

Montpelier Planning Commission Meeting
June 25, 2012

Subject to review and approval

Present: Jesse Moorman, Kim Cheney, Eileen Simpson, Gwen Hallsmith, Clancy DeSmet, Jon Anderson, John Bloch.

Guests: Eric Gilbertson

Call to order: No comments from the Chair.

Meeting Minutes from April 9, April 23, and May 14 2012 not yet available

Subcommittee reports:

Procedures: Working on a draft.

Standards: Committee hasn't met recently, so no further progress.

Definitions: Committee has been unable to meet for about six weeks, but a final review is being done.

Preliminary Discussion of Design Review: Eric and the committee saw there were not many changes to the design, but the changes are important. There is a change to the reference to the Cityscape manual.

The Design Review Committee is advisory to the Development Review Board. They work with and have discussions with applicants to bring things into compliance. There are 7 members of the committee. If the application is complete, it's usually a 5-10 minute meeting. The applicant then meets with the Development Review Board. Eileen asked if the approval process for Montpelier is more onerous than the State allows for in statute. The statute states that a town may have zoning, so the fact that zoning exists is more strict. The fact that Montpelier has a large amount of properties on the National Historic Registry makes it seem the regulations are stricter than in neighboring communities. For the most part, Montpelier is built out so there is very little space for new construction. Eric feels that Montpelier's process is much less onerous and less expensive than Act 250. About 98% of the projects that go before the committee are approved in less than 30 days.

An intern designed brochures with helpful hints on design guidelines. The Cityscape book is 36 years old and needs to be updated, with such changes as new designs for window treatment options. It is not mentioned in the Zoning Ordinance and should be included.

305H was discussed to a wording change. It could be changed "to the extent economically feasible" but it could also be structurally feasible.

Need boards to use common sense to apply regulations. Based on National Preservation brief bulletins.

Change 9 to read "all development shall conform to the Montpelier Cityscape studies and design review brochures as amended, as applicable and feasible"

Jesse mentioned that quality of materials is not addressed in the regulations, just composition.

Motion made by John that Design Review Committee come up with guidelines on windows that allows flexibility on materials. Passed unanimously.

Stricter definitions on districting – downtown properties are not compatible to residential neighborhoods.

In order to change paint color, someone must attend two meetings to get approval. Possibly provide Clancy with a palette of color that can streamline the process.

Kim made a motion that the Zoning Administrator has the authority to approve paint color schemes for the historic district, to be presented to the Design Review Committee. If the Committee does not ask for a hearing within 15 days, the decision becomes final. Jon seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Review Housing Replacement Map: This has not been incorporated into the Ordinance. It will be tabled until the next meeting.

Other business: Alan Goldman is unable to make the meeting because his father recently passed away. The committee would like to offer their condolences to him by way of the minutes and by buying and signing a card for him.

Kim asked the status of hiring someone to take minutes. Gwen told the committee that they are in negotiations with an applicant.

The City of Montpelier won a statewide energy contest and there will be free Ben & Jerry's ice cream on the State House lawn this Saturday from 1-3.

Adjournment:

Respectfully submitted,

Tami Furry
Recording Secretary