

# SMITH BUCKLEY ARCHITECTS

Cambria Hotel  
266 College St., Burlington, VT

May 19, 2019

## Project Description

We anticipate the new Cambria hotel, located at 266 College Street will provide great benefit to the City, with little negative impact on residents of Wards 1 and 8, (or any other residents.) Market research indicates there is strong demand for high quality hotel rooms in Burlington, and that this hotel will contribute substantially to our local economy through job creation and captured tourist revenue. The design responds to the goals of Plan BTV and the newly adopted form-based code district, and promises to create active and engaging streetscapes.

The new hotel will be constructed on the site of the current YMCA, (Y) at the corner of College and S. Union Streets. The existing structure was originally built to house the Y. Several additions and renovation projects have created a facility with an unattractive and opaque street frontage along S. Union that does little to enhance or activate this street. Furthermore, the interior of this facility contains approximately 20 different vertical levels that are poorly organized, and nearly impossible to provide with wheelchair access. After many years of planning, the Y decided to sell the facility, and move to a new building close by. Proceeds from this sale were a critical component of the Y's ability to finance the new building, and the generous terms of this agreement recognize a commitment by the new Owner to contribute to the success of the new Y.

The plans for the new hotel include keeping the gabled roof structure at the corner, and demolishing the majority of the heavily modified flat-roofed structure to the north. The interior of the retained portion of the building will be converted into public space on the ground level, and hotel rooms above. This plan has been discussed with the VT Division of Historic Preservation, and has been met with preliminary acceptance.

This project, which will be one of the first major applications in the newly adopted form-based code district, is expressed with a contemporary architectural design that is respectful of the saved Y building and the greater urban context. Features of the new hotel include:

- 142 guest rooms
- 77 below-grade parking spaces
- Ground floor lounge and reception areas
- Ground floor meeting room
- Rooftop bar, restaurant, and meeting rooms, with western views over the city. we anticipate that this feature will provide an inviting destination for the community, offering an experience that does not currently exist in the City
- Green/vegetated roof with kinetic art
- Exterior street-level terraces on College and S. Union Streets that will help activate these thoroughfares consistent with the stated goals of Plan BTV and the form-based code
- Building will be designed to meet third-party sustainable design standards, as defined by the zoning ordinance, (LEED Gold or similar)

A traffic study has been performed, which indicates that automobile trips generated by this project will fall well within acceptable limits, and will cause less congestion in this area than currently exists. This is due in part to spread out guest arrival and departure times versus the highly concentrated pickup and drop off schedules of the current Y childcare program. The main drop off area for guests and the parking entrance/exit will be on

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College Street, which is 2-way. Streets and sidewalks will be constructed to conform with the Great Streets standards, as adopted by the City. Deliveries and waste pick up will happen on the west side of the building in the sunken area where these services currently happen for the Y. Short-term and long-term bicycle parking areas will be provided to encourage bicycling, which is supported by the Plan BTV Walk Bike program in general, and more specifically by the protected bike lane on S. Union St.

The Y currently utilizes an antiquated sewer line that runs in the former ravine on the west side of the property. The new sewer and storm water systems will be routed to newer infrastructure under College St. This project will construct a storm water retention system that will reduce storm related loads on the City's treatment systems.

The Y has been allowed to continue their operations in the existing location until their new building can be occupied. The current schedule predicts this will happen in January or February of 2020, at which time the Y will vacate 266 College St. The goal of this project is to have permits and design documents in place to allow construction to begin in the spring of 2020. At this time, we anticipate it will take approximately 18 months to construct the new hotel. During this time, steps will be taken to keep construction vehicles out of the residential neighborhoods to the east and north of the site.

Floor plans are attached for reference. Photo realistic renderings will be presented at the NPA meeting.