

**DRAFT**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Hartford Design Review Committee**  
**May 19, 2022**

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

**Staff Present:** Lori Hirshfield, Planning and Development Director, and Jo-Ann Ells, Zoning Administrator

**Others Present:** Jim Pulver and Mitch Hager from Breadloaf, and Eric Bunge, Irene Greene, and James Lynch of Northern Stage.

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

Administrative Matters

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

Jim handed out a packets of drawings that matched the power point he would be reviewing.

Jim summarized the project as 24 dwelling units (7 2-bedroom, 6 1-bedroom jr. suites, and 11 studios) and a separate education space. He noted that 1.5 parking spaces would be provided per unit and additional parking spaces would be provided for the educational component and existing dwelling units at 140-146 Gates Street which is also owned by Northern Stage. In addition, Jim noted that a loading area would be provided on-site.

Jim explained that the project included the demolition of the multi-family dwelling at 178 Gates Street and an existing garage at 140-146 Gates Street.

Jonathan requested that the applicant consider keeping green space between the structure and sidewalk which would respect the existing streetscape.

Jonathan suggested that the applicant think about coordinating the window fenestration with the adjacent structures to maintain visual continuity.

Jim explained that the site does not receive a lot of sunshine and they are trying to design the building to let in a lot of light.

Denise commented that she understands the difficulty of fitting the desired design elements into a new building. She asked that the applicant look at the existing residential structures and design the building to acknowledge the residential feel of the street through shape or color theme.

Eric commented that Northern Stage wants to create a campus feel and bring activity down to the

end of Gates Street. He added that the building ties in with the block which includes the Assisted Living Facility.

Larson commented that he likes the aesthetics of the building and noted that he wondered if the educational part of the building could have more of a modern New England colonial feel and to then use some of these design features for the finishes of the residential part of the building.

Jim commented that they could look at a design similar to a meeting house with a gable roof for the educational part of the building. It was agreed that the new building should somehow speak to the gable roofs on the existing residential buildings.

Eric noted that it would be almost impossible to use the existing multi-family structure noting that the floor drops 7"- 8" in some areas. He added that the removal of the cement block garage would allow for surface parking.

Jonathan stated that he hoped the applicant would review the color and massing of the building and add design elements that speak to the existing residential structures.

Larson asked that the applicant try and reference the adjacent gable roofs at the street level of the building.

Denise suggested looking at a darker color scheme and to add design features that speak to the existing street streetscape.

Sara commented that she found the design pleasant and suggested the applicant rethink the roof slope on the educational portion of the building.

Anita stated that she still felt disillusioned by the disingenuous experience with Ken Parker regarding the demolition of 160 Gate Street. She stated that she appreciated that the applicant provided information about buildings in the entire downtown and agreed with comments about the front of the building and to minimize massing.

It was agreed that another informal meeting would be beneficial.

## 2. Minutes

Jonathan moved to approve the minutes of February 24, 2022. Larson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned.