

Burlington Development Review Board

Department of Permitting & Inspections

645 Pine Street

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Chase Taylor, (Alternate)



BURLINGTON DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

Tuesday, December 16, 2025, 5:00 PM

MINUTES

Hybrid & In Person (at 645 Pine Street) Meeting

Board Members Present: Caitlin Halpert, Evan Gould (5:05 PM), Sean McKenzie, Leo Sprinzen, Miles Waite (Remote), and Marina Campbell (Remote, 5:05 PM)

Board Members Absent: AJ LaRosa, Geoff Hand, and Chase Taylor

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

Staff Members Absent: Collin Naheedy

- I. Agenda
- II. Communications
- III. Minutes
- IV. Certificate of Appropriateness

1. ZP-25-442; 351 North Avenue (NAC-CR, Ward 7) 375 North Avenue, LLC / Ben Frye

Proposed revision to requirements of the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan for Cambrian Rise development. (Project Manager, Scott Gustin)

Eric Farrell, owner, present, Michael Monte, Kirsten Merriman Shapiro, Sharon Bushor, and Cindy Reid: Sworn in.

Caitlin Halpert: Can you tell us about this revision including the proposed changes?

Eric Farrell: Cambrian Rise is currently constructing affordable housing units. We are looking for an exemption to the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan for the building that is currently being constructed.

Scott Gustin: It is not exempt due to the maximum parking waiver.

Michael Monte: If we are retroactively enforcing this, then it needs to be considered that this is for affordable housing. We work with and support these families and at risk individuals. We manage these buildings and properties and rents must be stabilized to meet the affordable housing criteria under inclusionary zoning. This is one of the challenges of being a property manager. We do not dictate what types of vehicles our tenants could have or not have, and most of our tenants do not have vehicles or can afford services like Carshare. The money going into a TDM plan could be better utilized with other services like the food drives for our tenants. This is why exemptions like this exist.

Scott Gustin: There have been three project wide amendments since this project's inception. These project wide amendments encapsulate this whole property including all the buildings within the

Cambrian Rise development. The affordable housing component was included in the project wide amendments, including the maximum parking waiver that required a TDM plan.

Eric Farrell: These buildings should be looked at independently as they are completed and occupied.

Scott Gustin: Individual buildings may be occupied while the project remains underway due to the phasing plan.

Caitlin Halpert: It counts as part of this proposal.

Michael Monte: An exemption for affordable housing is important for evaluating transportation. It seems pretty straightforward for the requirements from a management perspective. We are fully managing the site, education, and services for our tenants.

Eric Farrell: We do get a 45% credit for the inclusionary zoning for affordable housing, which is why it should be exempt.

Evan Gould: Even a singular building with a certain number of affordable dwelling units is still required to have a TDM plan. The exemption is for a building with at least 75% affordable housing under the inclusionary zoning criteria.

Michael Monte: We are committed to affordable housing. I do not understand what the zoning requirements are for this.

Evan Gould: If this project was completely comprised of affordable housing under inclusionary zoning, then exemptions would apply. The PUD encapsulates multiple buildings under the Cambrian Rise development.

Michael Monte: The portions of this project being reviewed for the TDM plan are affordable though.

Scott Gustin: There are three project-wide approvals related to the Cambrian Rise development and include these affordable housing structures.

Eric Farrell: What is the requirement?

Scott Gustin: I understand that TDM plans can be a pain for applicants. They require time, money, and effort.

Caitlin Halpert: Our review is guided by whatever the ordinance says at the time of the application's submittal and are held accountable to it.

Kirsten Merriman Shapiro: Does the TDM plan take into account affordable housing?

Evan Gould: The exemptions are narrowly prescribed.

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

Sean McKenzie: To apply the TDM plan, you are saying that this is a hindrance to your project?

Michael Monte: Yes, this is a hard time in the community right now to have affordable rentals. The increased costs make it difficult for our tenants to get around. The goal would be for this money be earmarked elsewhere than a tedious TDM plan.

Caitlin Halpert: Can you tell us about the structure for evaluating the TDM plan?

Scott Gustin: There is a menu of options compared to this project's original TDM plan.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any additional questions or comments from the board? Hearing none, are there any questions or comments from members of the public in attendance or online?

Sharon Bushor: I do not live in this Ward, but I was on the City Council during the time of the inception of this project. The structure for affordable housing is consideration for making this process less difficult. The applicant was asking for reduced commitment from ten years to seven years. There has been no implementation of free bus passes. Listening to this board and participants, I work for the federal government now. The free bus passes should be considered as a viable solution. Residents of these affordable housing units need access to public transportation so they can access employment and services opportunities. I would like to see this reported so the perception aligns with the exemption criteria.

