

Montpelier Design Review Committee
December 14, 2010
Memorial Room, City Hall

Approved

Present: Stephen Everett, Chair; James Duggan, Vice Chair; Kate Coffey, Jay White, Muffie Conlon and Zachary Brock.
Staff: Clancy DeSmet, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Stephen Everett, Chair, at 5:30 P.M. Mr. Everett explained the advisory role of the Design Review Committee to the Development Review Board.

I. 100 State Street – CB-I/DCD

Owner: Capital Plaza Corporation

Applicant: William Foley c/o Northfield Savings Bank

Design Review for an Exterior ATM

Mr. DeSmet explained that Mr. Foley was present at the last meeting and the application was tabled to show some alternative options.

Mr. Foley said he thinks the design is much better. They considered all of the committee's comments. They took the main canopy and extended it throughout the whole bay which fits well with the existing canopy. The other items they talked about were color options. He brought actual samples with him. They talked about having the canopy even with the brick but felt it was better and provided for more protection if they brought it out so it is coming away from the brick about a foot and plays off the existing canopy very well when they do that. The last time they talked they had silver as the one sample. Now they are looking at a stone light which plays very well with a lot of the existing elements. The next one is sandstone which pretty much matches the existing egress. They talked about a dark blue so they looked at a darker color and this works very well with the ATM surround and picks up some of the other elements. Number 2 on their list is the Sierra Tan. Musket Grey and the Sierra Tan worked the best. The lighter tan would show dirt a lot more.

Mr. Everett said the Musket Grey also follows in the base of the color scheme for the awning and complementary of the brick color as well.

Mr. Foley said they are using the same lighting they have existing.

Mr. Everett said it could either be left where it is or back behind the awning. It actually could be moved out so it would throw more light down on to the ATM without creating any shadow.

Mr. White said it would put a light between the person and the ATM machine because the ATM machine is recessed back. That way the person wouldn't be in their own shadow using the ATM machine.

Mr. Everett asked what the specific name of the dark grey color was.

Mr. Foley replied Musket Grey.

Mr. Duggan said he would agree that it is a much improved design and more in keeping with the character of the building.

Mr. Everett said there is a set of criteria the DRC will base its decision on. There is existing landscaping that is going to be modified for the access to the panel so that was acceptable. The designated color of the panels surrounding the ATM will be Musket Grey. The DRC reviewed the criteria and found the application acceptable on a vote of 5 to 0.

II. 106 East State Street – HDR/DCD

Owner/Applicant: Gary Schy

Design Review for Multiple Exterior Renovations

Gary Schy said he proposed a few different things. He is just dealing with the front right now. He can live with two windows and three windows. If he does use three windows he is proposing to put them off centered and not have symmetry because the barn doesn't have symmetry. He would copy the historic window and just put another small window in. It isn't overpowering and it doesn't look like a house. He would probably have a new door made to replicate what is there. The front of the building has clapboard and it doesn't look out of place. The last time the DRC suggested he just take a barn door. He could do that and make a slot and it would have a wrought iron handle to open it. He doesn't want a door that makes it look like a barn. He is looking for a way to do that. He asked the committee if they had any suggestions for doing that.

Mr. White replied normally they look at the plans and he doesn't have any floor plans to show how it would work. Before he was talking about three or four apartments, is he still talking about that? Does he plan on sprinklering the building?

Mr. Schy said he would prefer to just talk about the exterior of the building.

Mr. White said what they might approve for the exterior is realistic in order to meet the needs he plans for. He sees on the site plan he proposes two garages. They require a two hour separation. From a preservation viewpoint the amount of thing he needs to do to enclose the garages affects it because 10 feet for a garage is pretty narrow to get out of the car. The other part is he doesn't want to look at one façade of the building at a time and prefers to look at the whole building as a whole. The third floor he is only proposing windows at the gable end.

Mr. Schy said he is going over that with Glenn Moore, the Building Inspector. All he is asking for is permission to do three apartments and that will be done to code.

Mr. White said their task isn't so much the permission or the code issue but more of the aesthetics issue and that relates to what happens inside.

Mr. Schy said he isn't going to discuss the inside at this point.

Mr. White said they get very specific on exact details of windows. He sees nothing here about what the size of the windows are, the proportion of the windows, whether they are or aren't divided light.

Mr. Schy said this is a historic window and he is proposing to duplicate this historic window which exists.

Mr. Everett inquired if it was a slider window or are they using a double hung sideways?

