

MONTPELIER DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD REPORT

Prepared by Meredith Strobridge Crandall, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Date: December 29, 2022

For the meeting of January 3, 2023

FINAL REVIEW CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

Applicant: Vermont College of Fine Arts

Owner: Same

**Addresses: 31–33, 35–37, 39, 41 & 45
College St, 62 Ridge St, & 1 West
St**

Application # Z-2022-0140

Zone: Mixed Use Residential



Guiding Ordinance Sections

Chapter 200. General Provisions

Chapter 210. Base Zoning Districts & Neighborhoods

- Section 2107. Mixed Use Residential (MUR) District & Neighborhoods

Chapter 300. General Standards

- Section 3001. Use Standards
- Section 3002. Dimensional Standards
- Section 3003. Accessory Structures and Uses
- Section 3004. Demolition
- Section 3005. Riparian Areas
- Section 3006. Wetlands and Vernal Pools
- Section 3007. Steep Slopes
- Section 3008. Erosion Control
- Section 3009. Stormwater Management
- Section 3010. Vehicle Access and Circulation
- Section 3011. Parking and Loading Areas
- Section 3012. Signs

Chapter 330. Conditional Use Standards

Chapter 340. Planned Unit Development Standards

- Section 3406. Campus Development

Chapter 430. Development Review Procedures

Chapter 440. Subdivision and PUD Review Procedures

Materials Submitted:

- a) Development Application, dated December 2, 2022;
- b) Zoning Permit Attachment, dated December 2, 2022;
- c) List of Vermont College of Fine Arts (“VCFA”) Addresses and Building Names, received

- by Planning and Community Development Dept. (the “Planning Dept.”) December 5, 2022;
- d) VCFA Campus Master Plan Application, pp. 1–15, dated December 2022, and received by Planning Dept. December 5, 2022 (the “VCFA Campus Master Plan”), including:
 - a. Existing Conditions Site Plan
 - b. Table A – Dimensional Standards
 - c. Table B – Proposed Permitted Uses
 - d. Conceptual Site Plan
 - e. Table C – VCFA Current and Future Parking Summary
 - f. Table D – Existing Parking Needs
 - g. Table E: Scenario A – Future Mixed Uses and Parking
 - h. Appendix A – Shared Parking Calculations

Materials Supplied by Staff:

- e) Email from Police Chief Eric Nordenson to Meredith S. Crandall, Planning and Zoning Administrator, re: Request for Comments: VCFA Final Campus PUD Application, dated December 14, 2022;
- f) Email from Corey B. Line, Department of Public Works Project Management Director, to Ms. Crandall, re: Request for Comments: VCFA Final Campus PUD Application, dated December 21, 2022; and
- g) Email from Mr. Line to Ms. Crandall re: Quick Question for VCFA Staff Report, dated December 29, 2022.

Project Scope & Applicant Request

Applicant seeks Final Approval of a Campus Master Plan for creation of a Campus Development PUD for the Vermont College of Fine Arts, which includes the following parcels: 31–33, 35–37, 39, 41, and 45 College Street, 62 Ridge Street, and 1 West Street.

This particular Campus Development PUD does not request any changes to structures, impervious surfaces, signs, or other aspects of the built environment at this time. Instead, VCFA is requesting that the Board approve: (1) a roadmap for future potential changes—which would require future, project-specific permits as applicable; and (2) alternative, less-stringent approval processes for some of those future projects when compared to the typical approvals required for other properties in the same zoning district (i.e., Administrative approval instead of Conditional Use Review).

The subject lands are in the Mixed Use Residential (“MUR”) Zoning District. This Final Campus Development PUD Application will first be reviewed by the Development Review Board (the “Board”) on January 3, 2023.

STAFF REVIEW & COMMENTS

- 1. Existing Conditions: The VCFA Campus is an existing college campus that incorporates 15+ acres (248,292 SF) from five different parcels of land, and eleven distinct street addresses for the various buildings. The various parcels are each serviced by municipal water and sewer.
- 2. Location: The subject land is in the College Hill-East State St. Neighborhood in the MUR

Zoning District.

