



• DESIGN • REVIEW • GUIDE •

Building Elevations

Burlington is well known as a community with a high quality of life, small and cohesive neighborhoods, a vibrant downtown and waterfront – all within a spectacular setting on the shores of Lake Champlain. This deserving reputation is due in part to the City’s small size, entrepreneurial spirit, civic-minded citizens and activist government. One of the many factors that makes Burlington such a great place to live, work and visit is the community’s attention to detail, and respect for it’s setting, heritage and quality urban design.

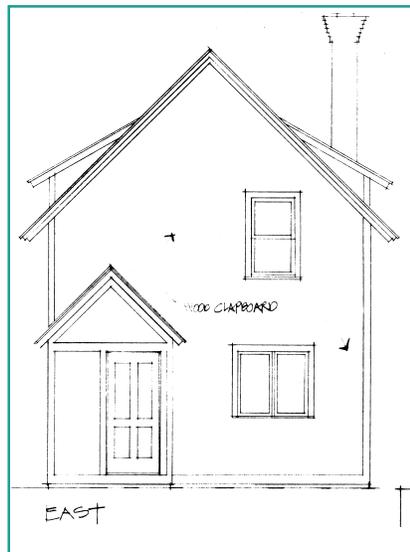
Burlington’s Design Review process strives to protect the city’s unique qualities and strong sense of place by carrying out citywide development and design objectives. The purpose of this *Design Review Guide* is to help applicants in preparing projects to be reviewed by the Design Review Board and the Burlington Planning Commission. Through materials such as this, the Department of Planning & Zoning seeks to make information available well before the final design of a project saving the applicant, and the city, time and money.

WHAT IS A “BUILDING ELEVATION”?

It’s a drawing of each side of a building - the front, the rear and the sides. When you apply for a zoning permit that includes a physical change to the outside of your building, (or the creation of a new building) you must include a drawing of each side of the building showing what it will look like when you’re done with your project. Photographs are often used to show what the building looks like today.

Each elevation should show the location of all the elements of the building - rooflines, windows, doors, and indicate the siding and roof materials, dimensions of windows and doors, the roof pitch, details of the trim, etc. Be sure to also include any gable and roof vents, exterior meters, utility boxes, lights or signs that may be planned for the structure (see also *Design Review Guides: Lighting, Signs, and Utilities and Other Essentials*).

Elevation drawings for the Planning Dept. do not need to be prepared by an architect, but must be drawn to scale (i.e. 1/4 inch equals one foot), and be easy to read and photocopy. Hiring an architect is always a good idea however if your project is large or complex.



WHY DO I NEED TO INCLUDE BUILDING ELEVATIONS?

Remember the old adage “a picture is worth a thousand words”? Well, this is a perfect example.

Under the *Burlington Zoning Ordinance*, whenever an exterior change is proposed for a building, or a new building is planned, a permit must be issued by the Planning Commission. In some cases this process is simply administrative, while for others it may require one or more public meetings. All of the materials submitted as part of the application process become part of the public record and history of your property. This information is available for public review should neighbors or other public officials have any questions.

The Planning Commission and its staff use this information to understand exactly what you are proposing to do. When a permit is issued, the City must ensure that what you are proposing meets the requirements of City regulations, and that the permit conditions and approval reflect what you really intend to do. The City will be particularly interested in ensuring that what you are proposing is compatible with the original or existing ‘design’ of your building, and the surrounding neighborhood. Respecting and protecting the character of Burlington’s commercial areas and residential neighborhoods is very important to maintaining the future vitality of the city.

Detailed drawings of your project serves as a guide between the property owner and the contractor through the design and building process. It should be an accurate representation of what the owner wants and what the contractor is proposing to do.

A successful project is found where these two lines of thought come together!



Illustrations courtesy of Duncan-Wisniewski Architecture, Burlington, VT

Did you...

- ✓ Label each page with the project's street address and applicant name, and each elevation.
- ✓ Prepare the drawings to scale (i.e., 1/4" = 1 foot), and include the scale on each page.
- ✓ Keep the drawings neat and easy to photocopy.
- ✓ Identify the type of windows, trim detailing, exterior building materials, and any signs, lights, meters, and vents on each elevation.

COMMON TERMS:

Detailing includes trim surrounding doors and windows, as well as the *cornice* (below the eave line along the roofline) and *corner boards* (running up and down at each corner of the structure), *water table* (running above the foundation), porch railings and posts, gable vents, etc. Dimensions, along with any layering, relief details or patterning needs to be indicated on the drawing.

Façade is a fancy name for the "face of a building". In the architectural world, the terms "façade", "elevation" and "view" are often used interchangeably to identify one or several sides of a structure.

Fenestration refers to the design and placement of windows in a building. Locations, size (including surrounding trim) and the type and detailing of the windows should be illustrated in the drawing. Will it have mullions or grills? Is it a double-hung or casement? Will it be one-over-one, two-over-two? For more details please refer to the *Design Review Guide: Windows*.

Lighting refers to the type of fixture to be used, the type of light, and the wattage. For more details please refer to the *Design Review Guide: Outdoor Lighting*.

Meters and Utilities are anything that is placed on the outside of the building including things like gas and electric meters, wastewater vents, HVAC equipment and vents, and mailboxes. For more details please refer to the *Design Review Guide: Utilities and Other Essentials*.

WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

zoning permits and general information
 • **Burlington Dept. of Planning & Zoning**
 135 Church St.
 Burlington, VT 05401
 802.865.7188

building permits and public rights-of-way
 • **Burlington Dept. of Public Works**
 645 Pine St.
 Burlington, VT 05401
 802.863.9094

property information and tax maps
 • **Burlington Assessor's Office**
 Burlington City Hall, Room 10
 Burlington, VT 05401
 802.865.7111

historic photographs and building surveys
 • **UVM Special Collections**
 Bailey-Howe Library
 University of Vermont

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