they get out of them to reach a fire escape.

Mr. White said they would probably not qualify as an egress window.

Mr. Duggan said the opening for these windows is smaller. His preference certainly would lean toward a wooden version as well. He doesn't have much experience with the triple tracks other than fighting with them. He said on the back where the fire escapes are located he wouldn't have as much of a preference but he has one of those unique buildings that three sides are very visible. It might have a more appropriate historical appearance having a wooden window.

Mr. White said his view from an aesthetics point of view if he was going to install the aluminum windows he would hope they could be further back than what is proposed here.

Mr. Brewer said it might be flush with the brick.

Mr. Everett said he isn't necessarily in favor of one over the other. It is a matter of style. His feeling about the wooden ones are that he knows so many people who had them. On a building of this nature it is easier to deal with it as opposed to residential tenants who are opening and closing constantly. From his own purposes with residential tenants he tries to make it as easy as possible with the window. In the summer time when you do open it if you are opening about 25 percent of the windows it gives it an awning look looking down the side of the building.

Ms. Conlon asked where the screen would be. Wouldn't they have to remove the screen in order to open and close the window?

Mr. Everett replied no. A triple track is set up so when you raise the entire sash the outer most sash is still exposed and then up above that is the inner storm sash, and above that is the screen. You can operate any of them independently.

Mr. Brewer said he sounds like he should do some more homework.

Mr. Duggan replied that would be great.

Mr. Brewer said he would be happy to do some more research. They talked a lot with Alan Lumber, but that one wasn't brought up.

Mr. Duggan said there is a web site, www.alliedstormwindows.com, which are located in Ohio and they do a variety of nice high quality permanent aluminum frames. He doesn't know what the cost difference would be with this, but they are worth looking in to. They might be one of the companies that would be eligible for the energy rebate.

Mr. White said they fit a little tighter than most storm windows and come in a different number of colors. They were looking at some storm windows for the renovation of the St. Bridges Catholic Church in West Rutland and went with a church restoration company that makes a special Gothic shape window. They also learned that Glass Works in Waterbury can make the same thing.

Mr. Brewer said he is also going to inquire about mounting the windows further in on the molding.

Mr. Everett said the further in he can mount them the more profile of the window casing is exposed.

Mr. White said by mounting them above the wood sill you also don't trap water in front of the sill. You don't water to be trapped between the storm sash and the wood sill so you keep the sill exposed. The aluminum option would work.

Mr. Duggan said he would feel the need to see in more detail how it is going to fit on the surround.

Mr. Brewer said he won't need to come to the Development Review Board next Monday. The next DRC meeting is December 29th.

Mr. Everett said they will officially move to table the application. Mr. Duggan seconded the motion. The motion carried on a vote of 5 to 0.

II. 101 Northfield Street – CB-II/DCD

Applicant/Owner: COPS, Inc.
Parking Lot Lighting and Sign.

Applicant didn't show up.

Mr. DeSmet said this application is also for a site plan review because of the placement of all of the lights.

Mr. White said he goes by that building every single day and it is improving greatly from where it started. It is unfortunate they didn't specify more architectural things happening on both sides of the lower front door. It looks really naked. In fact, it would look much better if they had two Econo Lodge signs on both sides of the existing door. He is sorry they didn't look more carefully at the façade proposed because he feels he was remiss in not recommending something else happening on the sides of the glass door because it is too blank of a space.

Mr. Duggan asked if this was part of the façade they looked at the last time. It seems like a new element to him.

Mr. White said they should look at not just what they have tonight but what was the original application proposed and see if there is a way they can improve the front door at the front door level. He would certainly not agree to a sign up in the peak above the window. There is already too much happening there architecturally and not enough at the ground level. He could agree with two signs at ground level that would give more sense of what is happening there.

Mr. Duggan said the sign they have approved for the street is similar to this.

Mr. DeSmet said he would be more comfortable if they discussed the application when the applicant is present.

Approval of November 24, 2009 Minutes:

Upon motion by Mr. Duggan and Ms. Conlon the minutes of November 24, 2009 were approved on a vote of 5 to 0.

Adjournment:

Upon motion by James Duggan and Steve Everett, the Montpelier Design Review Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Clancy DeSmet
Planning and Zoning Administrator