3. Permit/Parcel History: As a college, VCFA was subject to the Academic Institution Planned Unit Development (“AI-PUD”) provisions of the City of Montpelier Zoning and Subdivision Regulations adopted by City Council on August 30, 2016, as amended through January 26, 2011 (the “2011 Regulations”). As such, VCFA was subject to a Master Plan approved as part of its AI-PUD for several years. However, that AI-PUD expired on June 4, 2017, as the 2011 Regulations required that they be renewed every five years (the most recent “reinstatement” occurred on June 4, 2012).

During the gap between adoption of the current Regulations in January of 2018 and now, VCFA has had to obtain zoning permits based on the individual parcels it owns, without any of the benefits supplied by a Campus Development PUD. These relatively recent permits include a subdivision, a change of use, a request to use an old tennis court for temporary surface parking, and others.

The Sketch Plan Campus PUD Application was reviewed by the Development Review Board (the “Board”) on December 6, 2021, and was very similar to the Final Application that is now before the Board.

Case #	Site Address	Primary Contact	Department	Type	Project Name	Project Description	Status	Submitted	Issued
D-2021-0235	36 COLLEGE ST	VERMONT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS	MONTPELIER DEVELOPMENT	DEVELOPMENT PERMIT	Sketch Plan review of Campus PUD	Sketch Plan review of Campus PUD	PENDING	11/05/2021	
Z-2021-0134	36 COLLEGE ST	VERMONT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS	ZONING	ZONING PERMIT - PUD	Sketch Plan review of Campus PUD	Sketch Plan review of Campus PUD	COMPLETE	11/05/2021	
D-2021-0182	36 COLLEGE ST	VERMONT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS	MONTPELIER DEVELOPMENT	DEVELOPMENT PERMIT	Fire Alarm Installation	Fire Alarm Installation	PENDING	08/31/2021	
B-2021-0122	36 COLLEGE ST	VERMONT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS	BUILDING	BUILDING PERMIT - PUBLIC BUILDING	Fire Alarm Installation	Fire Alarm Installation	ISSUED	08/31/2021	09/16/2021
D-2021-0126	36 COLLEGE ST	GMR Tent Rentals	MONTPELIER DEVELOPMENT	DEVELOPMENT PERMIT	Tent for Educational Event.	Tent for Educational Event.	PENDING	07/08/2021	
B-2021-0082	36 COLLEGE ST	GMR Tent Rentals	BUILDING	BUILDING PERMIT - PUBLIC BUILDING	Tent for Educational Event.	Tent for Educational Event.	ISSUED	07/08/2021	07/28/2021
Z-2019-0001	36 COLLEGE ST	VERMONT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS	ZONING	ZONING PERMIT - COMPREHENSIVE	Temporary parking at location of tennis courts.	Temporary parking at location of tennis courts.	APPEAL PERIOD	01/02/2019	03/26/2019
Z-2019-0017	29 COLLEGE ST	VERMONT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS	ZONING	ZONING PERMIT - SUBDIVISION	Final plan review of a two lot subdivision.	Two lot subdivision.	APPEAL PERIOD	03/12/2019	05/15/2019
D-2019-0031	29 COLLEGE ST	VERMONT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS	MONTPELIER DEVELOPMENT	DEVELOPMENT PERMIT	Two Lot subdivision.	Two lot subdivision.	PENDING	02/07/2019	
Z-2019-0013	29 COLLEGE ST	VERMONT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS	ZONING	ZONING PERMIT - SUBDIVISION	Sketch Plan review of a two lot subdivision.	Sketch Plan review of a two lot subdivision.	COMPLETE	02/07/2019	

4. Procedural Status: This is Final Review of a Campus Development PUD proposal. The Board is charged with taking testimony during a public hearing, and making a decision on the application.

See text of §§ 4401–4405 for additional guidance on subdivision procedures as they apply to Chapter 340, including approval of Campus Developments.