Mr. Schy replied it is a slider. They are Integrity slider windows. He proposes to use them on the side. The rough opening of the window is 48 x 28. They match the existing windows in the back.

Mr. Everett inquired if the double hung windows on the back were also Marvin Integrity windows. Are they about the same size as the sliders?

Mr. Schy replied they are very similar.

Mr. Everett said he could put a casement in there and with a casement the screen is on the inside so the window opens further for additional ventilation.

Ms. Coffey said under the roof it doesn't look like there is a gutter. He might want to consider an awning.

Mr. Schy said he would have to come back for that.

Ms. Coffey said she didn't have any problem with a third window versus two windows.

Mr. Schy said he didn't need the third window but thought he would give the committee a choice as to what they thought looked best. He wants it to look like a barn. When they gave him the suggestion about the windows on the side to bring in light, if they think the three looks like too many windows and the two looks more like a barn he is mixed. He would like the option to do the third window but he could live with two.

Mr. Everett said they could go around the table and everyone could offer their opinion about the windows, particularly on the three sides that face the College Green on the East State Street side, the west side and the east side which is the least visible.

Ms. Conlon said in terms of whether it looks like a barn or not the one window that is there now is that there for light.

Mr. Schy said he didn't know how old that window is. It appears to be part of the original framing. Someone wanted to get light while they were up there haying so that is an existing window. He thought if there were two windows exactly the same it is a nice style.

Mr. Everett asked what about the options for the doorway using the existing barn/garage doors or using the option with clapboard.

Mr. Schy said there is a door in the interior behind the barn door.

Ms. Conlon said she would prefer just the two windows.

Mr. Duggan said he would like to have the two windows match.

Mr. Everett asked if the top floor was one whole unit or shared with a lower floor.

Mr. Schy replied it could just be an office. Someone could rent part of the third floor and use that as an office or dance studio. He wants to have the ability for them to use the space as a bedroom so that is why the building is going to be sprinkled. Bedrooms don't need a lot of windows. It's nice for living rooms to have windows. One large window there would be nice.

Mr. White said since he wants to use it as bedrooms there needs to be a second egress in the bedroom which can be a window but it has to be a certain size. His preference is to do the three windows instead of one or two. He likes the symmetry of it. It provides much more light into that space. The code will require the wall area be vented for natural light and ventilation and that would help achieve that. If he had dormers out the backside that would also improve the usability of that space and he could agree to that. He wants to

see a plan that gave him good apartments that are easy to rent that people liked and it was good economic development for the city. That is why he is pushing things that he thinks would make it a nicer place to live. That is his comments for the third floor. On the second floor he thinks the concept of the small square windows across the front is good and he would do at least three and maybe even more. He thinks the symmetry of the windows can improve the aesthetics of the building to try to bring it back to a better organization than what it has now to actually improve the façade and improve the appearance of the building. He thinks it would make it a lighter and airier place that would be better. He can agree to the sliding windows only because there is precedence for it on the back. He wouldn't want to see the wide horizontal windows on the front but he isn't proposing that, and he appreciates that. On the ground floor he would prefer to keep the garage opening as they are, and if he needs a person door he would basically create an effect of a recessed alcove that would be weather tight so that the doors could be left open all of the time and then come in about three feet and put a new wall recessed back from the façade. That would be behind the garage doors that could be left open. That way they could go sideways into an apartment or straight inside to an apartment, but the alcove itself would be like a little covered porch so when you are trying to get into the building when it is raining and not getting dripped on it would give some protection. He could also have a recessed light up in there so it would have a nice warm glow and be inviting to the entrance to the apartment. It would maintain the authenticity of having the lower floor is sensible shed or garage or barn appearance as opposed to introducing a single person door on the façade. He thinks he can get the function of a single person door but do it by recessing it behind the barn doors. He would like to see it so that the barn doors by nature aren't supposed to be weather tight so it would basically be a sliding door and give some protection. It would have the advantage of being a porch. He doesn't like the concept of agreeing to the horizontal windows on the side because they are hidden by another building. He doesn't know where the roofline is or how they would fit in. He would want him to have windows that looked over the roof of the garage next door or not have them there. He doesn't think it is good to have a new window and you look out at the façade of another building. It is a tenement type of solution he doesn't need or want here.

Mr. Schy said they would be completely above the roofline.

