

Burlington Development Review Board

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Leo Sprinzen
Miles Waite
Marina Campbell, (Alternate)
Vacant, (Alternate)



BURLINGTON DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

Tuesday, August 19, 2025, 5:00 PM

MINUTES

Hybrid & In Person (at 645 Pine Street) Meeting

Board Members Present: Caitlin Halpert, Evan Gould (5:20 PM), Geoff Hand, Sean McKenzie, Leo Sprinzen, Miles Waite (Remote), and Marina Campbell (Remote)

Board Members Absent: AJ LaRosa

Staff Members Present: Scott Gustin, Mary O'Neil, and Joseph Cava

Staff Members Absent: Garret King

- I. **Agenda**
- II. **Communications**
- III. **Minutes**
- IV. **Public Hearing**

1. ZP-25-325; 322-324 St. Paul Street (RC, Ward 6) Champlain Housing Trust / Taryn Barrett

Proposed change of use from group home to community house including renovation of existing building and construction of addition. (Project Manager, Scott Gustin)

Michael Monte, Kirsten Merriman Shapiro, Taryn Barrett, Bram Kleppner, David Conger, Amie Conger, Katie Tormey, Donna Roberts, Jenn Townley, Sharon Bushor, and Mary Tierney: Sworn in.

Caitlin Halpert: Can you tell us about this project?

Michael Monte: We have owned the property for several years. Previously, it operated as a under a property management company. The new use will provide mental health services in addition to housing for adult children. Adult children do well in a group setting because there is more support in a community setting. This will be a much better use of this property.

Kirsten Merriman Shapiro: We are here tonight to talk about this project and the direction we are taking this property in.

Caitlin Halpert: This project seems pretty straightforward.

Taryn Barrett: We have a landscaping plan in the works to evaluate existing species and find out what would work in the future.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any questions or comments from the board?

Sean McKenzie: Can you tell us about the planned route for egress?

Taryn Barrett: We are retaining the building on the far left to preserve the character of the site. There is a door with direct access to the ADA apartments from the existing parking lot. Apartments will be retrofitted as part of this renovation.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any additional questions or comments from the board?

Miles Waite: Nope.

Caitlin Halpert: Hearing none, are there any question or comments from the public?

Bram Kleppner: I served in the Vermont House of Representatives, and I listened closely to neighboring concerns about this property. After listening, I am in support of this project while recognizing the neighboring concerns. There is a disconnect between the mental health field and neighborhood safety. The impacts of this project will not cause negative impacts to the neighborhood as compared to previous projects at this site.

David Conger: My wife and I are neighboring residents. We are in support of this project, however, poor management has led to concerns supported by excessive police presence at this site. What rails can be included to keep this project on track? Once an approval goes through, the groups and people we contact are Howard Center and the police. This is a Champlain Housing Trust property, and between the existing/proposed uses, we would like to see the dynamic changed to support a project like this.

Caitlin Halpert: From the supporting materials we are seeing, there is nothing concrete to support this.

David Conger: There were several nuisance calls in the report.

Amie Conger: We support this project, however we need to know that there will be safeguards in place to protect neighboring residents.

Katie Tormey: We are a parent led group supporting residents with mental health services. The State has had to rely on the support of mutual housing services, which are often temporary and not a long-term solution. Those of us present who are retired and aging in place do not have the resources to take care of our adult children with developmental challenges. We thank you for your consideration.

Donna Roberts: I am a mother with a 27-year-old child with developmental disabilities. Until recently, supportive housing like this has not been allowed. This extraordinary project will allow the care of our children experiencing developmental challenges. This improves the quality of life for our children, which would otherwise be restricted to the foster care system. Our adult children have skills that otherwise extend beyond the neuro synchronies of normal individuals. I have worked with the developmentally challenged chapter of the Champlain Housing Trust, and we just want our children to have the same opportunities as anyone else.

Jenn Townley: They surveyed us, our children, and we have gotten to learn more about what is needed.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any additional questions or comments from the public?

Sharon Bushor: I would be remiss if I did not admit that I learned a lot from the public speaking at this meeting. This shared living experience is an excellent model to strive for. For those with enforcement concerns, the pod project on Elmwood is an excellent example of unanticipated problems created by any new development. These nitty gritty details need to be worked out over time. Other project facets like replacing existing windows with fiberglass replacement units to

support the historic nature of the property while encouraging new development. I do not know if it is necessary to remove an existing cedar hedge, so I would like to know more about the importance of shade and trees concerning our planetary warming. We should do our best to retain existing trees and mature plantings.

