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JUN 10 2015

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DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING & ZONING

June 6, 2015

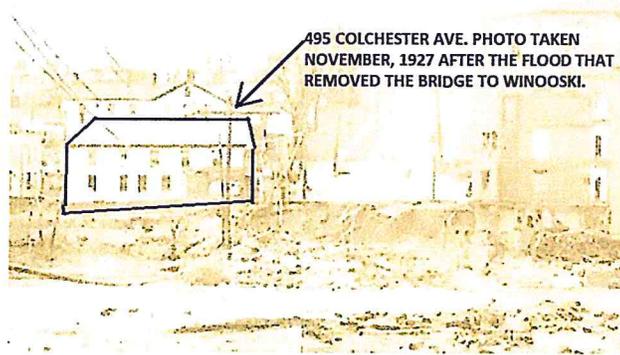
Burlington Zoning Department RE: ZP15-0747SP, 495 Colchester Ave.

**Description of Proposed Project,
Revised and Resubmitted on June 6, 2015**

EXISTING CONDITION:

After the flood of 1927, this historic building was buried when the current bridge to Winooski was built at a higher elevation. As a result both of the lower two floors (that used to have on-grade access and daylight at both levels) are now well below grade. Basement window-wells were added in the first floor (which seems like a basement) in an attempt to get some daylight this floor. These window-wells have had to be covered with little shed roofs in an attempt to mitigate water coming off the roof and blowing rain and snow from flooding the first floor. Apartments at that level get almost no daylight.

The former stone-walled cellar below the first floor originally had windows above grade on the north side, and full on-grade access and tall windows to retail space on the east side. These have been removed and filled in with concrete block. This floor is now entirely well below grade and is useless except as a place for the building's boiler room. A sump pump runs nearly constantly to keep water out of the cellar.



Historic Photo (1927) showing building before it was buried

The upper two floors are constructed of brick veneer just one wythe thick, supported on a heavy-timber frame similar to the other mill buildings in the area. When the building was buried, a concrete retaining wall was poured against the brick veneer walls on the north and west sides. This supports the current raised street elevation, but has caused significant damage to the buried brick and wood frame behind it, as seen below in the photo of rising-damp on the west end of the north facade.



Rising damp damage to bricks at west end of north façade.

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PROPOSED BUILDING WORK

This project is the restoration of the historic building at 495 Colchester Avenue to correct the water infiltration problems and return it to full use with all floors above the ground. It will improve the quality of the four apartments in the building now and make at least one of them fully accessible to people with disabilities.

The recommendation from us -- and as confirmed as the best solution by Caitlin Corkins from the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation who has conducted an on-site visit -- as the best way to prevent further damage to this historic building, is to simply lift the building straight up 8' 0" , including all of its heavy timber framing and posts, leaving all of the stone foundation walls and concrete retaining wall behind where they will remain visible in the Café space intended to occupy the eastern part of the cellar. This will get the historic brick out of the ground where it is deteriorating.

Caitlin Corkins has approved the Historic Preservation Certification Application and it is currently being reviewed by John Sandor at the National Park Service, Department of Historic Preservation in Washington. Approval as a Certified Historic Rehabilitation Project will allow the owner to take advantage the Federal tax credits available to Certified Historic Rehabilitation Projects in national historic districts.

The existing concrete Cellar Floor (not original to the building) will be lowered 12" to accommodate adequate headroom and be replaced with a new concrete slab on top of a new vapor barrier. This option will also allow uses of efficient and comfortable radiant heating coils in the new slab if the owner decides to explore that option.

A new Ground Floor level will be inserted after the building is lifted. It will be set at an elevation to provide on-grade access from a new walkway near the alley's current elevation. This design will meet current accessibility requirements necessary to reach re-captured space on part of the new ground floor and part of the new cellar floor that we would like to have available to rent to a café or coffee shop tenant of less than 2000 sf.

New concrete walls exterior walls made of insulated concrete forms will be built between the lifted building and the original stone foundation. The exterior of these wall will be faced with 6" -7" thick granite stones similar in size and texture to the existing foundation stones. These new stones will be placed under and support the existing brick veneer to match the original orientation of brick above stone. The interior of the concrete walls will be plastered, so they are not confused with the original foundation stones the will remain visible in the Café's lower floor. As envisioned now, the café would be on parts of both of the interconnected two lowest floors: the inserted, rebuilt ground floor and the rebuilt cellar floor set about 1' lower than it is now in order to gain sufficient head room.

Framing of the new ground floor and first floor above it will be heavy timber construction. This is consistent with the current mill-like framing used in the building and also allows for the required fire separation between the apartments and the café.