Mr. White said he would want those windows to be something compatible with other windows on the second floor. They could be the horizontal type even and the interior of the space might work well, or they could be a double hung window similar to the traditional window. The double hung window is a more traditional pattern and he would recommend that. What he would want to have the sliding windows should be consistent with the windows across the front so the total heights of all of the second floor windows are consistent. The hayloft solution is a good way to recognize there was that feature there. Normally, there would have been some sort of shutter over that, and if he has the shutter it would be good to have it attached and fold it back. It carries forward the history of the building. The people door on the bottom he would like to see left as a door and if he wants to put a window in the top part of the door to let light in that would be good.

Mr. Everett said he concurs with what Jay said. On the back side is that a door on the far end? Those two doors would be the access to the proposed deck. The idea of having three windows on the front is a nice feature as well.

Mr. White said that relates to his comment of wanting to know what the interior floor plan is so he can make it work for you. He wants him to have enough windows that it is a really nice place to live.

Mr. Schy said he was trying to compromise. Light is good but it is a barn. He really likes the fact he is getting to work on this and restore it.

Mr. White said if he takes the sensitivity of a barn having punched openings, which is what he is proposing, that works fine. More light is better. He thinks apartments that are dark and dingy are exactly that and they don't rent well.

Mr. Everett said they should have a cut sheet on specific windows. Think about the drip line off the roof and what that is going to do to the window. He obviously will want to protect the inside. Also think about the ease of cleaning the upper windows. If it is a vented picture window and only opens partially he is going to have to get on a ladder on the outside to actually clean them whereas many of the Marvin products are set up so they can tilt inside for cleaning. The nice thing about a casement is if you are trying to maintain the appearance of the building for a casement the screens are on the inside so on the outside they are just seeing glass. The new casements swing open and swing in so you can actually reach behind and clean the outer glass.

Mr. Brock said the good thing about the Integrity windows is that since they are fiberglass there is less overriding with the frame.

Mr. Everett said if he is coming back he should bring back cut sheets and sizes on the windows and a description of how deep the entry way is and whatever lighting he is proposing for the inside, whether it is recessed, etc.

Mr. Duggan said regarding the front façade he prefers the three windows across the front. It is a little more unified. Although he did have issue with the door he thinks the simpler the aesthetic is there the more in keeping with the character of this building. He would prefer to see that remain as the door. The window on the corner might be a little awkward. On the east side he doesn't have a problem with the windows, especially in light of the observations he made that they are going to have to be hanging from the upper trim piece similar to the windows that engage with the cornice at the front. Again, if a similar window to the ones that are being put on the front were put on that side that would be in keeping with what he has and moving forward. He doesn't have any issues with the deck or the railing. He thinks the key to success is to keep it simple. He thinks a recessed entry is fine. Should he not find the space inside to come in that far he would suggest putting a door inside a door? He thinks he should keep the simple frame that the façade presents looking right out to the College Green there. That will keep the character of the building intact.

Ms. Coffey said she would like to keep the aesthetic of the barn door there. She doesn't like the solution at the top. She thinks the three windows he is proposing aren't backing up the idea that the building is a barn.

Mr. Everett said the carriage house on their house on Terrace Street actually has double panel doors that swing in to the inside. They could almost put in a double window there.

Ms. Coffey said she would like to see some more options and look at other barns and carriage houses in the area.

Mr. Brock said he agreed with Jay, especially with the runoff from the roof.

Mr. White said as he lays out the third floor apartment he needs to have light and ventilation in all of the rooms.

Mr. Everett said they could table the application which would give Mr. Schy a chance to come back with some of the changes he is going to explore and also bring back cut sheets for the specific ones. He should check to see it meets the code requirements for egress as well. He needs to have cut sheets on doors, windows and plans for the recessed door on the front facing East State Street. Also, if he has a description of any lighting he is going to use on the outside he should bring that. If he is proposing any lighting on the

outside for the back of the building there is no cut sheets for that. He would imagine he would want a light by each of the rear doors that go out onto the deck as well.

Kate Coffey moved to table the application for 106 East State Street with Jamie Duggan seconding the motion. The vote on the motion was favorable to table the application on a vote of 5 to 0.

III. 7 Main Street – RIV/DCD

Owner: Pomerleau Realty

Applicant: Sharon McIlwaine, Breathing Light
Exterior Wall Sign

Sharon McIlwaine said she has been in the Depot Building for 2 ½ years and finally went to see John Miller at Sign Design to talk about a sign. He made the sign the same size and shape and the same technique would be used to hang it like for the Knitting Studio. There was a sign for the Knitting Studio which used to be in the space she is in so John has just duplicated the measurements and everything about the sign.

