

**DRAFT**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Hartford Design Review Committee**  
**December 16, 2021**

**Members Present** Denise Welch-May, Jonathan Schechtman, Anita Hamalainen, Larson Burns, and Sara Ferguson

**Staff Present:** Lori Hirshfield, Planning Director, Hannah Tyler, Public Works Director, and Jo-Ann Ells, Zoning Administrator

**Others Present:** Irene Greene, John Seidensticker, Eric Bunge, Michael Ganion and Chris Rivet

Jo-Ann introduced new Committee member Sara Ferguson.

Denise opened the meeting and read the hybrid meeting script as required by Act 92 and took a roll call.

### **Applications**

1. Application by Northern Stage for Design Review Approval for an outside theater on lot 45-0182-000, 76 Gates Street, White River Junction, in the CB and Design Review zoning districts.

Jo-Ann explained that an administrative permit was issued for one season and that Northern Stage was now seeing a permanent permit.

Irene stated that they want the outdoor theater to fit into the neighborhood and to be able to expand with the Barrett Center for the Arts (BAC) into the future.

Jonathan asked what benefit an outdoor theater as they are not proposing to run shows inside the BAC and in the outdoor theater at the same time.

Irene noted that the outside shows were born out of COVID. She explained that outside performances do not have the same financial expectations an inside show, so it is an effective way to hold additional performances.

Jo-Ann Ells asked Irene to give an overview of the site plan.

Irene explained that the intent was to reimage the courtyard into an outdoor theater. She explained that there would be a seasonal stage, seats for 230-250 people, 2 levels of seating, a will call booth, stage manager booth, and sound booth.

Michael added that people like to be outside, they have worked with the Fire Marshall, feel they have developed easy access to the space and seat, and have provided some greenery.

Anita asked if they had considered sun/shade screens. John stated that they were researching the idea and noted that they need to find adequate rigging points.

Denise commented that she thought that they had done a fabulous job with the space and that she had seen a performance during the summer.

Irene stated that in addition to the booths, changes to the space from the first season would include texturized paved walkways, noise mitigation/sound baffle system, a new speaker array and a different seating arrangement for the upper-level risers.

Larson asked if the construction of the risers would be more permanent than the first season. Michael confirmed that they would.

Irene noted that two on-site parking spaces were lost due to the upper-level seating.

Irene noted the exhibit depicting the string lighting and added that an existing streetlight provides a lot of light.

Michael reviewed the design of the will call, stage manager, and sound booths.

Anita stated that given the first season, she had a lot of confidence in the project.

There was no public comment.

Anita moved to approve the application as proposed. Denise seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Application by the Town of Hartford for Design Review Approval for improvements to a municipal parking facility, lot 45-0212-000, South Main Street, White River Junction, in the CB and Design Review zoning districts.

Chris handed out a photograph of a retaining wall and fence to supplement the information already provided.

Chris gave an overview of the project including:

- Existing conditions
- Proposed islands between the parking lot and Currier Street
- Currier Street improvements are a separate project
- New pavement
- Lighting
- Stormwater improvements
- Porous pavement
- Retaining wall and fence (new detail distributed)
- Landscaping
- Pedestrian access/walkways

Jo-Ann noted that Currier Street improvements are exempt from permitting as an Essential Service.

Anita noted that the lights in the parking lot were different than the ornamental lights along Currier Street.

Jonathan asked if installing a police call box was researched. Hannah noted that this is being discussed but a decision had not been made.

There was no public comment.

Denise moved to approve the application as presented. Anita seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

#### Administrative Matters

##### 1. Minutes

Jonathan moved to approve the minutes of September 30, 2021, as drafted. Denise seconded and the motion passed 4-1 with Sara abstaining.

The Committee adjourned at 6:55PM.