

Department of Planning and Zoning

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MEMORANDUM

To: The Design Advisory Board
From: Mary O'Neil, AICP, Principal Planner
RE: ZP18-0975CA 308 Main Street
Date: June 12, 2018

File: ZP18-0975CA
Location: 308 Main Street
Zone: RH **Ward:** 8E
Parking District: Neighborhood
Date application accepted: April 30, 2018
Applicant/ Owner: Green Castle Realty (Bruce Baker, Greg Doremus)
Request: Residential addition to add four (4) new dwelling units for a total of 8. Site plans changes simultaneous to lot line adjustment with 323-325 College Street to accommodate parking and circulation.



Background:

- **Zoning Permit 18-0671CA;** Remove existing fire escape on north elevation, install handicap ramp and remove partial wood enclosure on east entrance porch. Relocate electric meter, mechanical vents to rear (north) elevation. No change in coverage, use or number of parking spaces. February 2018.

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- **Zoning Permit 18-0059CA**; Original request: Structural addition to add four dwelling units. Permit request modified to withdraw request for an addition. Permit issued: Convert use from office to residential; four dwelling units. September 2017.
- **Zoning Permit 13-0800SN**; replace existing freestanding sign for Collins, McMahon & Harris with new freestanding sign. External illumination included. March, 2013.
- **Non-Applicability of Zoning Permit Requirements 11-0473NA**; replace 2 condensers with same. November 2010.
- **Non-Applicability of Zoning Permit Requirements 10-0688NA**, replace aluminum storm windows. March 2010.
- **Zoning Permit 04-641**; pave existing gravel driveway and parking lot; construct flagging stone retaining wall to preserve/protect lilac bush in southwest corner of parking lot. No change in dimensions of driveway or parking lot. June 2004.
- **Zoning Permit 04-251**; install non-illuminated parallel sign for Gabel Law Firm. November 2003.
- **Zoning Permit 01-267**; replace nonilluminated free standing sign with new illuminated sign. December 2000.
- **Zoning Permit 98-322**; installation of nonilluminated freestanding sign. February 1998.
- **Zoning Permit 94-027**; installation of two ground AC units behind existing landscaping on side of law office structure. July 1993.
- **Zoning Permit (n.n.)**; convert the residential building at 308 Main Street into an office. August 1977.

Overview: 308 Main Street was constructed in 1884 by A.B. Fisher, one of Burlington’s most accomplished architects, as his own residence. It remains completely intact and represents very high style architecture; “a veritable catalogue of the techniques and materials used in the period.”¹ It is included within the Main Street / College Street Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1977 it was converted to office use. In the fall of 2017 is was returned to residential use, accommodating a total of four apartment units. This application proposes a structural addition for four new dwelling units for a total of 8 on site.

A lot line adjustment with 323-325 College Street is being reviewed simultaneously intending to permit review of reconfigured parking and circulation.

Overview:

Part 1: Land Division Design Standards

A boundary line adjustment is being reviewed under separate application0.

¹ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. National Register of Historic Places, Main Street College Street Historic District, Resource #17, A.B. Fisher House (308 Main Street), Section 7 p. 18. Listed 10.13.1988.

Part 2: Site Plan Design Standards
Sec. 6.2.2 Review Standards

(a) Protection of Important Natural Features:

The area of the proposed addition is a paved parking lot.

A revised plan submitted via email for previous permitting in August 2017 illustrated 4 existing trees to remain but on an adjoining property to the west. Four new “Acer Rubrum” (Autumn Flame) of at least 3” in caliper are proposed for 323-325 College Street and the abutting property at 316 Main Street.

(b) Topographical Alterations:

The lot drops to the west, accommodating the addition and providing the first floor partially within the changing grade.

(c) Protection of Important Public Views:

The proposed addition will not impede distant views of Lake Champlain and the mountains to the east and west; nor to important public and cultural landmarks framed by public rights-of-way.

(d) Protection of Important Cultural Resources:

Burlington’s architectural and cultural heritage shall be protected through sensitive and respectful redevelopment, rehabilitation, and infill. Archeological sites likely to yield information important to the city’s or the region’s pre-history or history shall be evaluated, documented, and avoided whenever feasible. Where the proposed development involves sites listed or eligible for listing on a state or national register of historic places, the applicant shall meet the applicable development and design standards pursuant to Sec. 5.4.8(b).

See Section 5.4.8, below.

(e) Supporting the Use of Renewable Energy Resources:

The plan does not preclude the use of wind, water, solar, geothermal or other renewable energy resource. The addition is placed on the north elevation which limits passive solar gain.

(f) Brownfield Sites:

The site is not on the Vt. DEC. Brownfields list.

(g) Provide for nature's events:

Special attention shall be accorded to stormwater runoff so that neighboring properties and/or the public stormwater drainage system are not adversely affected. All development and site disturbance shall follow applicable city and state erosion and stormwater management guidelines in accordance with the requirements of Art 5, Sec 5.5.3.

