

Sprinkler Variance Committee
Meeting Minutes
8/7/2020

Washington County Mental Health 34 Barre St

Attendees:

Mary Moulton, Mike Curtis, Kieth Grier; WCMH, Robert Gowans; Fire Chief, Dan Richardson and Lauren Hierl; City Counsel, Jay Ancel and Michael Vitti; Black River Design, Stephen Connor; Connor Construction, Chris Lumbra; Building Inspector

Mr. Lumbra provided introduction and overview of the sprinkler ordinance and variance request.

- Sprinkler is required by Montpelier ordinance. It is not required by VT life safety code.

Ms. Moulton provided an overview of planned WCMH programming for the building:

- The building will better serve clients with mobility challenges than the current 3 story building it replaces.
- The front of the building will provide office space, the middle will be programming and the rear will be an apartment.
- Sprinkler installation is cost prohibitive, and if required would result in the elimination of the apartment.
- A staff assistant will be present to assist the apartment tenants during daytime hours.

Mr. Ancel described the fire and life safety features of the project:

- The mixed occupancies will be separated by 1 hour fire rated assemblies with each having direct exits to the exterior.
- The apartment will have code compliant egress windows.
- The building exterior is non-combustible construction.
- There is good fire department access to the building
- A code compliant vent hood with fire suppression will be installed in the food service kitchen.
- The project will comply with all adopted fire and life safety codes, as well as the 2010 ADA.
- Fire extinguishers will be provided throughout.
- A full manual fire alarm will be provided that will also monitor the kitchen hood.
- Sprinkler cost has been estimated at \$70,000.

Counsellor Richardson asked if tenants would be provided with orientation regarding fire safety and escape in the apartment. Ms. Moulton and Mr. Grier confirmed that this would happen.

Chief Gowans and Inspector Lumbra stated that they both supported the request. Counsellor Hierl moved to approve the request and Counsellor Richardson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to approve the variance request.