1. Meeting Materials

Documents:

03-30-23 DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE PACKET (PDF).PDF
03-30-23 DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE AGENDA (PDF).PDF
Memorandum

To: Hartford Design Review Committee
Cc: Helen Hong, COVER Home Repair, Inc.
From: Jo-Ann Ells, Zoning Administrator
Date: March 16, 2023
Re: Application for Public Art/Building Mural

COVER Home Repair, Inc. (COVER) has provided the attached application materials for your formal review at your meeting scheduled for March 30, 2023.

COVER is requesting that you recommend that the Planning Commission approve the project administratively, without a Public Hearing, as allowed under Section 260-46 A (5) of the Zoning Regulations which states:

If after review by the Design Review Committee, the Committee determines that the changes are minor and have no adverse effect related to the goals identified in Subsection A (2), the Design Review Committee may recommend to the Planning Commission that the proposed change be approved administratively.

§ 260-46 A (2) The design goals of the Downtown White River Junction Design Review District are as follows:

a) To maintain a vibrant downtown, economically, functionally, and culturally.

b) To preserve and conserve the historic qualities of the downtown and retain a sense of place.

c) To ensure architectural and site enhancements and/or new development projects preserve and/or enhance the historic qualities of downtown.

d) To acknowledge and preserve the integrity of the built form of the downtown, including landmarks, buildings and streetscape patterns.

e) To support public and private sector design and development that is compatible with the qualities of the downtown streetscape, townscape and historic architecture.

f) To educate the public on the value of preserving and enhancing the downtown and the historic district.

g) To create suitable places for pedestrians.

h) To accommodate parking with the least impact and encourage shared parking where appropriate.
APPLICATION TO
PLANNING COMMISSION &/OR ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL ITEMS APPLICABLE AND PROVIDE THE CORRECT NUMBER OF COPIES OF THIS APPLICATION AND THE SITE PLAN OR SUBDIVISION PLAT. ABUTTING LANDOWNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY THE PLANNING/ZONING OFFICE.

1. NAME & ADDRESS OF RECORD OWNER(S)  COVER Home Repair, Inc

158 South Main Street, White River Junction, VT 05001

Deed Recorded Book ___________ Page ____________ (Available at Town Clerk's Office)

Telephone: Work 802-296-7241 x5  Cell _________________ Email Address: director@coverhomerepair.org

2. NAME & ADDRESS OF APPLICANTS(S)


Telephone: Work ___________________ Cell _________________ Email Address: ____________________________

3. NAME & ADDRESS OF APPLICANTS' CONSULTANT


Telephone: Work ___________________ Cell _________________ Email Address: ____________________________

4. PROJECT LOCATION  158 S. Main Street, White River Junction, VT 05001

5. PRESENT USE OF PROPERTY  COVER thrift store (retail) and home repair office

6. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE PROJECT (in addition, a detailed narrative must be submitted)

See attached.

7. PROJECT SIZE IN SQ. FT OR ACREAGE

Lot Width __________________________ Lot Depth __________________________

8. IS PROJECT ON TOWN WATER/SEWER? Yes _____________ No _____________ If Yes, estimated

Water Consumption/day _______________ Amount of Sewer Flow Projected _______________

Size of Closest Lines Above (water) _______________ (sewer) _______________ 

9. DESCRIBE LANDSCAPING PLAN


10. IF A BUSINESS - Present # of Employees ____________

Proposed Days & Hours of Operation ____________________________

Will you use the landfill & recycling center? Yes ________ No ____________

The main waste by-product of your business is: ____________________________
11. IF A RESTAURANT - Present seating __________________ Proposed ____________________

12. PARKING SPACES - Number to be provided __________________

13. SIGNAGE - Free Standing ____________________ Attached __________________________

14. FENCING – Location __________________________ Height ________________

15. NEAREST WATER SUPPLY FOR FIRE PROTECTION ____________________________

16. ESTIMATED VALUE OF PROPOSED WORK ________________________________

17. IS THERE AN EXISTING DRIVEWAY? _____________________________________

18. IF A SUBDIVISION - Number of New Lots to be Created _______________

   Do you request that the Town consider taking over maintenance of – Roads _____________
   Or Park/Open Space _____________________________________________________________

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ON THIS APPLICATION IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE. (This certification must be signed by lot owners and applicants).