CHAPTER 300 GENERAL STANDARDS

5. Section 3001. Use Standards

- A. Applicability. The land development shall conform to the use standards for the applicable zoning district. Per the Use Table at Figure 2-15, the MUR District allows a variety of uses as “permitted,” including up to four dwelling units, B&Bs, inns, personal or professional services establishments, religious facilities, schools, etc. A number of other uses are allowed conditionally. More discussion on this under Chapter 340 below.
- B. Mixed uses. *Not applicable.*
- C. Prohibited uses. *Not applicable.*
- D. Materially similar uses. *Not applicable.*
 - i. Applicant proposes no changes to the current uses with this application as such.

Staff Comment: See discussion at Chapter 340 regarding request to change some Conditional Uses to Permitted Uses as part of the Campus Development PUD approval.

6. Sections 3002 and 3003. Dimensional Standards, and Accessory Structures

- A. Applicability. Land development shall conform to the dimensional standards for the applicable zoning district, as set in Chapter 200. Figure 2-07 establishes the dimensional standards for development in the MUR District as follows:

Figure 2-07. **Mixed Use Residential District Dimensional Standards**

PARCELS	SETBACKS	DENSITY	BUILDINGS
Parcel size: 3,000 sf min Frontage: 45 ft. min Coverage: 70% max	Front: 5 ft. min Side: 5 ft. min Rear: 10 ft. min Water: 25 ft. min	Residential: 1 du/1,500 sf max Floor Area Ratio: 1.0 FAR max	Footprint: 3,000 sf max Height: 24 ft. min, 40 ft. max

Note 1 See Section 3002 for specific information and any exceptions regarding dimensional standards. Accessory structures may have reduced dimensional standards (see Section 3003 for specific details regarding accessory structures).

- B. Per § 1203, a nonconforming structure may remain as is.
- C. Principal building § 3002.B. Allows more than one principal building on a parcel. *Not applicable.*
 - i. Applicant proposes no changes to existing structures or parcels with this application.

Staff Findings: Staff suggests that the Campus Development application complies with §§ 3002 and 3003.

- 7. Section 3004. Demolition – *Not applicable. No demolition proposed.*
- 8. Section 3005. Riparian Areas – *Not applicable. No surface waters mapped on the Montpelier Natural Resources Inventory Map (the “Montpelier NRIM”) are present on the VCFA campus.*

9. Section 3006. Wetlands and Vernal Pools – *Not applicable*. The standards in § 3006 only apply to wetlands or vernal pools documented on the Montpelier NRIM. Staff confirmed that there are no such wetlands or vernal pools on the VCFA campus through a visual inspection of the map.
10. Section 3007. Steep Slopes – Section 3007 applies to land development that proposes to disturb or clear land on steep slopes that exceeds the threshold amounts specified in Figure 3-08, all of which are 15% or greater.
 - A. The purposes of § 3007 are to: (1) Protect public safety and property; (2) Minimize the potential for erosion, runoff, flooding and degradation of water quality; and (3) Avoid the increased cost of providing services to remote or difficult to access land. § 3007.A.
 - B. Per §§ 3007.E & F, any development of land with $\geq 30\%$ slopes requires an engineered plan and report and a hearing. See also Figures 3-08 and 3-09.
 - i. No disturbing of soil is proposed with this Campus Development application.

Staff Findings: Staff suggests that § 3007 is not applicable to this Campus Development approval, as no slopes will be disturbed by the adoption.

11. Section 3008. Erosion Control – The provisions of this section apply to land development that proposes to disturb or clear land on steep slopes that exceed the threshold amounts specified in Figure 3-08.
 - i. *Not applicable. No land will be disturbed or cleared by the subdivision.*

Staff Findings: As there will be no disturbing of land with the Campus Development, Staff suggests finding that § 3008 doesn't apply to this application.

12. Section 3009. Stormwater Management – Section 3009 outlines the requirements for stormwater management and requires that storm sewer system and other drainage improvements shall be in accordance with plans approved by the Director of Public Works. In no case shall stormwater discharge into a city sewer system if a separate system exists.
 - i. *No land will be disturbed, grades changed, or impervious surface added with this Campus Development.*

Staff Findings: Staff suggests finding that § 3009 is not applicable to this Campus Development application, as no grades will be changed nor impervious surfaces added with issuance of the Campus Development permit.

