

Department of Planning and Zoning

149 Church Street
Burlington, VT 05401
Telephone: (802) 865-7188
(802) 865-7195 (FAX)
(802) 865-7142 (TTY)

David White, AICP, Director
Meagan Tuttle, AICP, Comprehensive Planner
Jay Appleton, GIS Manager
Scott Gustin, AICP, Principal Planner
Mary O'Neil, AICP, Principal Planner
Ryan Morrison, CFM, Associate Planner
Anita Wade, Zoning Clerk
Elsie Tillotson, Department Secretary



TO: Design Advisory Board
FROM: Scott Gustin *AD*
DATE: May 10, 2016
RE: 16-1145CA/MA, 207 Flynn Avenue

Zone: ELM Ward: 5S
Owner/Applicant: Vermont Railway, Inc. / City Market

Request: Construct new retail grocery building and related site improvements and subdivide lot.

OVERVIEW:

The applicant is seeking approval to construct a new retail grocery store, parking lot, and related site improvements. The single parcel will also be subdivided into two lots. Nearly all of the development will take place on lot 1. Lot 2 will remain as-is. Demolition of existing buildings onsite has been approved under separate zoning permits.

This project was reviewed by the Technical Review Committee on April 14, 2016. The Conservation Board reviewed it May 2, 2016 and recommended approval, subject to final review and approval of the stormwater management plan and erosion prevention and sediment control plan by the city's stormwater program staff.

ARTICLE 6: DEVELOPMENT REVIEW STANDARDS

Part 1, Land Division Design Standards

Sec. 6.1.2, Review Standards

(a) Protection of important natural features

The proposed subdivision will have no impact on important natural features.

(b) Block size and arrangement

Block size and arrangement will remain unchanged.

(c) Arrangement of Lots

Both resultant lots will be regularly shaped, and both will have sufficient frontage on public streets.

(d) Connectivity of streets within the city street grid

Not applicable.

(e) Connectivity of sidewalks, trails, and natural systems

Not applicable.

Part 2, Site Plan Design Standards

Sec. 6.2.2, Review Standards

(a) Protection of important natural features

The property does not contain any important natural features as identified in the Open Space Protection Plan or as outlined in Sec. 4.5.4, *Natural Resource Protection Overlay Districts*. In fact, the property is nearly devoid of any green space at all. The proposed construction will have no impact on Burlington's diversity of important natural features.

(b) Topographical alterations

The existing property is essentially flat and will remain so. Proposed grading will direct stormwater runoff into receiving stormwater management measures.

(c) Protection of important public views

There are no significant public views from or through the subject property. The proposed construction will not adversely impact any identified public view corridor.

(d) Protection of important cultural resources

The property has no known archaeological significance. It contains no archaeological site points, nor is it located within an archaeologically sensitive area.

(e) Supporting the use of alternative energy

See Sec. 6.3.2 (f).

(f) Brownfield sites

The Vermont DEC Hazardous Site List specifically lists 207 Flynn Avenue as a contaminated site. Its brownfield status is active, and phase I and II assessments have been done. Contaminants include VOC's, metals, and PAH's. With the Conservation Board, the applicants addressed at length the site contamination and corrective actions to take place. Contaminated soils will be capped with proposed construction or clean top soil. A vapor barrier and associated ventilation will be installed with the store's foundation. The applicants continue to work with VT DEC to address onsite contaminants.

(g) Provide for nature's events

The proposed stormwater management system contains both structural and nonstructural elements. Two rain gardens are proposed along with an overall reduction in pervious surface. The contaminated soils onsite prevent utilizing infiltration, but the under-drained rain gardens will provide stormwater treatment and attenuation. Structural elements include catch basins and piping that will connect to the city's combined storm/sanitary sewer. Overall stormwater discharge volumes will decrease for all design storm events.

(h) Building location and orientation

The proposed building will be set to the northeast corner of the site. It will serve as an anchor point at the corner of Briggs Street and Flynn Avenue. Multiple entries will provide access into the building. Entries will face Flynn Avenue, Briggs Street, and the parking lot. The west elevation, facing the railroad tracks, is the back-of-house elevation.

(i) Vehicular access

Two access points will serve the property. The driveway from Briggs Street appears to be the primary public access point in and out of the property. The other driveway from Flynn Avenue is one-way only (into the site) and will be used for delivery trucks.

As a corner lot, there are two street frontages and no way to put parking fully behind the building. As proposed, the parking will be set to the south of the proposed building. It will be screened by the new grocery store as viewed from Flynn Avenue and set to the side as viewed from Briggs Street.

