

Montpelier Design Review Committee
February 1, 2011
Memorial Room, City Hall

Approved

Present: James Duggan, Vice Chair; Eric Gilbertson, Kate Coffey and Zachary Brock.
Staff: Clancy DeSmet, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by James Duggan, Vice Chair, at 5:30 P.M.

Comments from the Chair:

James Duggan, Vice Chair, explained the advisory role of the Design Review Committee to the Development Review Board. They will review the application according to the criteria and Cityscape, and then depending on what the result of this evening is the application can go to the Development Review Board for final action.

I. 37 Barre Street – CB-II/DCD

Owner: CVCLT – Central Vermont Community Land Trust

Applicant: LaJeunesse Construction Co.

Design Review Replacing Windows and Roof Top Solar Collectors.

Interested Parties: Alison Friedkin and Mike LaJeunesse

The DRC looked at this project before and asked for a little more information.

Mr. LaJeunesse said the location of the new solar panels which is structurally the place to put them, and the most feasible place to put them. With regards to visibility you can see it from Barre Street, but it is at an angle where it is tight. It should blend in very well.

Mr. Gilbertson asked if he could point on the picture where they are going to be located.

Mr. LaJeunesse said the inserts and fully replacement units would look very similar as the ones on 37 Barre Street. They would be the full screen and full replacement. After doing more investigation on the project they are talking about apparently they must have gotten the storm windows on a deal because they patted down the header about 4 inches so that decreased the size of the opening. Someone said about 30 years ago they went in and took the window weights out, took the stops out and put in a plastic jamb liner.

Mr. Duggan asked if the jamb liners were vinyl.

Mr. LaJeunesse replied they were plastic so they cracked. They are really brittle.

Ms. Friedken said almost all of the windows were cracked. The window would have been routed to accept these new so they don't go up and down very smoothly because there is wood on the plastic. Because of cold temperatures most were cracked in the jamb liners. The glass in the windows is in good shape but the windows have been altered to receive these.

Mr. LaJeunesse said Jay was concerned about the actual finished glass size. Taking the consideration of the storm you would leave on versus the insert it is about the same. With the jam you are losing about an inch and a half on the width so that is about three inches. When you screw on the storm combination it protrudes onto the face of the glass. This is the window the Land Trust has proposed to us as far as what they wanted for a replacement window.

Mr. Gilbertson asked if he had actually measured the glass on the regular window.

Mr. LaJeunesse said the regular window is 14 ½ and the Marvin is 13. The rails are very close as far as the dimensions are concerned.

Ms. Coffey said in item 2 they are showing the Marvin unit with a clad exterior. Are they talking about the clad casing?

Mr. LaJeunesse said “yes.”

Mr. LaJeunesse said on number 2 they would have to take it off. Jay was talking about a unit. This is an insert. In order to get a unit in you need to get back to the rough opening to make it the same size as the other one. There is no other way you can do it. Because he talked directly to Doug Dennison he said there is either an insert or you getting a regular window unit with no casings.

Mr. Duggan said the inserts typically have smaller and thinner jambs and the sides of the sash are a little bit reduced.

Mr. LaJeunesse said the jambs on the inside are 1 ¼ inch.

Mr. Gilbertson asked him to talk about Option 3 of restoration of the existing windows.

Mr. LaJeunesse said the top and bottom sashes have to be removed. The existing jamb liner has to be removed. They cannot get that profile of that existing jamb liner so that means they will have to go with a different style which means everything would have to be brought back to the shop and the sash is going to have to be plowed out to receive the new jamb liner, and there is going to have to be some work done on the existing jamb of the window. They planned on putting all new combination storm windows back on. By doing that you would be able to get rid of that head.

Ms. Friedken said one of the big issues with the third option is that this is not a major rehab. Folks are not moving out. The existing work minimally impacts them. If you are talking about having to take windows out and bring them back to the shop it raises it to another level in terms of how it affects the tenants which is a huge concern for them.

Mr. Duggan said that is true but they will be affected by this project regardless. Work will be happening in and around their apartments. He has a question about the jamb liners. He isn't clear as to where the windows have been modified.

Mr. LaJeunesse said they have their jamb liner that the sash is plowed out for so it can run up and down.

Mr. Duggan said if they were considering option #3 where they would take the sash out to restore them would they need to put new jamb liners in?

Mr. LaJeunesse said they would have to replace those.

Mr. Duggan said he is wondering if the sash can be put back in with weather stripping. That is why he is curious if the windows had been trimmed at all. When you put a jamb liner in you are reducing the amount of space that was originally there and sometimes the windows are trimmed down to accept that in which case you would have to put the jamb liners back. Sometimes the windows are trimmed down to accept that

in which case then you would have to put the jamb liners back in. If the only treatment was to route out a little section there, it is possible.