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

Cindy Reid: I manage Cathedral Square and we manage at risk populations with severe housing, financial, and employment needs. The PUD assertion regarding this project is cost prohibitive to the mission of our organization. There are two separate classifications, and securement of capital for development is better served elsewhere. Early interventions for at risk community members is just one of the helpful services that we offer members of our community. How to define and delegate a project's PUD is creating financial instability and we would appreciate your thoughtful consideration. We do not need to make this process more difficult than it already is.

Michael Monte: We are not stepping away from outreach or consideration. The expenses have dramatically increased and made it difficult to break even. We wish we had more money to put into these outreach resources.

Evan Gould: Do you know how many of your residents receive free bus passes?

Michael Monte: No, I am not sure.

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

2. ZP-25-577; 189-191 North Champlain Street (RM, Ward 2) Trans Property Holdings, LLC / Michael Alvanos

Proposed reconstruction of a six-unit residential fire damaged structure with modern amenities and site improvements. (Project Manager, Mary O'Neil)

Tony Trans, owner, present, Michael Alvanos, Jonathan Rowe, and Sharon Bushor: Sworn in.

Caitlin Halpert: Can you tell us about this project including the proposed changes?

Michael Alvanos: There was an extensive fire at this property, but I am not sure when.

Mary O'Neil: The fire occurred in March 2024.

Michael Alvanos: The structure received extensive water damage to resolve the fire. The application before you is to return the six residential dwelling units back to the property with additional building and site improvements. Some of these site improvements include repaving and striping the parking area, a new recycling/trash enclosure and rehabilitations to meet Vermont energy codes. The renovated building will also meet Vermont fire safety codes. Essentially, the building's exterior will be re-sheathed. The current proposal is for wooden clapboard siding, but the owner is also exploring

the use of fiber cement board siding. There are some architectural details and ornamentation that we will hold onto and repurpose. We do not propose to deteriorate the building's existing architectural merit.

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

Sean McKenzie: Are you refurbishing the architectural details? What is beneath the existing vinyl siding?

Michael Alvanos: Yes, it is wooden clapboard siding beneath the existing vinyl.

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

Jonathan Rowe: I had a question about the responsibility of understanding where the structure's location is in proximity to the existing property line?

Caitlin Halpert: This board does not engage in boundary line disputes.

Jonathan Rowe: We are worried about parking beneath the eaves of the structure which abuts up against the property line. We were not aware at the time of our purchase that the neighboring property could be renovated. Does a side setback not apply to this project?

Caitlin Halpert: The existing structure is a pre-existing non-conformity.

Jonathan Rowe: So the current vacant status of the property does not change the structure's requirement for a side yard setback?

Evan Gould: Correct, the existing building is grandfathered as a pre-existing non-conformity.

Mary O'Neil: Most surveyors will not do work in this area because of the challenges of identifying the existing property lines.

Jonathan Rowe: Are we stuck with this issue?

Mary O'Neil: We recognize the unique challenges that properties like this present. The installation of preventative measures like snow guards or gutters would not be prohibited to manage these types of challenges. It is important to note that the physical presence of the existing building is not changing. The massing, proportion, and building footprint will remain the same. It is allowable under historic rehabilitation standards to retain the previous number of existing residential dwelling units.

Jonathan Rowe: I would be interested in solutions to negate the existing circumstances.

Mary O'Neil: The gable roof is a newer addition. The historic roof was flat. An asphalt roof is proposed; it will not effect snow slide like a standing seam roof.

Michael Alvanos: I do not have an argument against affordable housing.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any additional questions or comments from members of the public in attendance or online?

Sharon Bushor: Sorry, I did not think an affordable unit was going to come up. I feel that it is important to have affordable units and should be supported given the complexities of our current housing market.

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

3. **ZP-25-527; 116 Sunset Cliff Road (RL, Ward 4) Catherina O'Connell / Thomas Ellis**
Proposed reconstruction of existing, deteriorated, retaining wall to stabilize the slope. (Project Manager, Kirk Dressing)

Caitlin Halpert: I do not see anyone present for this item. Is there anyone present online?

Scott Gustin: No, I do not see anyone online to speak on this item. This item can be pushed back to the first meeting in January 2026.

Caitlin Halpert: Do we need to make a motion?

Scott Gustin: No.

V. **Master Sign Plan**

1. **ZPS-25-52; 110 Institute Road (I, Ward 4) City School Department / Administrative Offices / EED / Marty Spaulding**
Proposed Master Sign plan for Burlington High School/Burlington Technical Center. (Project Manager, Mary O'Neil)
Marty Spaulding and Brian Leet: Sworn in.