The Briggs Street driveway is 24' wide, sufficient to allow simultaneous in-and-out movement under the vehicular circulation standards of Article 8. The Flynn Avenue driveway is 30' wide, and appears to be as wide to afford access to the loading bays on the building's west side. If possible to lessen the width of this driveway, the applicant is encouraged to do so.

(j) Pedestrian access

Walkways and related hardscaping afford direct pedestrian access into the building from the public sidewalk. Interior pedestrian routes within the parking area are lacking. This criterion requires provision of safe, well-defined pedestrian routes through parking areas to primary building entries. Only one such route, along the eastern edge of the parking area, is provided. No pedestrian routes are provided to connect the two double-stacked rows of parking to the building's main entry. Plan revisions are needed in order to provide such routes. Lastly, striping is depicted across the Briggs Street driveway to delineate pedestrian crossing continuous with the proposed walkway along the eastern edge of the property. No such delineation is depicted across the Flynn Avenue driveway. This arrangement may be acceptable because there is no public sidewalk further west along Flynn Avenue. Note that this section of sidewalk along Flynn Avenue will be constructed as part of this project. Construction of this sidewalk is subject to review and approval by the Department of Public Works.

(k) Accessibility for the handicapped

A group of handicap parking spaces is depicted near the primary building entrance. Entries into the building appear to be at-grade. It is the applicant's responsibility to comply with all applicable ADA requirements.

(l) Parking and circulation

As noted above, parking is set to the side or rear of the building as perceived from Briggs Street or Flynn Avenue, respectively. Along Briggs Street, the parking lot will be screened with a line of new landscaping consisting of deciduous trees and shrubs. A single large center island will be provided in the parking lot. The westernmost double-stacked row of parking has no such island. Installation of a pedestrian route within this double-stacked row as noted above may afford opportunity to install additional landscaping here as well.

Parking spaces and circulation isles appear to be dimensionally compliant. Parking spaces are 9' X 20', and circulation isles are 20' wide allowing for 10' wide travel lanes. Back-up distance is slightly substandard at 20', whereas 24' is the standard for 90-degree spaces. Some variation from this standard is permissible per Sec. 8.1.11, *Parking Dimensional Requirements*.

Curbing is proposed along the eastern and northern ends of the parking area. None is evident along the western or southern ends. Landscaping along the periphery also serves to delineate the boundaries of the parking and circulation areas.

The proposed parking lot will require shade trees. No parking lot shading analysis is included in the application and must be. This criterion establishes a target of 30% shading of the parking area with new shade trees. At least 1 shade tree for every 5 parking spaces is required. The new parking lot will contain 114 parking spaces and will require 23 shade trees. As proposed, 29 new trees will be planted within or around the parking lot. Minimum caliper size at the time of planting must be 2.5" – 3.5." As proposed, caliper size is compliant. A mature canopy diameter of at least 25' is needed. No canopy diameter information is evident and must be provided.

Bike parking information has been provided. Twenty-eight bike racks will be provided near the building's Flynn Avenue entrance, and an additional 9 will be provided by the Briggs Street entry. Each rack can hold 2 bikes. Enclosed long term bike parking facilities will be provided inside the building along with associated shower and locker facilities.

(m) Landscaping and fences

A comprehensive landscaping plan has been submitted and encompasses a diversity of plantings. Proposed landscaping will be used to frame the property and to screen parking from the street. It will be used to break up the surface parking lot and to define spaces within the site. Species and planting size information has been provided. Only mature canopy dimensional information is lacking relative to parking lot shade trees.

(n) Public plazas and open space

No public plazas or open space are included in this proposal. Outdoor café seating is proposed along the building's eastern elevation adjacent to the accessory café.

(o) Outdoor lighting

An outdoor lighting plan has been provided. Fixture locations are noted within the parking and circulation areas and for the loading bays. No fixtures are indicated for the building's pedestrian entries. Presumably, these entries will be illuminated. Fixture specifications and locations are needed. Details are provided for the parking lot lights. They are acceptable cutoff LED fixtures mounted at 20'. No depiction of the proposed wall sconce for the loading bays is evident and must be provided. Finally, no photometric plan has been provided. One is needed in order to demonstrate compliance with the illumination standards for the building entries and parking and circulation areas.

(p) Integrate infrastructure into the design

No ground-mounted mechanical equipment is apparent in the site plans. Two large compactors will be tucked in along the building's western elevation. They will be screened, in large part, by the building. Any new utility lines must be buried.