Design features which address the effects of rain, snow, and ice at building entrances, and to provisions for snow and ice removal or storage from circulation areas shall also be incorporated.

EPSC and Stormwater plans have been submitted to the Stormwater Engineering department for review. Their approval will be a condition of any permit.

The entrance for the four rear units will be centralized at a covered entrance off the parking lot in the rear.



(h) Building Location and Orientation:

The addition is located in the rear of the existing structure; a typical configuration for building expansion.

(i) Vehicular Access:

There is an existing driveway off Main Street. This plan intends to create circulation with the adjoining parcel at 323-325 College Street, as a pass-through is afforded on west of the parking lot. If the direction of this proposed circulation is intended to be other than two-way, details must be defined as to traffic flow, proposed entrance and exit. The property boundary adjustment is being reviewed separately.

(j) Pedestrian Access:

A new concrete sidewalk is proposed from the easterly side of the building to the rear entrance. This will allow building residents to exit directly onto a pathway that will lead around the building toward the public sidewalk on Main Street.

(k) Accessibility for the Handicapped:

ADA compliance is under the review of the building inspector. A lift is annotated on the easterly porch, but the front units do not appear to be connected internally to the proposed 4 units in the rear. An internal stair is located on the northeast corner. Access as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act is under the jurisdiction of the building inspector.

(l) Parking and Circulation:

There are 8 existing parking spaces for the four units, which meets parking requirements. Eight units will require 16; only 8 will be provided on site. A parking management plan that defines shared parking and/or opportunities to meet the parking demand will be required to support a necessary parking waiver. As noted, the intended vehicular circulation path must be defined.

(m) Landscaping and Fences:

Previous review (ZP18-0059CA) identified the omission of landscaping required in 2004 (ZP04-641, Condition #2. "large trees, established and new lilacs, foundation plantings"). New plantings are proposed for neighboring properties (316 Main Street to the east, 323-325 College Street to the north.) This review cannot incorporate development, or landscaping changes on properties other than the one under review.

Seven shrubs are proposed for the west elevation (see Plan C-1.00) which may help to visually screen the proposed parking expansion, particularly the proposed compact space.

A previous application included a retaining wall on the west embankment. There is no mention of such a feature here. The applicant shall confirm.

(n) Public Plazas and Open Space:

There are no public plazas on this parcel. Little has been provided for outdoor tenant amenity space.

(o) Outdoor Lighting:

Where exterior lighting is proposed the applicant shall meet the lighting performance standards as per Sec 5.5.2.

Submitted lighting specification sheets define the intended installation of pole lights and bollards. These are not defined on the site plan. No photometric has been forwarded. Compliance is not known.

Pole light installation is defined as 20', which is acceptable.

(p) Integrate infrastructure into the design:

Exterior storage areas, machinery and equipment installations, service and loading areas, utility meters and structures, mailboxes, and similar accessory structures shall utilize setbacks, plantings, enclosures and other mitigation or screening methods to minimize their auditory and visual impact on the public street and neighboring properties to the extent practicable.

Previous review identified meter locations under the easterly porch. If any other utility connections or mechanical equipment is proposed, they shall be identified on the site plan and/or building elevations as appropriate.

Mailbox locations have not been identified and need to be.

Utility and service enclosures and screening shall be coordinated with the design of the principal building, and should be grouped in a service court away from public view. On-site utilities shall be placed underground whenever practicable. Trash and recycling bins and dumpsters shall be located, within preferably, or behind buildings, enclosed on all four (4) sides to prevent blowing trash, and screened from public view.

A dumpster is identified on the site plan at the rear of the (boundary adjusted) lot. As located, it encroaches into a required 5' setback and must be relocated. No detail has been provided for the trash enclosure, which is required.

Any development involving the installation of machinery or equipment which emits heat, vapor, fumes, vibration, or noise shall minimize, insofar as practicable, any adverse impact on neighboring properties and the environment pursuant to the requirements of Article 5, Part 4 Performance Standards.

If any additional mechanical equipment is proposed, it shall be illustrated on a site plan and/or building elevation as appropriate.

Part 3: Architectural Design Standards

Sec. 6.3.2 Review Standards

(a) Relate development to its environment:

1. Massing, Height and Scale:

The redesigned addition has dropped the new building mass behind the existing historic structure, and reduced the roofline on the westerly edge to lessen the mass and visual impacts of the new addition.

2. Roofs and Rooflines.

A flat roof is proposed, which steps down in deference to the original building. The roofline is elaborated with wide molded cornice lines.

3. Building Openings

Window openings are arranged vertically in columns as paired (south, north elevation) or singularly (east elevation.) Window sash configuration is illustrated in a 6/1 configuration. The rear ground floor entrance is paired with a full sidelight.

(b) Protection of Important Architectural Resources:

Burlington’s architectural and cultural heritage shall be protected through sensitive and respectful redevelopment, rehabilitation, and infill. Where the proposed development involves buildings listed or eligible for listing on a state or national register of historic places, the applicant shall meet the applicable development and design standards pursuant to Sec. 5.4.8. The introduction of new buildings to a historic district listed on a state or national register of historic places shall make every effort to be compatible with nearby historic buildings.

