

**Montpelier Development Review Board Meeting
November 5, 2018**

This public meeting was recorded, and the video will be available for viewing at:
<http://www.montpelier-vt.org/416/City-Meeting-Videos>

Present: Kevin O'Connell, Thomas Kester, Ryan Kane, Robert Goodwin, Deb Markowitz, Clare Rock (alternate), Meredith Crandall – staff.

Not Present: Dan Richardson, Kate McCarthy

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Kevin O'Connell (Acting Vice Chair). Ryan made a motion to approve Kevin acting as vice chair for the meeting, Deb seconded. The motion passed on a 5-0 vote, with Kevin abstaining.

Approval of the agenda: Tom made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of electing an acting vice chair. Ryan seconded. The motion passed on a 6-0 vote.

Comments from the Chair: There were no comments from the acting vice chair. Dan has recused himself from further hearings on the project at 100 State Street due to a potential appearance of a conflict of interest.

Approval of minutes from September 17 and October 15, 2018: There was not a quorum in attendance to approve the September 17 minutes.

Dan, Tom, Ryan, Rob, and Clare were in attendance at the October 15 meeting, Deb stated that she watched the video, so she would be eligible to vote. Deb moved to approve the minutes, Ryan seconded. The motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

Kevin requested that all those in attendance that wished to present testimony on the three applications at issue raise their hands. He then swore them in, en masse.

100 State Street (continued)

**Owner: Capitol Plaza Corporation Applicant: City of Montpelier
Final plan review of a two lot subdivision.**

Laura Rose Abbott submitted a petition on behalf of some residents and property owners in Montpelier. The petition addresses concerns with street frontage, lot dimensions, view corridors, architectural standards, among other items.

Greg Rabideau, from Rabideau Architects spoke about some follow-up questions. David Grover from Resource Systems Group, James Findley-Shirras from Wagner-Hodgson, and David Marshall from Civil Engineering Associates, were in attendance, and Ron Lyon from Dubois and King was in the audience to answer questions, if needed.

Tom McArdle, Director of DPW, stated that his department had no issues with the subdivision.

100 State Street (continued)

**Owner: Capitol Plaza Corporation Applicant: City of Montpelier
Site plan amendment to remove on site parking.**

There needs to be a shift in parking from on site to off site. Greg mentioned some of the design changes the DRC requested earlier in the evening with regard to the Parking Garage Site Plan application that would need to be reflected in the final Hotel Site Plan Amendment documents.

100 State Street (continued)

**Owner: Capitol Plaza Corporation Applicant: City of Montpelier
Site plan review for a new parking garage.**

David Grover from Resource Systems Group, the traffic engineer, spoke about the traffic study. Traffic volume has decreased since the last study done in 2013. He testified that the study doesn't warrant a left turn lane off Taylor.

Dave Marshall addressed the storm water drainage. The runoff will be filtered through a series of underground chambers before going into the sewage system. District heat would be used to melt the snow on the top level through radiant heating and into the filtration system.

Mr. Grover confirmed that pedestrian traffic wasn't considered in the traffic study.

There will be 20 electric vehicle charging stations set up. The city will decide if they are to be exclusively for charging or if they will be mixed use, depending on demand.

A question was raised about the 20-foot setback from the river. Mr. Rabideau stated that his understanding is that this stretch of river is channelized, meaning that the water setback didn't apply.

A 5-minute recess was called. Upon reconvening, the testimony was opened up to public comment.

Stephen Whitaker requested that the DRB order a balloon validation to assess the view shed impact. He stated that the City doesn't have a contract with the architect yet, so some documents aren't open to the public yet. Pedestrian safety was the next item he brought up, critiquing the various paths people would need to take to get to and from the garage. He expressed concern that the traffic flow during construction of the 3 area projects (1 Taylor Transit Center, Hotel, and Garage) will be disrupted for up to a year; he also feels the traffic flow analysis for after construction is completed is flawed. He also feels the elevator is not placed correctly and that bathrooms are essential is a public, \$ 10 million project.

Deb asked how it was determined that the North Branch of the Winooski River at this project site is channelized. Ron Lyon from Dubois & King discussed the differing definitions of channelization, both those used by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Vermont State definition – and that human construction or fill that keeps the river contained results in a channelized river. Mr. Lyon went on to state that the upstream portions of the North Branch are clearly channelized, and that this portion of the North Branch is channelized to at least some degree with rip rap and the railroad bridge abutment. Mr. Marshall then provided a

further nuanced answer regarding what makes a river channelized, including Vermont's river corridor program, and that under this statute when upstream areas have building right up to the river, then those property owners further downstream are supposed to have the ability to build similarly. Mr. Marshall then applied this general analysis to Montpelier, and described the river corridors that flow through the City, and all of the historic development up to the riverbank in Montpelier that results in extreme channelization of the North Branch of the Winooski River – including this particular area of the project. Mr. Marshall indicated that the new recreation path also creates a further bottleneck of the river, and that the opposite side of the river has also been found to be channelized. Upon further questioning, Mr. Lyon indicated that he had no disagreements with Mr. Marshall's analysis.

Mike Miller, the Planning Director, then spoke. He mentioned that there are currently three telephone poles in the parking lot, two are about 40-43 feet high and the shorter one is 34 feet high. He stated that the parking garage is going to be 39 feet high, so about in between the smaller and the taller of the poles. He feels that a balloon study doesn't need to be done for the view sheds, but the poles can be used as a matrix.

Clare had some questions about the lighting. There will be 50-foot high city standard pole lights and building sconces. They will be on a timer or motion sensed. Bike racks will be put along the boardwalk and on level 2 in the garage. The exact number of bike spaces has not been determined yet.

The DRC had 7 recommendations and two options for this project:

1. They selected the # 1 option for the large artwork and to have a public contest the designs that gets displayed, the artwork on the scrim should be muted and preferably in blacks and grays. The artwork should echo local themes.
2. Cornices shall be made from GFRC or a smooth polymer but should be the same color as the gray granite on the building.
3. The decking for the boardwalk will preferably be made from local black locust, if that's not practicable, it shall be ipe or another tropical hardwood to withstand the anticipated heavy use.
4. The granite portions shall be smooth and not rough surfaces.
5. Change the landscaping to be inviting for access and to have open curbing for walkable access.
6. Verify that the fencing and railing at the rear of the garage may be galvanized metal on the boardwalk and black metal material toward the building.
7. Clear markings and signage as the determination of Montpelier Alive! to agree with signage with the rest of the city need to be included in the final designs.

The DRC options:

8. Bike racks may be added along the boardwalk, as well as in the garage.
9. Applicant may provide hanging hardware along the large art sections of the building to allow for banners advertising special events in the city.

These were agreeable to the Applicant.

SL-8 lighting within the landscaped wells didn't provide lumens. The application contains foot candles, so the translation would need to be made.

The partially shielded lighting should be no more than 45 degrees downcast, the application provides for 90 degrees. Applicant (via Mr. Shirras) agreed to the 45 degree requirement.

Deb made a motion to close the public hearing, Tom seconded. Clare asked if there were any questions in deliberative session and the hearing was closed, would those questions be answered. Staff clarified that if factual issues were raised, and unable to be resolved with the evidence in the record, the hearing would need to be re-opened. Ryan amended the motion to close the public hearing for all 3 applications and move into deliberative session. Deb approved that friendly amendment. Tom agreed with his second. The motion passed on a 6-0 vote.

Other Business: The next regular meeting will be Monday, November 19, 2018.

Adjournment: There was a motion and a second to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Tami Furry
Recording Secretary