

RECEIVED

JAN 27 2020

BURLINGTON
PERMITTING & INSPECTIONS

CITY OF BURLINGTON

Zoning Permit Application - Conditional Use

Property Address: 36-38 South Union Street, Burlington, VT 05401

Property Owner: The Paul Gregory Mayer Revocable Trust (u/t/a 12/4/18) and
The Karen Louise Mayer Revocable Trust (u/t/a 12/4/18)
61 School House Road
South Burlington, VT 05403

Applicant: Burlington Community House, LLC d/b/a My Cousin's Place
c/o Jennifer Fabiano
34 Pleasant Street, Unit 4
Morrisville, VT 05661

Memorandum in Support of Zoning Permit Application for Conditional Use

Description of the Proposed Use:

Applicant proposes a change of use from a duplex to a hostel. 36-38 South Union Street (the "Property") is located in the "Residential – High Density" zoning district and is currently permitted as a duplex, an approved use in this district. The Burlington Comprehensive Development Ordinance ("Ordinance") Comprehensive Use Table (Appendix A), lists hostels as a non-residential conditional use within the residential high density district. Applicant requests conditional use approval to allow the Property to be operated as a hostel.

Each side of the duplex is currently made up of seven bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen, a living room, and a dining room. Conversion of the Property to a hostel will not require any interior or exterior changes to the Property. The bedrooms will each be used as individual rooms for hostel guests, for a total of 14 rooms in the hostel. The bathrooms, kitchen, living room and dining room on each side will be shared.

The hostel will provide an alternative affordable lodging option for visitors to Burlington, including professionals on short-term assignment in the area, tourists, and parents of UVM and Champlain College students. The proposed hostel will be the only year-round hostel in Burlington and its pricing will make Burlington an accessible work and vacation destination to more people.

The Property is owned by The Paul Gregory Mayer Revocable Trust (u/t/a 12/4/18) and The Karen Louise Mayer Revocable Trust (u/t/a 12/4/18) and is rented in its entirety to Jennifer Fabiano.

Days and Hours of Operation:

The proposed check-in time for the hostel is 4:00 p.m. and the check-out time is 10:00 am. Of course, many guests of the hostel will stay more than one night, so it is expected guests may remain in the hostel throughout the day. The hostel will be open all year.

Specific quiet hours will be enforced between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am, however, quiet will be encouraged at all times as it is expected that some guests will be sleeping during the day, such as night-shift nurses on temporary assignment at UVM Medical Center.

Number of Employees:

Ms. Fabiano and a co-host/manager will manage the hostel and will employ one additional person. The proposed employee lives in Burlington and will not use a parking space at the hostel.

Traffic Generation and Parking Analysis:

Pursuant to Section 8.1.8 of the Ordinance, the minimum off-street parking requirement for a hostel in a neighborhood district is 1/2 of a parking spot for every two beds. A total of 14 beds are proposed at the hostel which requires four off-street parking spots. The Property currently has eight off-street parking spots, providing double the minimum parking required for a hostel.

It is expected that many guests will visit Burlington without a car or may keep their car at a downtown garage, as will be suggested in the hostel's electronic guidebook. The convenient location of the hostel to downtown means visitors can easily access anything they might need on foot.

The hostel will not generate additional traffic to the neighborhood beyond a residential use of the Property and will have no adverse impact on traffic or parking in the neighborhood.

Floor Plans:

Applicant requests the floor plan requirement be waived as there is no proposed change to the current building and floor plan. The proposed change of use will have no impact to the layout of the building and will not require any modifications to the Property.

Phasing Schedule:

The change in use to a hostel will not require any construction and therefore, no phasing schedule is proposed.

Review criteria pursuant to Sec. 3.5.6(b):

- 1. Existing or planned public utilities, facilities or services are capable of supporting the proposed use in addition to the existing uses in the area:**

The proposed change in use will not result in an undue adverse effect on existing or planned public utilities, facilities, or services. Changing the Property from fourteen bedrooms that are rented longer term to fourteen bedrooms rented shorter term as a hostel will not create any additional need for public utilities, facilities, or services. The number of individuals staying at the Property will remain consistent with current permitting.

