

Approved
Meeting Minutes
Hartford WRJ Design Review Committee
October 5, 2023

Present: Denise Welch-May, Larson Burns, Anita Hamalainen, Sara Ferguson, and Jo-Ann Ells, Zoning Administrator

Absent: Jonathan Schechtman and Kim Souza, Selectboard Liaison

Sketch plan review of conceptual plans by Northern Stage Company for the redevelopment of 140-146, 160 and 178 Gates Street, White River Junction, in CB and Design Review districts.

Jason Smoller, Managing Director, Northern Stage, Jim Pulver, Breadload Corp., and Jim Lynch, Northern Stage Board of Directors, were present.

Jason introduced himself and informed the Committee that Northern Stage was in the process of developing an application for housing on Gates Street and would like feedback from the Committee on the application.

Jim P. introduced himself and reviewed elevation and site layout plans and played a video of the project. He noted that they hope to build in one phase, but are designing the project so it could be built in two phases.

Jim P. shared a sample of the siding on the adjacent building, a possible dark colored asphalt roof shingle for the project, and clapboard and accent color options for the project. He explained that Northern Stage is considering a white clapboard, with 1-3 accent colors, and light-colored double hung windows.

Sara asked for confirmation that they are not suggesting vinyl siding. Jim P. confirmed.

Larson commented that the white clapboard and dark roof reads very commercial and asked what would bring character to the project, noting it reads a little flat, especially if use of accent colors are limited to the rear of the structures.

Sara commented that since the buildings will not look historic, maybe white is not the best color choice. She voiced her support for the design of the courtyard.

Jim P. confirmed that the goal of the design of the project is contemporary, not historic.

Denise commented that she liked the livable feel of the courtyard. She noted that she was not in favor of the white vernacular and suggested the applicant lean more into color.

Denise suggested considering stepping back the color tones like they did for the original, previously approved design.

Anita concurred that the applicant should break up the massing with color and suggested that it could be done to look like the building had an addition. She noted it was important that the project not read like it is trying to be historic.

Larson noted that the use of vertical materials in some areas might work.

It was noted that Northern Stage intends to submit a formal application on October 16th and therefore, the Committee will meet on October 26th to formally review the application.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Members of the Design Review Committee are as follows:

Chair, Denise Welch-May 04-19-24
Vice Chair, Jonathan Schechtman 03-07-25
Sara Ferguson 10-04-24
Anita Hamalainen 11-15-24
Larson Burns 08-22-25