Part 3, Architectural Design Standards

Sec. 6.3.2, Review Standards

(a) Relate development to its environment

1. Massing, Height, and Scale

The proposed grocery store is 33,874 sf with a 24,250 sf 1st floor (additional area is related to a proposed stair tower and mezzanine). It reads as a moderately large single story building in character with other nearby commercial structures on Flynn Avenue.

The overall building volume is broken into distinct building sections. Recesses, protrusions, and varying rooflines emphasize perception of distinct building components. Varying materials and fenestration further serve to relieve perceived mass of the proposed building.

Building height varies depending on adjacent grade and roof plane. The highest point appears to be 41' tall. This height is under the maximum permissible 45' in the ELM zone.

2. Roofs and Rooflines

The proposed building will include flat roofs on most building segments. Only the café has a shed roof. Such roof forms are common in the neighborhood and acceptable as part of the proposed building design.

3. Building Openings

Sheltered entries will face Flynn Avenue and the parking lot. Both are readily identifiable. It appears that the café along Briggs Street will have its own entry with access to the outdoor seating. The fenestration is consistent with the boxy appearance of the building and is placed in consistent rhythm throughout. Storefront glazing along the café provides an open and airy feeling to this prominent feature.

(b) Protection of important architectural resources

Demolition of existing structures has been approved under separate permit. Evaluation for historic significance took place via an historic site assessment and review by the VT State Historic Preservation Officer. No buildings either listed on an historic register or eligible for listing will be affected by the new construction.

(c) Protection of important public views

See 6.2.2 (c) above.

(d) Provide an active and inviting street edge

The north and east building elevations define this structure's street face. Both have well defined entries sheltered underneath a projecting canopy. Ample glazing along the Briggs Street façade provide visual access into the building. The café and related outdoor seating area provide additional activation. The Flynn Avenue façade is less successful as a pedestrian interface. Half of it contains an entry and mural sheltered under a canopy. These elements clearly draw people towards the building entry. The other half, however, is fairly blank. Interior store layout presumably drives the lack of ground-level glazing but there is room for improvement to further activate the street level of this primary building façade.

(e) Quality of materials

The building will be clad largely in metal paneling of varying textures and coloration. Wooden panel accents will be installed near the entries. A membrane roofing system will be installed. All of the windows appear to be fiberglass. The proposed materials are acceptable for new construction.

(f) Reduce energy utilization

Few energy details are included in the application plans. The new building must comply with the current energy efficiency requirements of the city and state.

(g) Make advertising features complimentary to the site

A parallel "City Market" sign is depicted on the Briggs Street building elevation. It appears to be placed above 14' height. Such placement is acceptable so long as the sign is not internally illuminated. Sign area is ~ 57 sf, under the maximum permissible 200 sf.

(h) Integrate infrastructure into the building design

Loading bays are screened from the street and are set apart from active pedestrian areas of the site. Abundant rooftop mechanicals are proposed, some of which are quite large. This criterion requires screening such features within the overall roof structure, outer building walls or parapets, or integrated into the overall building design. No such screening is proposed and is required. Note also that some of the proposed equipment is tall enough to exceed the overall 45' height limit. The total area of such features cannot exceed 10% of the roof area. Confirmation is needed as to whether this limitation has been observed.

(i) Make spaces safe and secure

The project underwent technical review on April 14, 2016. The fire marshal provided written comment to the applicants based on that review. Building accessibility by emergency service vehicles appears to be adequate.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Approval and forward to the Development Review Board subject to the following conditions:

1. Lessen the width of the Flynn Avenue driveway if feasible.
2. Provide safe, well-defined pedestrian routes through both double-stacked rows of parking for access to the main building entry.
3. Provide landscaping island(s) within the westernmost double-stacked row of parking.
4. Provide a parking lot shading analysis demonstrating at least 30% parking lot shading. Also provide anticipated mature tree canopy dimensions.
5. Provide building entry lighting fixture locations and specifications. Provide depiction of proposed wall sconce over loading bays. Provide a photometric plan that includes a point-by-point photometric analysis of proposed illumination levels. Average, minimum, and maximum illumination levels must be summarized in a table for each lighting environment (i.e. parking/circulation and building entries).
6. Provide additional pedestrian activation of the Flynn Avenue façade.
7. Provide screening for all rooftop mechanicals and confirm whether mechanical units exceeding the overall 45' height limit comprise 10% or less of the total rooftop area.