

Calais Design Advisory Board

Kents Corner Design Control District

Applicant: Janet Ancel and Stephen Reynes

Site Visit and Review: May 31, 2020

Recommendations to Development Review Board: June 16, 2020

The Kents Corner Design Control District was established by the Town of Calais to ensure the continued preservation of the rural character and historic resources of one of Vermont's first historic districts, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in the early 1970's. The District's listing was updated in 2006, and in 2008 the Calais Selectboard adopted a set of design guidelines which have since been the standard for property owners proposing any change to the landscape or historic structures around Kents Corner and the Old West Church.

Applicants Janet Ancel and Stephen Reynes propose building a smaller house for themselves on a subdivided parcel of 3 acres of their larger property on Old West Church Rd, above Kents Corner. The Design Advisory Board was asked to provide an informal advisory site visit with the owner to respond to the design before its formal submission. Members John McCullough, Kurt Janson and David Schutz reviewed plans, elevations and a site plan and answered questions on site May 22nd. Designer David Weir updated his design documents the following week, and the DAB met for its formal site review with the owner, her designer and neighbor Craig Line on Sunday, May 31st. Members McCullough, Janson and Schutz were joined at this meeting by new member Ryan Edwards.

At our site review we were shown a slightly new location with the house and garage approximately 20 feet further from the road and with other changes to the design that had been discussed at the previous consultation. Below are our findings and recommendation.

- New construction in the district is expected "to coexist harmoniously with the historic structures". We find that the proposed structure conforms in massing and overall design with that of historic buildings in the district.
- We also find the proposed structures conform to guidelines that call for traditional orientation of the entry to the road, use of historic materials, textures and siding, retaining the historic ratio of window to wall patterns, and a roof with a design that is similar in scale and form to historic structures in the district. Doors and windows also are arranged and are similar in proportion to those prevalent in the district. The proposed colors are also within the acceptable range of those used within the district. The proposed porch depth was reduced in submitted drawings since our meeting to allow more natural light. We find this change to be acceptable.
- We also approve the siting of this new structure, which observes the historic orientation to the road and settlement pattern of existing structures in the Kents Corner district.

- The design makes reference to the many story and a half Greek revival or vernacular farmhouses that can be found in the district, but also does not seek to imitate. That is what our guidelines suggest.

Based on these findings, the Design Advisory Board recommends acceptance of the design of this new structure as proposed for inclusion in the Kents Corner Design Control District.

For the Calais Design Advisory Board,

Ryan Edwards
Kurt Janson
John McCullough
David Schutz

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