Mr. Gilbertson said the existing windows have really been messed with. They have been cut down, cut out so he has less of a problem with Option #1. Option #2 just seems silly. He would like to see the windows fixed but he can understand why that would be an issue. He isn't sure that would be successful because all of the windows have been cut down.

Mr. Brock said he agreed. He didn't think Option #2 had any benefit over Option #1 aesthetically. He guesses the question comes down whether it is new windows or restoring the old ones. He thinks it looks better to not have the storm windows but having the historic windows that have been around for 100 years is nice, too. He thinks the new windows look better.

Mr. Duggan said his preference would be Option #3, but thanks for doing a little more investigation. He agrees they have been modified a bit. If you have to put jamb liners back in that is problematic. When he does a new cost comparison does this price include new storm windows?

Mr. LaJeunesse replied yes.

Mr. Duggan said for a little more money they could retain those but it seems there would be some issue with the management of the project and also the long term maintenance considerations. Keeping affordable housing in the city is an important goal as well. His one hope would be if they do approve the removal of these windows is that they don't end up in the dumpster. There are places like Recycle North.

Mr. LaJeunesse said he would rather give them away than to put them in the dumpster.

Ms. Friedken said part of the contract with LaJeunesse is a whole waste management plan, and part of that is trying to divert anything into recycling.

Mr. Duggan said they are talking about almost 60 sashes here.

Ms. Friedken said they are happy to do that.

Mr. Duggan said with the added information he feels that Option #1 would be appropriate for reconstruction of the historic style.

Mr. Gilbertson said if the old windows hadn't been messed with and were in decent shape he would feel very differently about it.

Ms. Coffey said she agrees.

There was a question about lighting. Ms. Friedken said on the back porch there is a porch light. They are replacing the existing lighting system.

Mr. Duggan said that is just maintenance.

Mr. Duggan said they are talking about the originally proposed work of the Marvin wood insert windows with clad exterior in white. The DRC reviewed the criteria and found the application acceptable on a vote of 4 to 0.

Ms. Coffey said she wants to make sure they are getting the simulated divided lights with a 7/8 inch bar and the internal spacer bar because that is not specified here. This would be an adjustment to the scope.

II. 59 Elm Street – CB-II/DCD

Owner: Hood and Ayer Partnership

Applicant: Steven Usle

Design Review for a Sign.

They are pretty much replicating what was there in terms of dimensions and the color isn't too different. Everything is pretty much the same, except the wording, as what has been approved in the past.

The DRC reviewed the criteria and found the application acceptable on a vote of 4 to 0.

III. 63 Barre Street – CB-II/DCD

Owner: Tom and Leslie Sabo

Applicant: Buzz Ferver

Design Review for Multiple Exterior Renovations.

Mr. Duggan said for full disclosure that Buzz Ferver is on the Board of Directors at Yestermorrow, which is where he teaches and gets paid to teach at, and he doesn't feel uncomfortable in this position. If anyone feels there is a conflict of interest he would gladly step down.

Buzz Ferber said 63 Barre Street is a house that has been 50 and 75 years almost maintenance free so there is considerable damage to various parts, specifically the back ell on the barn which has been repaired. It didn't alter the shape or form of the structure. There was a cellar hole that had caved in and it caved in and rotted off. The roof had been leaking for a very long time so that entire corner was punky. The roof has been replaced with the same shingle and same metal and same style which were approved by Clancy to go forward with the repairs. The front façade windows are all original and in pretty good shape. There are no proposed changes on those. They are going to do reglazing. There were triple track self storing storms on all of them already. The upper windows do not have sash weights; the lower ones do and he doesn't know they can be made operable again.

It is his intention to try to leave the top sash on all four windows in the front inoperable and just restore the bottom sash. They have already had little brass keepers which have been installed on the upstairs windows and half the downstairs, and they will probably put those back rather than spending a lot of time trying to get the sashes down.

The windows to the south side facing the Coop on the main house are in pretty good shape with the exception to the ones closest to the porch which has been changed with a vinyl insert. The one directly opposite that on the north side has also been changed. The woman who lived and died there sat in the chair on the north side and the window beside her she changed with vinyl inserts. All of the windows on the main two floors are one over one. The next house over at 61 Barre Street is two over two and the house very much like this one, 65 Barre Street, is also one over one. The windows higher up in this building like the ones in the barn eave and the attic are a mish mash. They are 6 over 6. He doubts they will be operable because they are up too high to be used. There is some glass in them. The two doghouse dormers also have 6 over 6 and will also remain.

Mr. Gilbertson said he wouldn't be too surprised if some of the windows had been replaced because of the stained glass.

