

Department of Planning and Zoning

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TO: Development Review Board
FROM: Scott Gustin
DATE: August 21, 2018
RE: 19-0105MP; 111 Colchester Ave

Note: These are staff comments only; decisions on projects are made by the Development Review Board, which may approve, deny, table or modify any project. THE APPLICANT OR REPRESENTATIVE MUST ATTEND THE MEETING.

Zone: I Ward: 1E

Owner/Applicant: University of Vermont Medical Center/White & Burke

Request: Amend master sign plan

Applicable Regulations:

Article 6 (Development Review Standards), Article 7 (Signs)

Background Information:

The applicant is seeking approval to amend the existing master sign plan for the University of Vermont Medical Center. The original master sign plan was approved by the Development Review Board on April 25, 2005 and amended May 4, 2010 and again March 21, 2011. The pending amendment amounts to incorporating 4 new hanging parallel signs (noted as VR4 and EID1 in the application) and mounting the parallel sign for the newest building's name (Miller Building) above 14.' Note that the application materials also include a number of other signs that are consistent with the existing master sign plan and do not require DRB review and approval as part of this amendment.

Recommendation: Consent approval as per, and subject to, the following findings.

Article 6: Development Review Standards

Part 1, Land Division Design Standards

Not applicable.

Part 2, Site Plan Design Standards

Sec. 6.2.2, Review Standards

Not applicable.

Part 3, Architectural Design Standards

Sec. 6.3.2, Review Standards

(a) Make advertising features complimentary to the site

The 4 new hanging parallel signs are directional in nature (Do Not Enter / Emergency Only / Ambulance Only) and are consistent with the hospital use of the building. They are unobtrusive and serve their intended purpose.

The new “Miller Building” parallel sign consists of individual letters affixed to the building exterior. It is stylistically similar to the “Fletcher Allen” (now UVM Medical Center) sign mounted on the hospital’s east pavilion, also approved above the standard 14’ height limit by way of previous sign plan amendment. **(Affirmative finding)**

Article 7: Signs

Sec. 7.3.4, Flexibility from Existing Standards

The 4 new hanging parallel signs are each ~ 70 sf in size and add up to more than 200 sf together. Three of them (the VR4 signs) also exceed 14’ in height where mounted to the building. This criterion enables some flexibility from the existing sign standards relative to size. Rather than limit the collective area to 200 sf, this criterion states that no individual sign may exceed the size limitations of Sec. 7.2.3 (a) (3). In this case, total sign area exceeds 200 sf; however, all 4 of the signs comply with the 1 sf per 1 linear foot of building frontage standard, and each individual sign is well below 200 sf. Sign mounting height of more than 14’ is enabled by footnote 2 in Table 7.2.1-1. The footnote states that signs above 14’ high are permissible so long as they are not internally illuminated and do not exceed the ceiling height of the first floor. Such is the case here.

The “Miller Building” sign is to be mounted at 38’ 11.” As noted above, a mounting height of more than 14’ may be permitted in certain circumstances. In this case, the sign is technically below the ceiling height of the 1st floor – in this case the 1st floor is elevated above open air circulation space. Under the provisions of this section, the proposed location could be permitted even if there were enclosed building area below. The sign is not illuminated, and it is visually compatible with the building. **(Affirmative finding)**

II. Conditions of Approval

1. Except as specifically changed in this amendment, the provisions of the master sign plan and as previously amended remain in effect.
2. The individual signs included in this master sign plan amendment are subject to a separate zoning permit prior to installation.