Caitlin Halpert: We did review the landscaping plan.

Scott Gustin: We have one more person online wishing to speak.

Mary Tierney: I am concerned about the long-term maintenance of this property. We are abutting property owners and we would like to know more about the long-term policy making to create a consistent, neat, and orderly landscape.

Caitlin Halpert: Thank you, is there anything else? Does anyone else wish to speak?

Evan Gould: I am familiar with this project.

Taryn Barrett: Responding to the landscaping concerns, we are removing the hedge for the proposed patio for easier access into the building. This is addressed in the civil plans. This also creates an outdoor space with continual surface that makes it easier for ADA individuals. The landscaping also creates a water retention barrier so runoff will not be an issue. The sprinkler system also provides proper egress.

Mary Tierney: Previously landscaping and property maintenance was substandard. Can you expand on how you are going to keep this in line?

Kirsten Merriman Shapiro: Champlain Housing Trust will be the landlord and property maintenance team. Fencing will be used to help clarify the property lines as well as the retention of mature plantings. We want it to be tidy and manageable which has gained neighboring support.

Leo Sprinzen: Will there be support staff?

Kirsten Merriman Shapiro: There are intentional spaces for the future residents including communal spaces. This will range from medium to high needs. A service provider will come in to support this, but at this time, we cannot make any precise descriptions. Staff will also provide structure for residents.

Caitlin Halpert: Hearing no additional questions or comments, we will close the hearing on this item and deliberate later on.

2. ZP-25-306; 204 Pearl Street (RH, Ward 3) Pearl Union SRO Housing, LP / Donal Dugan

Proposed change of use from boarding house to family shelter with associated renovations and site improvements. (Project Manager, Mary O'Neil)

Michael Monte, Paul Dragon, Donal Dugan, Andy Arp, and Liz Segal: Sworn in.

Caitlin Halpert: Can you tell us about this project?

Michael Monte: Here is another project for a change of use. The Single Room Occupancy (SRO) have not worked well under the existing environment. We previously shut down the use at this site because it became unsustainable. Instead of changing the use, we are adapting it to fit the needs of this site as well as the needs of the population that will inhabit it. Have you heard anything from the Mayor's office regarding this project?

Scott Gustin: Yes, I heard from them a few minutes ago.

Michael Monte: Maybe this project can be approved under certain conditions.

Donal Dugan: The exterior physical changes are minimal. We are removing some stairs, bringing the railings up to code, and installing a fenced in play yard. Cold weather is around the corner, so we would like to get this project moving.

Paul Dragon: The Williston shelter was closed previously. This will be a high barrier shelter with two staff present.

Michael Monte: The Champlain Inn was a good example of a project that the Champlain Housing Trust has taken over. We also have two other properties up in St. Albans in addition to the pod shelter on Elmwood Avenue.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any questions or comments from the board?

Sean McKenzie: The existing railings look like over styled railings. Can you speak on design choices?

Donal Dugan: One of my biggest concerns is safety. We are sensitive to the historic nature of this property, but if it is rotted, we will need to upgrade it for safety for the children that will be present on site.

Sean McKenzie: It is a lovely building. It would be nice to see more detail.

Leo Sprinzen: Can you expand on what will be done with the lead paint?

Donal Dugan: We are conscious of this, but it will not be effective to remove in its entirety.

Paul Dragon: There will be background checks to ensure the safety of residents.

Mary O'Neil: Under the allowable review, I highlighted the locations of the condensers being within a setback. I caution the applicant to revise this.

Donal Dugan: We have low-sloped roofs that can be utilized to relocate the condensers. An existing porch is not being considered because it attracts nuisances.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any additional questions or comments from the board? Hearing none, are there any question or comments from the public?

Andy Arp: I was surprised from comments raised by other neighbors, that other Champlain Housing Trust properties have attracted similar issues. We would like to see the building used as intended rather than trying out this or that.

Liz Segal: We are working with the Champlain Housing Trust to understand the impacts that this project will have on this neighborhood. This has led to a decline in our properties. I do not have a lot of faith seeing what we have seen in the past.

Michael Monte: We have over 375 properties. Many of these properties were not in good shape and we are working through this. It is difficult to monitor these properties on a routine basis. This is the best use of this property, given the prior existing issues.

Evan Gould: The removal of SRO is unfortunate given the usefulness of this housing type.

