

## Department of Planning and Zoning

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### MEMORANDUM

**To:** The Design Advisory Board  
**From:** Mary O'Neil, AICP, Principal Planner  
**RE:** ZP16-1253CA; 56 Ledgemere Street  
**Date:** June 14, 2016

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**File:** ZP16-1253CA

**Location:** 56 Ledgemere Street

**Zone:** RL **Ward:** 5S

**Date application accepted:** May 11, 2016. Revised drawings received June 2, 2016 and June 6, 2016.

**Applicant/ Owner:** Gabriel Stadecker / Brendan Hogan

**Request:** Expand living space of existing single family home into attic, adding multiple dormers and rear addition.



#### Background:

- Non-Applicability of Zoning Permit Requirements; install gas stove fireplace direct vented facing driveway. November 2015.

The programs and services of the City of Burlington are accessible to people with disabilities. For accessibility information call 865-7188 (for TTY users 865-7142).

- Zoning Permit 15-0948CA; enclosure of existing screened porch, extension of existing fence with gate. April 2015.
- Zoning Permit 06-826CA; raise roof to enlarge existing area deemed non-habitable by building code. Shake-sided second story, new windows, removal of chimney. June 2006. **Permit expired without exercise; relinquished** August 2009.
- Zoning Permit 06-362CA; enclosure of existing screened porch and new dormer on second floor. New shake-shingled skylight. November 2005. (Note on permit that the work does not appear to have been done.) **Permit relinquished** August 2009.
- Zoning Permit 03-410; cedar fence along property line. April 2003.
- Zoning Permit 87-752; install 2 wooden garage doors to existing garage. No change to driveway. March 1988.

**Overview:** The applicant has proposed expansion of living area in an attic; achieving additional habitable area by the addition of multiple dormers. A rear kitchen addition is also included.

A previous permit (06-826CA) was approved for a similar expansion; however the permit expired and the zoning permit was relinquished by the owner. Subsequently, the zoning ordinance changed in 2007, almost concurrent with completion of a Historic Sites and Structures Survey of the Five Sisters neighborhood (“New Harlem.”) That study assessed the existing buildings for eligibility for historic designation, and prepared a draft nomination for listing to the Vermont State Register of Historic Resources. Although the nomination was not forwarded for formal adoption, the buildings identified within the neighborhood were identified as either contributing or non-contributing to the district; thus establishing eligibility.

56 Ledgemere Street was determined to be eligible for historic designation, and a contributing resource when viewed within the context of the neighborhood. That research material is attached.

Built in 1936-7, the house occupies Lot #14 of the Kelley Plan (see attached.) The house was first occupied by a carpenter in 1937.

Previous to the ordinance change in 2007, the neighborhood was non-design control and therefore would not have required zoning review for materials and design change. Only a change of use or alteration to a building footprint would have triggered the requirement for a zoning permit. Since the change of ordinance, exterior renovations require a Certificate of Appropriateness (CA) zoning permit, and are subject to Section 5.4.8 of the zoning ordinance relative to the treatment of historic properties.

Administrative authority is warranted in this application; staff will observe the recommendation of this Board in making a decision.

**Part 1: Land Division Design Standards**

Not applicable.

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

**(a) Protection of Important Natural Features:**

Not applicable.

**(b) Topographical Alterations:**

Not applicable.

**(c) Protection of Important Public Views:**

There are no protected views from this site. Not applicable.

**(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:**

Not applicable.

**(f) Brownfield Sites:**

Not applicable.

**(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.*

The relocation of the rear (kitchen) door places it at the mercy of sliding snow and rainfall directly off the standing seam roof. Some form of canopy or roof cover should be considered for the protection and safety of building residents.

**(h) Building Location and Orientation:**

No change. Not applicable.

**(i) Vehicular Access:**

No change to the existing vehicular access is proposed. To capture additional coverage for the kitchen addition, the driveway is proposed to be narrowed in width. The applicant has identified those specific dimensions on the revised site plan to confirm the coverage change.

**(j) Pedestrian Access:**

No change to the front pedestrian access is proposed. The property remains connected to the existing sidewalk network, and has an access walkway to the primary entrance. The rear walkway to the driveway, patio and house had been omitted from the coverage calculation in this and the most recent permit application; it is now re-introduced to the overall coverage for accuracy.

**(k) Accessibility for the Handicapped:**

This is not a requirement for a single family home, although encouraged. Vermont visitability standards may apply.

**(l) Parking and Circulation:**

No change is proposed to the existing parking configuration, although the driveway is proposed to be reduced in width to compensate for the new kitchen addition. Two parking spaces must remain available to the single family home.

**(m) Landscaping and Fences:**

No change has been suggested to the existing landscaping on site.

**(n) Public Plazas and Open Space:**

Not applicable.

**(o) Outdoor Lighting:**

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

A residential scale lighting fixture has been proposed for the rear entrance. No change is proposed to the front entry.

**(p) Integrate infrastructure into the design:**

Meters, mailboxes, utility connections, and any other mechanical equipment will need to be illustrated on a site plan or elevations as appropriate.

**Part 3: Architectural Design Standards**

**Sec. 6.3.2 Review Standards**

**(a) Relate development to its environment:**

***1. Massing, Height and Scale:***

Ledgemere Street has predominantly 1 ½ - 2 story homes, with 50 and 56 Ledgemere among the smallest in height and scale. The 1938 and 1951 Sanborn Maps confirm that 23, 38, 44 (then 42) and 50 (then 52) were 1 ½ stories; 56 was the lone single story house. Two residences (38 and 44) demonstrate by design an effort to expand the typical 1 ½ story to a full 2 story by puncturing the eaveline with wall dormers. Although among the smallest in scale, 56 Ledgemere sits atop a bluff and is positioned higher than most structures on the street, giving it the appearance of greater stature.