The house next door to this, 69 Barre Street, is almost an exact replica but it has been changed around a little bit. The barn was pulled back and not connected to the house. There is no ell. The barn boards are identical. A lot of the original profile has been removed to be replaced with more modern.

Mr. Gilbertson asked if the application was really about replacing windows.

Mr. Ferver replied yes. The two story porch to the south side had a combination of triple track storms and wood one over ones that were nailed in place. They were set on very flat sills and of course never painted so all of that is rotted, especially on the first floor. The first floor is 80 percent rotted away. He is proposing they replace those with Marvin Integrity windows one over ones. They will be white with minimal trim.

On the north side the kitchen and bathroom you can see those windows were also pulled out and put in small casements. They are going to be left for now because they are probably only 15 years old and work okay. The kitchen has been built around them.

There is a proposed inserting of an ADA ramp into the front porch which will be entirely enclosed within the front porch. All of the posts will remain.

The other big change to the windows he is asking for is in the barn where the doors were. There are two large barn doors, one in the ell which is smaller and one in the barn which is a bit larger. This had rolling doors that were internal and this had hinged doors to the exterior. He would like to mount the rolling doors on the interior and just fix them. He may have to resize the doors. He wants to turn these into large windows with storefront glass that is held all the way to the back.

Mr. Gilbertson asked if he was going to convert the garage into offices.

Mr. Ferver replied yes. The people in Worcester who bought the property actually looked at 15 buildings in Montpelier trying to find one they could restore. A lot of buildings in Montpelier are hammered and covered over with paneling and this building it was easy to see what was wrong with it and in a good location. They are going for tax credits. The paint color is going to stay the same.

Mr. Duggan said going back to the double doors in the front, the idea was to keep those, open them and fix them that way. This is a door that is going to be sealed. He said looking at the elevation he likes the clean lines the building has without the doors on the exterior and it would leave the casing exposed. They look ragged and are rotting from the bottom up.

They could leave that as an option. Mr. Duggan said he feels like the insertion of the commercial window units are enough of a change to the opening that they stand apart.

Mr. Gilbertson said he thinks the same thing. If they are opening up and it is the back side of the door, he wonders if there is some place he could use them on the inside almost as a decorative element so they don't go away.

Mr. Ferver said he could mount them on the inside of the doors. The inside of the barn is horizontal flat boards so they could be hung there.

Mr. Duggan said that is why he was suggesting they put it in as an option so it is approved as presented. The option would be to use them on the inside.

Mr. Gilbertson said if he just hung them on the inside it is an interesting element and at least he isn't throwing them away.

Mr. Ferver said as far as the awning on the back he is envisioning just a very simple square painted white. It will be protection for people coming and going to get in out of the rain.

Mr. Gilbertson asked if he was going to do lighting under the awning in the back.

Mr. Ferver replied yes. It will be a flat ceiling with a can light.

Mr. Gilbertson said turning the building around the main entrance is at the back.

Mr. Ferver said for the time being until they get the ADA ramp done in the front. They can come from the street to come in but the outside stairs are horrible and scary to come in through so no one is going to use the front door or the front stair. They are all going to go in the back and park and walk in the back.

Mr. Duggan said they typically ask for 60 watt bulbs.

Mr. Ferver said they are LED and at least that or more. They have been recommended by his electricians.

Mr. Duggan said since landscaping is one of the criteria could he just briefly comment on it.

Mr. Ferver said the property was very overgrown and the neighboring property was overgrown as well. The property at 61 Barre Street was very nicely kept with the exception of the hedge which was in common. The entire property will be regarded to fill in all of the ditching and reverse drainage into the basement, which has been done already. He is proposing to put in rain gardens all the way around and he will be planting flowering perennials that are low maintenance in order to drastically reduce or eliminate any storm water discharge on the property. The pathways are indigenous brick, concrete or asphalt, the pathways to and from the doors.

The DRC reviewed the criteria and found the application acceptable on a vote of 4 to 0. An adjustment to the scope will be the installation of a small shed over the northeastern corner over the electrical meter. The optional changes are that the swinging barn doors may be removed and used on the interior. The adjustment is the installation of a small shed roof only over the electrical meter in the existing location. There will be a new six foot tall vertical wooden fence to match the neighbor's fence.

Review and Approval of January 11, 2011 Minutes:

Upon a motion by Eric Gilbertson and James Duggan, the 1/11/11 minutes were approved by a vote of 4-0

Adjournment:

Upon motion by Kate Coffey and James Duggan, the DRC adjourned on a vote of 4 to 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Clancy DeSmet
Planning and Zoning Administrator

Transcribed by: Joan Clack