13. Section 3010. Access and Circulation – The purpose of this section is to promote safe and efficient access to and circulation within a property for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic.
 - A. Per § 3010.B, “[a]ll parcels being developed or redeveloped” must provide vehicular access from the street in accordance with Montpelier public works specifications, VTrans’ B-71 Standards for Residential and Commercial Drives, and the standards of § 3010, which include the requirement for “adequate access and circulation to prevent traffic congestion on the street and traffic conflicts (including service

vehicles, passenger vehicles, parking, drive-through lanes, bicyclists, and pedestrians) within the site.” § 3010.B.1.

- B. Per § 3010.B(9) “[p]reviously developed sites with nonconforming access shall come into conformance with the provisions of this section when changes are proposed to the site layout, access, or circulation.”
 - i. No changes to any access points or vehicle circulation proposed.

Staff Comment: Note that the Campus Master Plan describes College Street as a minor collector road, but per DPW’s Mr. Line it’s a major collector. See email from December 29th for details on the difference. Staff suggests conditioning any approval on amending this FHWA classification reference in the Campus Master Plan.

Staff Findings: Staff finds § 3010 not applicable to this Campus Development application, as no access or circulation will be changed with the approval. Additional permits will be required prior to any such potential changes.

14. Section 3011. Parking and Loading Areas – See discussion at § 3406.J, below as relates to Campus PUDs.

15. Section 3012. Signs – Not applicable. No new signs being proposed. See below for sign plan discussion relevant to a Campus Development.

CHAPTER 330 & 340: CONDITIONAL USE & PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

STANDARDS: Chapter 330 contains the standards applicable to conditional use review.

Meanwhile, Chapter 340 is intended to provide flexibility for development types and patterns that further the goals of the Montpelier City Plan.

16. Section 3406. Campus Development

- A. Per § 3406.A, Campus Developments are intended to accommodate the particular needs of manufacturing, office, or institutional uses.
- B. Campus developments are allowed in specific Zoning Districts, including MUR.
§ 3406.B. Campus Master Plans do not expire, though developments approved in those Master Plans that require major site plan approval expire within 5 years.
§ 3406.M.
- C. For this section, “campus” is defined as a self-contained development that includes multiple buildings or parcels that: (i) are commonly owned and managed; (ii) Are located in proximity to and related to one another; (iii) Are oriented and organized around common open space areas; (iv) Share access, parking and other facilities or amenities; (v) Are connected with pedestrian walkways; (vi) Accommodate primarily light industrial, office and institutional uses that have a similar, shared or common purpose; and (vii) Are a minimum of 5 acres in size
 - i. The VCFA campus is over 15 acres in size and includes multiple, adjacent parcels, already developed with several buildings which are commonly owned and managed by VCFA.
 - ii. A central feature of the VCFA campus is the College Green.
 - iii. Shared facilities include parking areas, dormitories, cafeteria, and College Green, and all buildings and parcels are connected by pedestrian walkways,

including public sidewalks.

Staff Comments: Should VCFA sell off buildings that are currently within the proposed Campus Development, those buildings could remain within the § 3406 jurisdiction so long as some form of condominium or other management/owners' association is formed to maintain the "common ownership [of the land] and management" of the Campus Development as a whole.

- D. Per § 3406.L, a Campus Master Plan Application must include a Site Plan and a Narrative that includes: (i) A statement of the principal purpose of the Campus; (ii) Any requests for dimensional waivers; (iii) A description of residential and non-residential development and how consistent with § 3406.D; (iv) A list of uses to be approved as a base of principal and accessory uses consistent with § 3406.E; (v) An outline of new construction proposed, if any; (vi) Description of compliance with open space standards; (vii) Any necessary supplemental information regarding pedestrian and vehicular access; (viii) Shared parking plan; and (ix) Sign plan.
- i. The Application addresses each of these items, though some in less detail than others. See additional details below as each sub-section is reviewed.
 - ii. There is both an Existing Conditions Site Plan and a Conceptual Site Plan, both incorporating shared parking plans.
 - iii. Applicant requests the Board's approval of a shared parking plan that allows for less than the minimum number of parking spaces required under § 3011. See pp. 10-14 of the Campus Master Plan, and subsection H below for additional analysis.
 - iv. Applicant has described the current signage on Campus on p. 15 of the Campus Master Plan, and requests that it be allowed to apply for changes to that Sign Plan in the future, when it has decided on campus-wide updates or changes to the existing signage.

