

Approved
Meeting Minutes
Hartford WRJ Design Review Committee
March 30, 2023

Members Present: Jonathan Schechtman, Larson Burns, and Sara Ferguson

Staff Present: Jo-Ann Ells, Zoning Administrator

Others Present: Helen Hong, of COVER Home Repair, Julio Alejandro Munoz, muralist, Sarah Kelly, and Kim Souza Selectboard Liaison

Jonathan opened the meeting, read the hybrid meeting script, and took a roll call.

Applications

1. Application by COVER Home Repair Inc., for a public art project/building mural, lot 46-0037-000, 158 South Main Street, White River Junction, in CB and Design Review Districts.

Helen reviewed the background of the mural design noting that a professional mural artist, Julio Alejandro Munoz, was engaged to design the mural, the intent of the mural was to create something public, not commercial, given the prominent location. She noted that the community would be engaged in the painting of the mural, and that the mural design submitted to the Committee was the 4th design based on public input. She gave a brief overview on how the mural would be funded.

There was a discussion regarding on how the mural would align with the existing elements of the building (i.e. windows and stairs). Helen confirmed that the stairs would be painted.

Helen explained that the application was reviewed by the State Department Historic Preservation and noted that an email exchange with the State was included in the application packet.

Helen stated that the section of the mural depicting a child would be on a wooden panel attached to the motor, not the brick, to give the mural depth.

Jonathan asked if the wood would degrade. Helen stated that the special mural paint would be used to protect the wood and that maintenance would be done as needed.

The Committee discussed their role reviewing the mural noting it was not to judge the artwork. Sara commented that the Committee should make sure the artwork does not create a negative experience. Larson stated that the Committee's role includes enhancing the vitality of the downtown district and improving what is there today.

All agreed that there is a benefit having art in the downtown.

Responding to a question about vandalism, Helen noted that a special paint will be used that would allow removal of any graffiti without damaging the mural.

Sara moved to approve the mural as proposed and to recommend that the Planning Commission approve the project administratively. Larson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Administrative Matters

1. Minutes

Sara moved to approve the minutes of January 26, 2023 as presented. Larson seconded, and the motion passed 3-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 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