The proposal will raise the rear roofline 5-6' above the current ridge, substantially altering the volume of the structure. Additionally, the house's position at the zenith of the rise will visibly amplify its increased height.

## **2. Roofs and Rooflines.**

Although the plan continues the gable and eave roofline, it will increase the pitch of the principal roof, and add 4 / 12 pitch dormers. Roof sheathing is proposed to be standing seam, which is a material change from the existing asphalt roof.

With the initial submission, a cantilevered 2<sup>nd</sup> floor gable was proposed on the south elevation. This could not be approved, as it encroached into a required side yard setback. Revised drawings have removed that element as well as a proposed vertical expansion above the enclosed porch. All new work now observes required setbacks.

## **3. Building Openings**

Several new dormers are proposed; three on the front (each with a different arrangement of awning windows); and one on each of the south and north elevations. Egress windows in enlarged openings will be introduced at the gable ends; a rear door is proposed to the new addition on the north elevation. Specifics for the door have not been included. Windows will be re-arranged on the east (rear) elevation to accommodate the new kitchen. New windows are proposed for most of the dwelling except the first floor.

### **(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:**

Not applicable.

### **(d) Provide an active and inviting street edge:**

As noted, the structure sits substantially above the public sidewalk giving it a prominence that it would otherwise not enjoy. The proposed alterations will substantially expand the living area of the dwelling by increasing the roof pitch and adding dormers.

It will continue to have pedestrian and vehicular access.

**(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.*

Windows are proposed to be clad awning/casement/double hung, as noted in plan A201. New clapboard siding is identified for the dormers. The roof is proposed to be standing seam, which may be functionally problematic due to snow slide (particularly over the rear door on the north elevation.)

Depending upon the color chosen, it may visually diverge from the existing roof appearance, which is asphalt shingle.

**(f) Reduce energy utilization:**

All new development 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:**

Not applicable.

**(h) Integrate infrastructure into the building design:**

See Section 6.2.2. (p.)

**(i) Make spaces secure and safe:**

All applicable building and life safety code as defined by the building inspector and fire marshal shall be required. A roof canopy is recommended at the rear door to divert rain and snow from the pedestrian pathway.

**Sec. 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:*

*To preserve, maintain and enhance Burlington's historic character, scale, architectural integrity, and cultural resources;*

*To foster the preservation of Burlington’s historic and cultural resources as part of an attractive, vibrant, and livable community in which to live, work and visit;*

*To promote a sense of community based on understanding the city’s historic growth and development, and maintaining the city’s sense of place by protecting its historic and cultural resources; and,*

*To promote the adaptive re-use of historic buildings and sites.*

*(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.*

As part of the Five Sisters Neighborhood and defined under CLG Grant 07-011, 56 Ledgemere was considered eligible for historic designation. See attached resource information sheet.

*(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 property was constructed as a single family residence, which is proposed to continue.

- 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 proposed alteration of the principle roof pitch and addition of dormers on the primary façade will substantially alter the existing features and spatial relationships that characterize the property.

- 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.*

The dormers and the roof pitch are not consistent with the original and extant character of the property. While similar modifications are frequently approved for rear or secondary elevations where they are invisible from the public right-of-way, substantial modification that alters the principal façade is to be avoided. Additionally, the



residence did not have a roof pitch as characterized in these plans, but a more shallow pitch similar to house plans popular with companies like Sears' model "The Springwood", from the 1921 and 1922 catalog books. As a carpenter was the first owner, there remains the possibility that this, too, was the result of pattern books or a house kit as has been demonstrated common within the neighborhood.

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

None are identified.

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

The proposal defines continuation of clapboard siding on the new dormers.

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 basis for the project application is not material failure.

Windows identified for replacement will be clad wood casement/egress or doublehung. These have been found to be acceptable to the DRB and the Vermont Superior Court Environmental Division in previous decisions.

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.

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

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 concern of new additions is important because a new addition to a historic building has the potential to change its historic character as well as to damage and destroy significant historic materials and features. A new addition also has the potential to confuse the public and to make it difficult or impossible to differentiate the old from the new or to recognize what part of the historic building is genuinely historic. The proposal to raise the roof and add new dormers on the primary elevation will substantively alter the visual, spatial and massing characteristics of the

property. The work is integrated with the existing plan and therefore finds no clear distinction between old and new; a requirement of this standard.

*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 roof will be significantly altered to facilitate this plan, it cannot be determined to be reversible. If effected, the house will lose the integrity of its original design and no longer retain any merit of historic significance due to its alteration.

**Staff recommendation:**

The overall plan proposes significant alterations to the massing, scale, and spatial characteristics of the original property which is subject to Section 5.4.8 of the Comprehensive Development Ordinance. As the property is considered eligible for historic designation per the research conducted under the Historic Sites and Structures Survey of 2007, there remains conflict between the standards and the submitted plan. If the DAB concurs that the plan is inconsistent with Section 5.4.8 of the Comprehensive Development Ordinance, denial of the plan as proposed is recommended.

**If a recommendation for approval is considered, the following conditions are suggested:**

1. The property remains a single family home. No change of use or increase in the number of residential units is part of this approval.
2. Meters, mailboxes, utility connections, and any other mechanical equipment will need to be illustrated on a site plan or elevations as appropriate.
3. Some canopy or roof cover is recommended at the rear entrance to avoid discomfort or prevent injury from snow slide or rainfall.
4. Specification sheets for new exterior doors shall be provided.
5. Standard Permit Conditions 1-15.