RECEIVED

JAN 27 2020

BURLINGTON
PERMITTING & INSPECTIONS

2. The character of the area affected as defined by the purpose or purposes of the zoning district(s) within which the project is located, and specifically stated policies and standards of the municipal development plan:

The proposed change in use to a hostel will not have an undue adverse effect on the character of the area. The Property is located in the Residential High Density District which, pursuant to Section 4.4.5(a) of the Ordinance, is intended primarily for high density attached multi-family residential development. Development is intended to be intense with high lot coverage, large buildings, and buildings placed close together. The use of the Property as a hostel is in keeping with the high density, high lot coverage intention of the zoning district. The proposed change of use is consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

No construction is proposed as the Property is already set up for a hostel. Unlike some hostels, My Cousin's Place will be made up of individual private rooms, with no group dormitory-style rooms.

Should the change of use be approved, the Property will lose its current grandfathered status relative to Section 4.4.5 of the Ordinance concerning four unrelated adults living in a dwelling unit. A change of use to a permitted hostel will bring the current non-conforming use into a conforming use.

3. The proposed use will not have nuisance impacts from noise, odor, dust, heat, and vibrations greater than typically generated by other permitted uses in the same zoning district:

The proposed use will not have nuisance impacts from noise, odor, dust, heat, and vibrations. The expected visitors to the hostel are tourists, professionals on short-term assignments in the area, and parents visiting the local college campuses. The hostel will institute quiet hours between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am. However, quiet will be encouraged throughout the day as the hostel expects to accommodate travelling nurses and others who may work overnight shifts and sleep during the day.

The proposed hostel will be made up of individual private rooms, with no group dormitory-style rooms. This set-up will encourage a quiet environment at the hostel.

The change from rental to hostel will not require any renovation, modification, or construction and the change in use itself will therefore not generate noise, odor, dust, heat, or vibrations.

4. The transportation system is capable of supporting the proposed use in addition to the existing uses in the area. Evaluation factors include street designations and capacity; level of service and other performance measures; access to arterial roadways; connectivity;

RECEIVED

JAN 27 2020
BURLINGTON
PERMITTING & INSPECTIONS

transit availability; parking and access; impacts on pedestrian, bicycle and transit circulation; safety for all modes; and adequate transportation demand management strategies:

Pursuant to Section 8.1.8 of the Ordinance, the minimum off-street parking requirement for a hostel in a neighborhood district is 1/2 of a parking spot for every two beds. A total of fourteen beds are proposed which would require four off-street parking spots. The Property currently has eight off-street parking spots, providing double the required parking for a hostel. A bike rack is provided on site to encourage bicycle use.

Additionally, it is expected that many hostel guests will visit Burlington without a car or may keep their car at a downtown garage. The electronic guide book that will be provided to all guests suggests using the downtown parking garages for parking. The hostel will not generate additional traffic to the neighborhood beyond the traffic generated by the current residential use.

5. The utilization of renewable energy resources:

The proposed project will not interfere with or have an undue adverse effect on the sustainable use of renewable energy resources. The new use will not require any additional use of renewable energy resources or impact the future availability of such resources. The Applicant will use energy efficient bulbs, water saving showerheads, and Energy Star appliances in the hostel.

6. Any standards or factors set forth in existing City bylaws and city and state ordinances:

“Hostel” is defined in Article 13 of the Ordinance as, “A place where travelers may stay for a limited duration, as recognized by the International Hostel Association.” No such organization currently exists. A group called Hostel International USA (HI USA) seems to have the closest name to International Hostel Association, however, the group is a network of 50 hostels in the United States that require guests to first register with the group before booking. We don’t believe this is the intention of the City Ordinance, and the only other hostel located in Burlington is not listed as a member of HI USA.

The Applicant will apply to the Vermont Department of Health for an application for a license to operate a lodging establishment pursuant to the Vermont Department of Health Licensed Lodging Establishment Rule.

The proposed project will conform to the City bylaws as well as City and State ordinances.

RECEIVED

JAN 27 2020

BURLINGTON
PERMITTING & INSPECTIONS