Helen Hong 3/16/23

Applicant’s Signature Date Lot Owner’s Signature Date

Co-Applicant’s Signature Date Co-Owner’s Signature Date

The applicant retains the obligation to identify, apply for, and obtain any relevant local or state permits. Please call 802-282-6488 to speak with the State Permit Specialist

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Application to the Town of Hartford Design Review Committee
Submitted by COVER Home Repair
3/13/2023

Proposal Location: COVER Building at 158 South Main Street, south-facing brick wall

We are proposing to have a community mural installed on the south-facing wall of the COVER building. We have spoken with our neighbor at Big Fatty’s who is fully supportive of the mural.

The Process

In the fall of 2022, we began working with a muralist named Julio Alejandro Munoz (“Ragko,” https://ragkoart.com/) on a collaborative mural idea. In conversation with the artist, it was clear to us that the mural should be a community-supported and community-engaged mural given its highly visible location as one enters downtown White River Junction from Sykes Mountain Avenue. In the past, this wall has been marred with graffiti and we believe it will continue to invite graffiti as long as it remains unpainted.

In November of 2022, we held a community-inclusive event, in which ideas for the mural were discussed, sketched, and compiled into an artistic rendering. We held the event at the Center for Cartoon Studies, which has a large open space that is accessible. We promoted the event to the public. The muralist led participants through a series of prompts, including emotions evoked when thinking about White River Junction as a place and then generating drawings that depicted the emotions.

The muralist then created a second iteration of his mural, which was shared with the community in January. We shared an image of the mural and an on-line survey through Facebook (both on COVER's Facebook page and the wider Upper Valley Facebook page), the Hartford listserv, a Mailchimp email to COVER’s 3000 subscribers, outreach to Dartmouth College, and an email to the White River Junction business community. Over a four-day period, January 19 to 22, we received 142 survey responses. The response rate greatly exceeded our expectations and we decided to close the survey so that the data could be manageable in terms of size. (The survey summary is attached.)

On February 21, the muralist shared his third iteration of the mural with the community via a public Zoom session.
The proposed mural design is a fourth iteration that has centered its motivation and process in community over a four-month period, November through February.
The proposed mural will continue to be a public work of art through the collaboration and community participation that will be integral to the painting of the mural. Of the 142 survey respondents, approximately half expressed an interest in helping to paint the mural. There will be many opportunities for the public to be part of the mural painting, from the cleaning and prepping of the wall surface, to priming and helping to paint the mural under the guidance of the muralist.

Additionally, COVER will be applying for State of Vermont Better Places Program funding to help pay for the mural cost. We will be responsible for raising 1/3 of the budget cost through a crowdfunding campaign. This will further ensure community support for the mural.

**The Design**

In the words of the muralist, Julio, the mural design is meant to reflect a sense of hope, through the act of blowing air and light. The look through the window represents a deep reflection on life, rootedness, and a sense of place.

The child’s personal and special history is reflected in the woman. The mural is meant to be a celebration of life and human stories and the interconnectedness between our stories and sense of place.

The mural will be painted in parts directly on the brick wall. Some sections, such as the image of the child, will be painted on wood panels and then fastened to the wall. This will create dimensionality in that the wood panels will project slightly out from the wall.

The mural will be approximately 80-feet long and 10-feet high, on a wall that is approximately 91-feet long. Portions of the wall, such as the wall underneath the hop plants on the left-side and a portion of the building depicted in the mural design will be left unaltered.
The muralist will work directly with several existing features. These include the hop plants on the left-side, which are a remnant and ode to the time when the COVER building was Catamount Brewery. There is a catamount peaking out by the hops. The window in the mural is part of an existing window in the building. There are two smaller windows that will be incorporated into the windows of the train’s sideview. The door and staircase will be painted over as water.

In an email dated 2/2/23, Laura V. Trieschmann, who is a State Historic Preservation Officer, stated, “Based on the image of the mural design provided, we have no concerns about the painting of the brick on this side of the building. This will not have any effects to the character-defining features of the historic district.”

COVER’s Board has expressed its intention through a Board Resolution to keep the space in front of the mural accessible to the public. The existing picnic table will remain or be replaced by more natural seating areas such as granite blocks or something similar.
Mural Design Enlarged
Proposed Entry Renovation

Cover Store, White River Junction, VT

Cover, 0.56 acres
25,269 sq. ft.

South-facing brick wall
98'

Proposed rite plan

Diagram scale: 1" = 20'
Hi Helen

Based on the image of the mural design provided, we have no concerns about the painting of the brick on this side of the building. This will not have any effects to the character-defining features of the historic district.