See Section 5.4.8.

(c) Protection of Important Public Views:

There are no protected public views through this site. Not applicable.

(d) Provide an active and inviting street edge:

The addition as visible from the public right-of-way has been modified so as to be deferential to the existing historic structure. Window arrangements are in line with the floor levels of the existing structure. The stone foundation is referenced in the material of the lower level of the addition.

(e) Quality of materials:

All development shall maximize the use of highly durable building materials that extend the life cycle of the building, and reduce maintenance, waste, and environmental impacts. Such materials are particularly important in certain highly trafficked locations such as along major streets, sidewalks, loading areas, and driveways. Efforts to incorporate the use of recycled content materials and building materials and products that are extracted and/or manufactured within the region are highly encouraged.

Owners of historic structures are encouraged to consult with an architectural historian in order to determine the most appropriate repair, restoration or replacement of historic building materials as outlined by the requirements of Art 5, Sec. 5.4.8.

“Boral” lap siding and trim are identified, with a stone veneer basement exposure.

(f) Reduce energy utilization:

All new construction is required to meet the Guidelines for Energy Efficient Construction pursuant to the requirements of Article VI, Energy Conservation, Section 8 of the City of Burlington Code of Ordinances.

(g) Make advertising features complementary to the site:

Any exterior signage will require a separate sign permit.

(h) Integrate infrastructure into the building design:

See Section 6.2.2. (p), above.

(i) Make spaces secure and safe:

All development shall adhere to all building and life safety code, as defined by the building inspector and fire marshal. For multi-unit buildings, intercom systems are recommended.

Section 5.4.8 Historic Buildings and Sites

The City seeks to preserve, maintain, and enhance those aspects of the city having historical, architectural, archaeological, and cultural merit. Specifically, these regulations seek to achieve the following goals:

(a) Applicability:

These regulations shall apply to all buildings and sites in the city that are listed, or eligible for listing, on the State or National Register of Historic Places.

(b) Standards and Guidelines:

The following development standards, following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, shall be used in the review of all applications involving historic buildings and sites subject to the provisions of this section and the requirements for Design Review in Art 3, Part 4. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards are basic principles created to help preserve the distinctive character of a historic building and its site. They are a series of concepts about maintaining, repairing and replacing historic features, as well as designing new additions or making alterations. These Standards are intended to be applied in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

- 1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.*

The building was constructed as a private residence; the continuation of residential use is consistent with this standard.

- 2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

The historic structure will remain intact, with the point of building connection the only area of alteration to original fabric. The reduction in mass of the proposed addition from earlier iterations has moved the project toward greater compatibility with the historic house.

- 3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

No conjectural features have been included in this application. The addition is clearly new construction, and differs in style and materials from the original house.

- 4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*

The historic house, in its location on the site will be retained and preserved. No other later structural or site components are identified as requiring preservation.

- 5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

As noted, the house and its features will be preserved. The application is for new construction.

- 6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials recognizing that new technologies may provide an appropriate alternative in order to adapt to ever changing conditions and provide for an efficient contemporary use. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*

The application is not intended to address failure or repair, but to add new building volume and four new housing units. Not applicable.

- 7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*

No chemical or physical treatments are proposed to the existing historic house. Not applicable.

- 8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*

No archaeological resources have been identified at this site. Not applicable.

- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

The proposed structural addition is clearly differentiated from the original. The reduced massing of the upper floor, the alignment of window openings with those of the original house, the small “connector” between old and new, and the subdued hand in ornamentation contribute to greater success toward compatibility.

- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

As the point of connection is limited and on a rear elevation, it is possible to consider the development reversible.

Items for the Board's consideration:

1. Prior to review by the DRB, the applicant shall confirm existing and proposed coverage.
2. Prior to review by the DRB, the applicant shall confirm existing and proposed lot sizes.
3. Prior to review by the DRB, the applicant shall define the vehicular circulation path between the College and Main St. parcels.
4. The applicant shall confirm the inclusion (or not) of a retaining wall on the westerly embankment. If a retaining wall is intended, more information is required. Any retaining wall over 3' in height will require approval of the city engineer.
5. Intended lighting locations shall be provided on the site plan, with a companion photometric defining light levels as required by Section 5.5.2.
6. If any additional utility connections or mechanical equipment is proposed, they shall be identified on the site plan and/or building elevations as appropriate, and assessed for the need of screening.
7. The dumpster shall be relocated to observe a minimum 5' setback from the boundary line.
8. Details about the trash enclosure shall be submitted for review.
9. All new construction is required to meet the Guidelines for Energy Efficient Construction pursuant to the requirements of Article VI, Energy Conservation, Section 8 of the City of Burlington Code of Ordinances.
10. For multi-unit buildings, an intercom system is recommended.
11. Standard Permit Conditions 1-15.