This solution also returns the amount of building exposed above grade to generally match its original condition without changing any of the current street elevations, street slopes, or making any changes to the public Right of Way (R.O.W.).

The building will have an automatic fire suppression system, new HVAC system. Plumbing and electrical services will also be new in the remodeled areas.

PROPOSED SITE WORK

NO SITE WORK is proposed in the R.O.W. except connection to existing utilities lined under Mill Street, and the removal of the four window-wells and the shed roofs over them when the building is lifted. These will not be necessary, nor will they be replaced.



View of window wells and shed roofs over them we want to remove.

NO CHANGES IN PARKING are proposed from the current conditions. Off street parking is not required with a café space of less than 2000 sf in this Shared Use District, which is why this use is envisioned.

We will be adding a stairway from Colchester Ave. to our own courtyard as a convenient access to the café, since there is no sidewalk currently on Mill Street.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS SUBMITTAL

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1. Although we originally proposed rebuilding the historic west porch, we will not be able to do that unless we were to be given use of seven feet of ROW space against our west façade and the curb was moved out to align with that on the bridge. Vtrans will not allow use of non-transportation functions within the Route 7 ROW. After discussion with Laura Wheelock at the Burlington Public Works Department and Scott Gurley, an historic preservation specialist at Vtrans, it may be possible, but seems unlikely within a year and won't happen without Burlington's support. If the option becomes available, we may file to do this work under a separate permit, but it is no longer part of this proposed project. The restoration of the building, however, including restoration of windows and doors that are now buried, is part of this project.



Historic photo (1927) showing original porch we are not allowed to rebuild without Vtrans permission. We will restore the façade behind the porch as you see it here.

2. Since Act 88 requires at least one of the improved apartments be accessible to people with disabilities, we have proposed building a ramp 15' long, on the first floor level of the existing side porch. This will provide handicapped access to both of the first floor apartments, one of which will be made to be fully accessible to those with disabilities.

3. We also decided to withdraw all requests related to changing the existing curbs, overhead utilities, sidewalks and parking around our block. According to Laura Wheelock, Burlington Public Works is considering changes to the intersection of Riverside Drive with Colchester Ave. Initial planning indicates aligning the curb in front of our building with that of the bridge, as well as creating a walkway on the south side of Mill Street with a new curb about 8' from our building. We support both of these changes, but since they are not finalized, we see no reason to suggest our own site changes when none are necessary to lift the building out of the ground to protect it from further deterioration, improve the apartments, and create addition rental income from leasing a café of up to 2000 sf on the lower two levels. We have changed the major access to the Café to come through our courtyard from the sidewalk at Colchester Ave. rather than rely on a new sidewalk at Mill Street.

4. Instead of lifting the building 9' 7" as originally proposed, the receipt of a Site Survey from Cross Consulting Engineers indicates that the optimal lift should just be 8' 0" instead of 9' 7". This will put the inserted Ground Floor (upper level of the café) at the right height to be accessible to people with disabilities from the new walkway we propose at the level of the alley east of our building. It also makes it possible to reach the first floor apartments from Colchester Ave. with just a 15' long ramp that we will build within the first floor of the side porch on the south side that we will also be restoring, as seen in the proposed South Elevation.

5. Rather than relocate the electrical service to the west side of the building, we will keep it where it is now on the east end of the south wall. The conduit on the façade will need to be 8' longer to reach the location of the meters so they will be visible at ground level on the back of the building and essentially away from public view.

6. A new set of drawings, including the requested Survey is attached to further clarify what is intended.

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was the contractor. Although the surface of the road has been periodically changed since its construction, the bridge itself has remained relatively unaltered with the exception of the cobra-head lamps, which replaced the original lantern-shaped lights.

**14. Burlington Flouring Company Grist Mill Site, c.1823,
1854, 1927**

Located adjacent to the lower crib dam near the southwest corner of the Winooski Bridge (#13) is the site of the Burlington Flouring Company's grist mill. The portions of the mill's brick foundation walls, floodgates, and sluiceway are the district's only remaining references to the industries on the Burlington side of the Winooski River's lower falls throughout most of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The site has served as the location for a succession of mills since the early decades of the 1800s. A grist mill was built on the site by the Catlin Brothers sometime after 1823 to harness the waterpower of the lower falls and was soon joined downstream by an oil mill and a plaster mill. The complex was expanded in the mid-1840s with the addition of a new grist mill and a cotton mill, but was destroyed by fire in January of 1852. An 1860 description of the rebuilt complex describes the mill as being five stories high and built of wood with eleven runs of stone. It could grind 70,000 bushels of wheat a year, while the adjacent plaster mill could produce about 500 tons of plaster a year. By the 1870s, however, the aging grist mill could no longer compete against the new roller mills, and through the late 1880s it was used only for occasional custom grinding. The building was eventually sold to the Burlington Woolen Mill for its water rights and used for storage until 1928, when it was torn down after suffering extensive damage in the 1927 flood.