If your plans are to change, please let me know so we can re-evaluate effects.

Many thanks and best of luck with your project. Laura

Laura V. Trieschmann
State Historic Preservation Officer
802-505-3579 cell

Thank you, Laura,

The mural would be located on the brick side of our south-wall. Attached is the first draft of the mural design. We’ve received over 140 public comments and the muralist is working on a second version. The wall is about 40 to 50’ long.

The muralist says he could leave certain sections of the wall unpainted and incorporate those areas of exposed brick into his mural design, if that would help. The brick on the other sides of the building would remain as is.
We will take a look at the guidance document that you've shared with me.

Helen

On Wed, Feb 1, 2023 at 3:55 PM Trieschmann, Laura <Laura.Trieschmann@vermont.gov> wrote:

Hi Helen,

1. There is no hard and fast rule about painting brick buildings that are historic. That said, painting directly on brick can cause maintenance issues. I have attached some guidance on that.

2. The building at 158 South Main Street is located in the White River Junction Historic District, which was updated in 2019. It is noted as resource 29, contributing to the historic district. Nomination is attached.

If you can provide me with the information related to the mural, such has where it will be painted on the building, how large/coverage, I can better evaluate if and how it might be appropriate due to the changes this building has undergone. Meaning, the building has changed some since 1908 and that provides us with opportunities. From there, my question will be: can the mural be painted on canvas or wood that is attached at a few points to the building? But lets look at where you want to put the mural and go from there.

Many thanks, Laura

Laura V. Trieschmann
State Historic Preservation Officer
802-505-3579 cell

From: Helen Hong <director@coverhomerepair.org>
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 1:26 PM
To: Amore, Richard <Richard.Amore@vermont.gov>; Trieschmann, Laura <Laura.Trieschmann@vermont.gov>
Cc: Helen Hong <director@coverhomerepair.org>
Subject: historic preservation questions

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Thank you, Richard, for your voicemail. A few additional questions. I have added Laura Trieschmann here in case Laura is better able to answer my questions.
We are in the planning stages and your answers will guide our next steps.

1. I understand that buildings that are historic may not have a mural painted directly on the brick surface. Is this the case regardless of whether or not an organization seeks Better Places crowdfunding? In other words, if we were able to raise private funds for the full cost, and no state dollars came in, are we still subject to the no-mural-on-brick rule?

2. Could someone confirm that the COVER building, located at 158 S. Main St, White River Junction, is designated as historic? I was able to find a letter notifying us of the intent (attached), but I haven’t seen a final determination letter. (I joined the organization in Sept 2021.) Please note that we are in the designated downtown zone for White River Junction.

3. Is there a process for seeking an exemption so that we can paint directly on the brick wall? If the answer is no, then we will plan for the alternative.

Richard - I have tried a few times to open the link to "Signage and Public Art on Masonry Buildings for further guidance" from the Better Places Program Guide. The link is not active, as you can see from my screenshot - attached. Could you please send me a new link or email me the guidance doc for "signage and public art on masonry buildings"?

Helen

Helen Hong (she/her)
Executive Director
COVER Home Repair & Store
158 South Main St.
White River Junction, VT 05001

www.coverhomerepair.org
helen@coverhomerepair.org

(802) 296-7241 x5
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Summarization</th>
<th>What do you like about the mural?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is this a mural you would enjoy seeing on your way into downtown WRJ?</td>
<td>Bright colors, historical allusions</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="mural_image.png" alt="Mural Image" /></td>
<td>lots of highlights</td>
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<tr>
<td>I like it - there is room to improve but it's a great start.</td>
<td>train, starburst</td>
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<td>I like it - there is room to improve but it's a great start.</td>
<td>Colors, scale, depiction of train, the light</td>
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<td>I love it! Seeing this would make my day.</td>
<td>Can we have bright without the colors being so primary? Mix something original that gives a colorful, historical elements incorporated</td>
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<td>I like it - there is room to improve but it's a great start.</td>
<td>Color and vibrance</td>
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<td>I feel pretty neutral.</td>
<td>the train &amp; the gates building are recognizable. The use of purple is striking. Perhaps use r</td>
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<td>I love it! Seeing this would make my day.</td>
<td>colorful the colors and train</td>
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<td>No way - start all over.</td>
<td>The train</td>
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<td>Just now sure what that first panel is about?</td>
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<td>I love it! Seeing this would make my day.</td>
<td>Colorful</td>
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<td>No way - start all over.</td>
<td>Love the color and different scenes included.</td>
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<td>I like it - there is room to improve but it's a great start.</td>
<td>trains to maintain history of WRJ</td>
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<td>I like it! Seeing this would make my day.</td>
<td>Multiple colors</td>
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<td>No way - start all over.</td>
<td>Love everything but the left side - It's not clear to me what is happening there. A silhouette</td>
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| I like it - there is room to improve but it's a great start. | I like the steam engine train. That should be more prominent, as it is an integral part of WRJ.
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I feel pretty neutral.
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I love it! Seeing this would make my day.