Staff Comments: Applicant has addressed each aspect necessary for a complete Campus PUD application, with the potential exemption of a Sign Plan. See below for additional analysis.

- E. Statement of Principal Purpose – "Create a mixed-use campus, with adaptive reuse of existing buildings, respectful of its heritage as an academic institution within the greater Montpelier community and an integral part of the College Hill neighborhood." See p. 2 of the Campus Master Plan.
- F. Dimensional Standards – Per § 3406.C, the Board may waive dimensional standards for parcels, setbacks, and buildings in the base zoning district for a Campus PUD. Though the campus must meet applicable setbacks around its perimeter, and lot coverage for the campus as a whole shall not exceed the lesser of 70% or the district maximum (in MUR 70%).
- i. As noted in the Campus Master Plan, p. 4, VCFA's buildings are all existing, so any discrepancies from the current dimensional standards are nonconformities that may remain unchanged. No changes to structures or parcels are proposed with this application.

Staff Findings: Staff suggests finding that the application complies with the dimensional standards as applicable, as no structures will be added or changed by the Campus Development proposal itself.

- G. Density – The Campus Developments provide no density bonuses, except that density is determined based on the campus as a whole versus individual parcel sizes. See § 3406.D.
- i. Non-residential density in MUR is limited to 1.0 FAR.
 - ii. As detailed in Table A, p. 4 of the Campus Master Plan, there is only one parcel that exceeds this FAR, and the campus as a whole has a FAR of 0.34.
 - iii. The current proposal does not include construction of any additional buildings.

Staff Findings: Staff suggests finding that the proposal complies with the density requirement for a Campus Development, as no structures will be added or changed by the proposal.

Reminder for Applicant that should it convert any of its buildings to residential uses—even with Board approval as a permitted use, the total density will have to be recalculated accordingly for such revised development and found to meet the FAR max for permit approval.

- H. Uses – Per § 3406.E, uses within a Campus Development are allowed as follows:
- (1) Any use (permitted or conditional) allowed in the base zoning district that is also listed in the Campus Master Plan as incidental to or supportive of the campus’ primary purpose **shall be allowed in a campus development as a permitted use.**

Staff Comment: The language of § 3406.E(1) does not REQUIRE that a Use converted from conditional to permitted use within a Campus Development meet the Conditional Use Standards of Chapter 330. However, Staff suggests that at review of those Chapter 330 Standards is warranted – and that the “shall” language is in relation to the approved Campus Master Plan, not that the Board must approve the requested classification changes no matter what.

- (2) The Board may approve additional uses listed in the Campus Master Plan that are not otherwise allowed at all in the base zoning district, so long as the applicant obtains Conditional Use approval and “demonstrates that the proposed use is incidental to or supportive of the principal purpose of the campus development.” § 3406.E(2).

Staff Comment: Applicant is not requesting this.

- (3) Retail, service, or similar customer-oriented uses that are designed and operated primarily to serve campus residents or employees may also be available for the public.
- (4) Any use not listed in the Campus Master Plan as incidental to and supportive of the primary use of the campus development shall be regulated as allowed in the based zoning district.

Staff Comment: Meaning that unless conditioned by the Board, uses that are otherwise permitted in

the MUR zoning district may obtain Administrative zoning permits as applicable under the Regulations as written at the time of application.

- i. Per § 3406.M, unless the Board conditions otherwise in the Campus Development PUD approval consistent with this Section 3406.E, or a use is not allowed in the MUR Zoning District, individual permits for development consistent with an approved Campus Master Plan shall be administrative (i.e., not require approval by the Board).
 - a. The principal purpose is stated in full above, but focuses on mixed-uses compatible with “adaptive reuse of existing buildings” while being “respectful of [the campus’s] heritage as an academic institution within the greater Montpelier community and an integral part of the College Hill neighborhood.”