Caitlin Halpert: Can you tell us about this project including the proposed changes?

Marty Spaulding: I am a former facilities director.

Brian Leet: Generally, the high school will include administrative facility offices in addition to the technical center. The fire department requires extensive signage for traffic pattern flows and safety. It is important to note that the mural discussed during Design Advisory Board (DAB) proceedings has not been contextualized. This will likely require a separate zoning process. There are three elements under zoning's review. The prescriptive standards for directional signage within the site through multiple locations. The directional signs that regulate traffic into one location for cohesive movement. Additional signs for vehicle specific traffic like buses will be implemented during specific times during the day. Essentially, there will be two posts securing a series of directional signs.

Caitlin Halpert: If all this information were constrained to one sign, it would make traffic management difficult.

Brian Leet: Correct.

Leo Sprinzen: So it is modular.

Brian Leet: Yes.

Sean McKenzie: Have you evaluated other campus' to understand what other institutional facilities are doing to regulate the flow of traffic?

Brian Leet: This allows us to use a flexible model to work from for a campus setting.

Mary O'Neil: If you made it through the staff report, congratulations. The site under the regulations are limiting on freestanding signs. One freestanding sign could be used, but this complicates the traffic flow.

Brian Leet: The other signs also follow similar categories. The monument sign will include an electronic display.

Mary O'Neil: The requested location for the monument sign is an opportunity under the Master Sign plan for variability in sign location: one of the discretionary options available to the Board.

Brian Leet: The ordinance allows up to six feet, which is two-dimensional criteria. We thought the sign as presented provides a good overview for the size and scale of the building and property. Currently the construction fence limits the view of the monument sign's proposed location. The master sign plan requests an allowance appropriate to the standards for lighting and cycle time of messages. The cycle time would be roughly 15 seconds. The cycle would appropriate emojis and school logos for discretionary review. It is good for community feedback and communication.

Evan Gould: Up to 20% would be the allowance of alternative compliance.

Mary O'Neil: Correct.

Brian Leet: Sign measurements and the realities are contingent on what would be allowable.

Caitlin Halpert: Brightness of the screened lighting is a factor of consideration.

Mary O'Neil: This is a type of lighting is regulated by the ordinance. The specific items that will require the Board's discretion under Alternative Compliance provision. The review of this starts on pages eight and nine of the staff report.

Evan Gould: If you find what is granted is not sufficient, the Planning Commission can review this for changes.

Leo Sprinzen: What is the level of illumination during daytime hours?

Brian Leet: During this time of year, it is dark during the day and night.

Caitlin Halpert: This standard changes over time like the height of the monument sign.

Brian Leet: If we had to lower the dimensions, we could.

Caitlin Halpert: So the interpretation of the sign is relative to the property? What is the distinction between a monument sign and a freestanding sign?

Mary O'Neil: A solid base for the sign is characteristic of a monument sign.

Brian Leet: The distinction is evaluating this proposed monument sign in comparison to other monument signs like the curved wall of Champlain College's entrance sign.

Leo Sprinzen: Will there be planting/landscaping to accompany the signage?

Brian Leet: Yes, but we have not gotten that far in the process yet.

Leo Sprinzen: So the proportions of the proposed signs impact the selection and placement of the proposed landscaping?

Brian Leet: Yes.

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

Leo Sprinzen: Can you discuss the frequency of the message board?

Brian Leet: This would cycle between the message, the date and time, and location of the event being advertised. This is because so many activities occur at the campus, the intent is to provide as much information within the limited period of display.

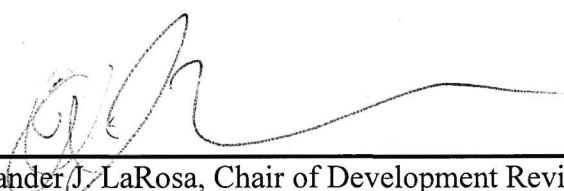
Sean McKenzie: It is also an evaluation of the message on the sign that works best.

Mary O'Neil: Yes.

Caitlin Halpert: Are there any additional questions or comments from the board? Hearing none, are there any questions or comments from members of the public in attendance or online? Hearing none, we will close the hearing on this item to deliberate on this item later on.

VI. Adjournment

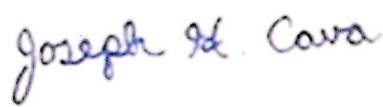
Hearing closed at 7:00 PM.



Alexander J. LaRosa, Chair of Development Review Board

1-20-26

Date



Joseph H. Cava, Permitting & Inspections Permit Technician

1-20-26

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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