**15. Duncan Blacksmith Shop (495-97 Colchester Avenue),
c.1841, 1928**

This 2-story, brick-veneered building on the southwest corner of Colchester Avenue and Mill Street is three bays across and five bays long with a gable roof that is covered by slate shingles on the north and asphalt shingles on the south. The 2/2 windows below its shallow-pitched roof are spanned by rectangular wooden lintels, which extend behind the friezeboards above the attic windows.

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The single-story, front elevation facing Colchester Avenue to the west contains a central entranceway and features a gable cornice with wide soffits and returns.

The building's south facade is composed of a second story at street level with four unevenly spaced windows separating entrances near each end. The facade is screened by a two story, four bay, shed-roofed porch, which was added between 1894 and 1900 and features turned Tuscan columns rising from its second story railing. An additional bay supported by a manufactured, wrought iron post was more recently added to the west end, allowing access to the street. Covered storage areas sheathed with wooden shingles were added on the porch's first story, between which rise two sets of wooden stairs.

The rear facade faces east and is screened by a 2-story, shed-roofed, wooden porch added between 1906 and 1912. The facade's original cornice appears to have been removed, since the roof now ends flush with the brick wall.

The building's interior consists of a top floor that has been divided into two apartments and a lower floor used for storage and mechanicals that has been finished with beaded, wooden panelling dating from the turn of the 20th century.

The building was originally constructed as a store between 1841 and 1846 to serve the rapidly expanding manufacturing and commercial center developing around Winooski Falls. From 1851 to 1882, the building was a forge and blacksmith shop operated by Albert and George Duncan. In 1883, the shop was purchased by I. S. Dubuc, who continued to use the building as a blacksmith and wheelwright shop with a painting shop on the second floor. By 1889, Dubuc had expanded his operations and built lumber drying sheds, which were connected with a carriage house to the south and a livery next door. Insurance maps indicate the building was used to sell second hand goods from 1894 until about 1912, when Dubuc converted the building into a grocery store.

In addition to being a significant example of the mid 19th century commercial development at Winooski Falls, the building also shows changes to the district brought about in the aftermath of the disastrous flood of 1927. Along with the destruction of the Winooski Falls dams and extensive damage to the mills, the flood swept away the iron bridge connecting Burlington and Winooski. To accommodate the increased height of the replacement bridge, approximately

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eight feet of fill was added to Colchester Avenue, raising the grade up to the level of the second story on the building's west side.

16. I. S. Dubuc Tenement Building (5-11 Mill Street), c.1912

Number 5-11 Mill Street is part of a continuing line of tenements stretching between the Chace Mill (#1) and the Winooski Bridge (#13). The 2-story, flat-roofed, clapboarded building features a simple bracketed cornice atop its parapet, which extends around the building's east, north, and west sides and masks the roof behind. The fenestration on both stories is four bays wide on the front and rear facades and two bays wide on the sides. The openings were partially infilled several years ago to accommodate new 1/1 windows.

Access to the building is gained from the south side, which is screened by a full-length, 2-story porch with stairs rising up to the two second-story apartments. The porch appears to be original to the building, although several of the posts have been replaced. The two apartment doors on both stories are interspersed with windows.

The building reflects the economical construction techniques intended for low cost rentals. Built as a tenement by I. S. Dubuc around the same time as the construction of the Champlain Mill across the river, it is one of the few early 20th century tenements in the Winooski Falls Mill Historic District and reflects the increased demand for factory worker housing during this period.

17. Burlington Cotton Company Tenement Building (13-19 Mill Street), c.1853, 1874

This large, 2 1/2 story, asbestos-shingled, apartment block rises from a high brick and stone foundation up to a gable roof trimmed by an overhanging cornice with soffit returns. The building's 10-bay, north facade faces Mill Street and contains two sets of paired doors on the first story. Partly covering the north facade is a shallow, 2-story porch originally constructed between 1935 and 1941 and later rebuilt and enclosed with aluminum combination storm windows. Sets of covered stairs lead to the east and west ends of the porch. Additional doorways open to the porch from the second story.

The side facades are two bays deep with windows in the attic gables and an additional entrance on the southeast corner,