Relevant and colorful representation
keeping true to WRJ heritage
The vibrant colors and the nod to WRJ
Colorful
Brightness!
Major artful piece of work - says we care
I really enjoy the layers of work, I particularly enjoy the color choices of the rolling mountains.
All the colors. IDE™ is absolutely fitting for WRJ.

Bright and colorful
It reflects on the location, history, and community of our village. I'm not sure about the sca
WRJ history + colorfulness
It doesn't feature pot
The vibrant and bright colors! and the sense of motion
color, graphics, modern design with historic images
Better than Graffiti!
The color, the vibrancy, abstract but traditional enough (the train) to please most people
bright colors
Great color. Love the train!
colorful, bold, graphic; eye catching, love the train-site specific
Vibrant bold colors
Colors and vertical lines. Love the half in the foreground.
I like the colors and the way it is structured. The bears of the sun in the far corner touching
color is nice and composition is good
Colorful, abstract, doesn't hit you over the head with anything
bright colors and train
Color and theme
Vibrant colors; beautiful depiction of the hearts of this town;
I like the train part, hard to see the right end of it in this photo, but like the idea of a child w
the color
The colors in the first frame.
I like everything from the town hall-looking building and to the right of it. I can tell what it is:
train, river, landscape - reflecting the area

Color! The railroad motif.
So colourful!
The person figure is vague so could be a person of different races/not necessarily a white p

I like the shading and the train
The color and the visual message.
The train car but it looks like PRR not VT Central
I love the right side with the deck, train, and child

I like the bright colors and the division of the mural by the lines emanating from the light.
colorful, people & history suggested
**What could be done differently or better (or explained)?**

- I don’t know about better, but I can’t interpret the left panel. The color is fine, but what is it?
  - No
- A graphic, more details.
  - Yes
- I don’t get what the left half represents.
  - Yes
- Perspective is off on the train, especially.
  - No
- Don’t know what the panel on the left about?
  - No
- It’s hard to tell what the images are on the right end, especially on the right end, I can barely see it.
  - Yes
- The thing on the left does not look like a woman. Couldn’t tell what it was until I read the description.
  - No
- What is the blob on the left?
  - Yes
  - No
- Can’t see the panel with child, so can’t comment. Don’t care for lady opening door, or understand at all.
  - No
- I can’t tell what the purple thing on the left is.
  - Yes
- Maybe add a catamount.
  - No
- Move the train section to be closest to the road.
  - No
- It would be nice to have a plaque or something mounted that explains the mural. Once I could read it.
  - Yes
- The left side looks like a blob of leftover paint trying to fill a space. Tree? Smoke? Significance?
  - Yes
- The office thing I recognize in the mural is the train. Everything else is recognizable to me. The white house?
  - Yes
- I don’t know what is in the first frame. A person?
  - No
- Is it not sure what the image on the left is? Is it a person from behind looking through a door? If it is a person, then this would be a better fit. I think it is a head.
  - No
- Colors are too bold.
  - No
- I don’t care for the first scene, I’m not even sure what it is supposed to be.
  - No
- What is by on either side of the train.
  - No
- That first panel.
  - No
- More nature needed.
  - No
- The first section - human in doorway doesn’t feel as fleshed out as the right side of the mural.
  - No
- Not sure what the two images flanking the train scene are or represent.
  - No
- What is the large purple shape to the left?
  - No
- Maybe instead of what’s on the left side, more of a scene, like a field of flowers?
  - No
- I love the rich, vibrant colors, but what is the meaning of the figure on the far left? I don’t like it.
  - No

**Would you like to be invited to a Q&A with the muralist by Zoom?**

- Yes
- No

**Would you consider helping with the mural?**

- Yes
- No
I have no idea what the first panel is supposed to be. A random person?