Michael Monte: We are moving to a much better system to manage our properties. We are a small organization.

Liz Segal: We have lost tenants because of the condition of SRO properties like this. It is a shame if it does not work, and we are afraid if it does not work out.

Andy Arp: The site and house has been difficult to manage in the past.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any additional questions or comments from the public? Hearing none, we will close the hearing on this item and deliberate later on.

V. Certificate of Appropriateness

1. ZP-25-197; 93-97 North Street (NMU, Ward 3) 3G, LLC / Michael Alvanos

Proposed amendment to ZP-24-253 for an increase in number of previously approved residential dwelling units for a total of 17. (Project Manager, Scott Gustin)

Michael Alvanos, Kirsten Isgro, and Sharon Bushor: Sworn in.

Caitlin Halpert: Can you tell us about this project?

Michael Alvanos: This is a redevelopment project from a previous proposal made before this board last year. The number of residential dwelling units has increased by decreasing the size of previously proposed units to create smaller units. The building is the exact same as previously proposed. A portion of the building is in extreme disrepair and will be demolished to make room for the proposed addition.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any questions or comments from the board?

Geoff Hand: Do you have a response to staff comments concerning parking?

Michael Alvanos: There will be bike parking in the rear. We are also working out the details for landscaping.

Scott Gustin: A TDM plan is also needed.

Michael Alvanos: This is a first for me to understand how to meet this requirement, so we are working through it.

Caitlin Halpert: Do you expect design changes to accommodate accessibility?

Michael Alvanos: Yes, we have some ground floor units proposed.

Geoff Hand: Seems appropriate.

Sean McKenzie: There is quite a lot to get through.

Scott Gustin: It will need to meet the basic conditions of approval.

Michael Alvanos: I would like to see a recommendation of approval given the size and scale of this project.

Kirsten Isgro: I am in support of this project. I have a question about fencing. The existing fencing is in dire need of replacement to prevent lights from the parking lot shining into neighboring residences. Will it be the same footprint?

Michael Alvanos: Yes, the existing barn is being demolished to accommodate the new addition.

Sharon Bushor: I spoke on this during the first meeting this item was heard at last year. To change from two to three bedroom apartments to studio apartments, seems like it would inhibit families from finding housing in Burlington. I believe in having housing that supports all types of family structures.

Michael Alvanos: We need to recognize that folks are transitioning from, institutionalized living to independent living and do not need the excess space. We are excited about this project.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any additional questions or comments from the board?

Evan Gould: Given the requirement for a TDM plan, I highly recommend increasing the number of bicycle parking spaces.

Caitlin Halpert: Hearing no additional questions or comments, we will close the hearing on this item and deliberate later on.

2. ZP-25-312; 2 Starr Farm Beach (RL, Ward 4) Daniel M Boardman Rev Trust / Daniel Boardman

Proposed demolition of existing seasonal camp to construct a new house on existing footprint with full foundation. (Project Manager, Mary O'Neil)

Daniel Boardman, owner, present.

Caitlin Halpert: Can you tell us about this project?

Daniel Boardman: There is a long history of Starr Farm Beach. This is a multi-generational property. I think the proposal is straightforward.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any questions or comments from the board? Hearing no additional questions or comments, we will close the hearing on this item and deliberate later on.

3. ZP-25-170; 196 South Willard Street (I, Ward 8) Purple Door Collaborative, LLC / Lars Cartwright

Proposed conversion of carriage barn to one new residential unit. (Project Manager, Mary O'Neil)

Bob Schatz: Sworn in.

Caitlin Halpert: This seems relatively straightforward, but can you tell us about this project?

Bob Schatz: This is an adaptive reuse of an existing carriage barn.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any questions or comments from the board? Hearing none, we will close the hearing on this item and deliberate later on.

VI. Adjournment

Hearing closed at 6:35 PM.



Alexander J. LaRosa, Chair of Development Review Board

9-2-25

Date

Joseph H. Cava

9-2-25

Joseph H. Cava, Permitting & Inspections Permit Technician

Date

Plans may be viewed upon request by contacting the Department of Permitting & Inspections between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Participation in the DRB proceeding is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal. Please note that ANYTHING submitted to the Zoning office is considered public and cannot be kept confidential. This may not be the final order in which items will be heard. Please view final Agenda, at www.burlingtonvt.gov/dpi/drb/agendas or the office notice board, one week before the hearing for the order in which items will be heard.

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