Mr. DeSmet said it is painted plywood with vinyl graphics and no lights.

Mr. Everett asked if there were any specific colors for the lettering and the graphics. Obviously, the Center for Health and Well-Being is black.

Mr. White said he liked the graphics and design of the sign. He thinks it is quite nice. The one thing he would like better is if the location of the sign was such that the top of the sign was within line of the metal part of the double hung windows so it would be a little bit lower. Mr. White said one thing he likes about that building is the arched windows. If you pull the sign up and get away from the arch of the window they don't compete as much with the window.

Ms. McIlwaine said the reason he has it there is so there can be another sign above it.

Mr. White said if they are using both floors she would have the right to put it on either one or both, and if at some point she wasn't going to be there then the sign could be a different sign for the next tenant. Right now since she is using both of those floors it would be good to center the sign right between the four corners of the windows.

Ms. Conlon inquired where the entrance was.

Ms. McIlwaine said it is the main entry between Minuteman Press and the Citizens Bank so you just go up the stairs. They are 7 Main Street which faces Shaw's.

Mr. White asked if she was proposing any lighting on the sign.

Ms. McIlwaine replied no.

Mr. Duggan said it is two specified locations, and that is where the existing shields are to screw into the brick. While he understands the aesthetic placement of the sign where would the other set of shields be, below or above?

Mr. White said he would still like to see it in the correct proportionate and put new mortar anchor bolts to hang the sign.

Mr. Everett said when they put new anchors in the anchors should be placed in the mortar joints and not in the brick itself. If the sign is plywood he isn't sure what he will do to seal the edges. They make a frame that will enclose that and would protect the sign, and it would also give a little bit of border around the outside. She might want to consider doing a border around the outside with one of the darker colors.

Mr. White said it would make the sign pop out a little bit more and makes it more readable.

Mr. DeSmet asked what the modification on the sign placement was.

Mr. Everett said it will be just raised above the existing location and spaced between the second and third floor windows. It will be equal distance from the corners of the four windows.

Mr. White said he thinks a painted border is better than some other type of frame because he likes the curved corners on her sign and he thinks it is consistent with the image she projects of her business. It is a little softer and a nicer detail.

Mr. Everett asked if the sign background was white or more of off-white. It looks more like off-white. It looks like it is proposed to be an off-white which is actually more compatible with the building.

Mr. DeSmet said Cityscape says second and third floor businesses should be permitted to display signs which are placed either directly beside or immediately above a related window, which is difficult in this case because the example here shows double windows.

Mr. White said he thinks what they are proposing aesthetically looks well.

Ms. McIlwaine said the sign that faces the dry cleaner is the upper windows are near John Durrance's office on that side of the building.

Mr. Duggan asked if there was the potential for doing a vertical sign as opposed to a horizontal design that could go next to the window.

Mr. White said he would recommend the DRC approve the proposal as proposed with the exception of putting both the signs higher halfway between the second and third floor windows and that there be a black border around the perimeter of both signs.

Mr. Everett said he would go either with black or a dark blue.

Ms. Coffey said she would have the white background of the sign match the windows.

Mr. Everett said the adjustment would be the border painted around the perimeter of the sign and would be either a dark blue or black color. They would attach the sign anchors in the mortar instead of the brick. They would be raising the sign so it is equal distance between the four surrounding windows. They should match the background of the sign to the window sash and checking with John Durrance to make sure the sign is okay on his side of the building.

Mr. DeSmet said one thing he doesn't know if anybody noticed in the application is that there was a proposal to put the signs back in the same holes that were already drilled.

Mr. White said he doesn't see a reason that they need to do that, especially if they were drilled in the brick, because over time it is going to wear out.

The DRC reviewed the criteria and found the application acceptable on a vote of 5 to 0.

Review of November 9th and 23rd Minutes:

Upon motion by Jamie Duggan and Jay White the minutes of November 9th were passed on a vote of 4 to 0.

Upon motion by Kate Coffey and Jamie Duggan the minutes of November 23rd were passed on a vote of 4 to 0.

Adjournment:

Upon motion by Jamie Duggan and Kate Coffey the DRC adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Clancy DeSmet
Planning and Zoning Administrator

Transcribed by: Joan Clack