More whimsical
What is the person opening the door? Yes
The panel I see on the left is unclear. What is it?

Nothing
Maybe more social justice oriented.
I don't see a story or message being conveyed. I would love something that made everyone feel.

Not sure.

put something more relevant on teh 1st panel
The left hand side panel with the purple blob is nothingness
Is it's very simple, more detail please! It's content is somewhat boring. The train is the only.
The head and the final image on the right which is probably sun's rays but looks like a shattered surf
What else makes WJU unique... train station, river etc?

I don't get it. The small size but none of the rest of the image conveys any meaning to me.

First window looks like fast food drive through what is it?
I can't make out... what the left most panel is, a person?
I don't know what the middle rectangle is supposed to be- my first impression is cell phone which will not clear that the mural supports community building... doesn't seem to reflect your mission.

I'm not really sure what I'm looking at besides the train. Be nice to reflect the diversity of the area, etc.

I can't identify what is on the left side... smoke?

No. Install a vine

No. The profile in the foreground is difficult to interpret? Is it a person?

Remove the train. We've enough reminders of the trains via 5 winter months full of overnight idli

Don't know; can't determine the context from this tiny photo

No. More trains. Let's celebrate the art and theater here in this town!

I am really getting tired of murals... they are usually visually intrusive, and rarely easy on the eyes

Add bikes, books, flora, etc and clarify that muddled image

The figure at the left end of the mural is vague, not well defined- is this a person? a cloud? it does no

I don't understand what the left hand side of the mural is about! also the kaleidoscope of color on it

Yes. The first panel looks like a blob. I'd rather see real images.

Don't understand the child or the old person... what's the door trying to tell us? nostalgia? don't love

More abstract, movement in the drawing

Some words would be nice, I would love to have this done with youth etc.

I was unsure of the content on the left side. I read the explanation but wouldn't have known otherwise.
left side should be more in proportion to the right
a little more nature involved
I'm not sure what the panel to the far left is.
My preference is to evoke the past - but that's me. 110 years ago there was a roundhouse on the
The panel furthest to the left, I feel like I'm missing what's going on there
Would love to know if there's a statement as to what response you are hoping it will invite or is it just for color and beautification
I don't understand the first person. Is it the back of their head? I would emphasize the mountains
See above comments. Plus; THANK YOU! We're all very excited for this!
It feels like there is maybe a bit too much going on. But it's also hard to see when I'm only seeing a snip
The left side is a bit muddy/boring compared to the right. And it seems like some other exciting and
I just can't tell exactly what the purple in the foreground is - I am assuming it's a person
the left end panel looks a little ominous
Do not know what the purple image on mural left is?
The collage of elements on the far side is a bit too literal. Something a little more surreal with elements
all parts of the mural is really cool!
maybe tone down the color brightness just a bit
besides the train, the rest of the image is not clear
Not sure that it needs to be different
I don't care for the left side, the woman with door, what is that supposed to represent? It isn't clear and
not crazy about the execution of it either. But hard to really get a good look at it in the photo above.
I have no idea what everything before the town hall building is supposed to be. I think its a person and No
colors are way too bright - they do not fit in with the town or the region; also, why the shadow person
The whole left side needs to be explained. I have no idea what it is trying to show. No idea
More details in some of the panes, like the pane right of the person
This doesn't really convey the theme of & togetherness & to me, perhaps because there is only one big person. My eye is drawn to the large red and turquoise "window" image (think it's a window), which isn't actually that interesting to look at as compared to the part with the
The Hartford Design Review Committee will meet on Thursday, March 30, 2023, beginning at 5:00 P.M. to consider the following Application and Administrative Matters.

This meeting will be conducted in person at Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, White River Junction, Vermont. In addition, you may join the meeting remotely as follows:

Microsoft Teams meeting
Join on your computer, mobile app or room device
Click here to join the meeting
Meeting ID: 275 547 724 867
Passcode: JuTjMG
Download Teams | join on the web
Or call in (audio only)
+1 802-377-3677,409146123#
1 802 377 3677
Phone Conference ID: 409 146 123#

If you cannot access this meeting notice electronically or if you are having difficulty connecting to the meeting, please email Jo-Ann Ells at jells@hartford-vt.org

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.

Administrative Matters

1. Minutes of January 26, 2023

Information is available for review at the Department of Planning & Development Services, Hartford Town Hall, 171 Bridge Street, Room 205, WRJ (802) 295-3075.