Staff Comment: This purpose statement is broad, but so long as the Uses being requested are appropriately linked to this statement and meet the relevant § 3406 requirements, the Board has the authority to approve the request.

- b. Applicant requests that the following Uses be changed from Conditional to Permitted in Table B on p. 7 of the Campus Master Plan:
 - Multi-Unit dwellings (5 or more units)
 - Group Home, Major
 - Congregate Living
 - Office
 - Restaurant (including take-out)
 - Food service contractor
 - Laboratory or technical facility
 - Performance theater
 - Indoor games facility
 - Exhibition, convention, or conference structure
 - Government facility, office, or courthouse
 - Other community centers
 - Fitness, sports, gym or athletic facility
 - Recreational field
 - Medical clinic building
 - Rural enterprise

Staff Comment: One of the Board’s key roles in approving a Campus Master Plan is determining which Uses will be “permitted uses” within the Campus Development going forward—i.e., which will require only Administrative approval so long as no other changes trigger Board review (i.e., construction of a new principal building, disturbance of steep slopes, etc.).

Reminder that such a conversion means that within the Campus boundaries, those switched Uses will not be subject to review under the Conditional Use Standard Criteria, specifically the three core issues of: (1) Capacity of Community Facilities and Utilities—§ 3302; (2) Traffic—§ 3303; and

(3) Character of the Neighborhood—§ 3304.

- Because this Campus already contains a number of large, underutilized buildings, and is fully connected to City water and sewer, and central to other community facilities, Staff expects that Traffic impacts are likely to be the largest concern out of the Conditional Use Criteria.
- Under Section 3303, for Conditional Use approval, an applicant must demonstrate that the proposed development “will not have an undue adverse effect upon the traffic in the area,” including: (1) “That the volume, type, and timing of traffic generated by the proposed development shall not be substantially greater than what would normally occur at nearby uses or at other uses permitted in the neighborhood”; and (2) “That reasonable measures have been taken to minimize or mitigate the amount of vehicular traffic generated by the proposed development.” § 3303.A.
- With no clarity regarding the existing traffic flows in the area (DPW has represented to Staff that it does not have any such data for nearby intersections), and no definitive projects proposed, Staff Suggests looking to the trigger for traffic impact studies under the Conditional Use Standards for a potential condition of approval – specifically, generation of 75 or more new trips during the a.m. or p.m. peak hour on Class 1 roads, and 50 or more new trips during the a.m. or p.m. peak hours on Class 2 and 3 roads.
 - College Street, East State Street, Ridge Street (City owned section), and West Street are all Class 3 roads.

The Board has the option of conditioning any Campus Development PUD Use approval in various ways, potential examples:

- A single medical clinic could be approved under a permitted use, but more than that would require fresh Conditional Use Review by the Board.**
- A cap on the total SF of existing buildings that could be converted to residential dwelling units or lodging uses without fresh Conditional Use Review.**
- A cap on the cumulative number of vehicle trips during peak AM or PM levels generated by new Uses above the existing base level.**
 - That base level could be determined from the existing Uses, or the Board could ask Applicant to conduct a traffic impact study to provide a more detailed analysis of the existing conditions.

Staff Suggests that given: (1) the unknowns (current traffic status, incoming uses, which buildings will be used for what, what public comments will be received during the hearing, etc.); (2) the need for Applicant to be able to make use of its existing structures in a timely manner; and (3) the need for new housing in the State — any approval by the Board will likely include a combination of Use and Traffic-Impact related conditions of approval.

- I. Building Design – § 3406.F puts limits on building design within a Campus PUD.
 - i. Applicant proposes no new buildings in this application, but does provide a thorough description of the neighborhood and the campus in the Master Plan.
 - ii. Further, Applicant has laid out suggested guidelines for any future development.

Staff Comment: Staff suggests that the information provided by Applicant is sufficient for approval under § 3406.F, as no structures will be added or changed by the proposal, and exterior changes will be subject to the Design Review standards of § 2201, plus any projects triggering Major Site Plan Review would be subject to Board approval under the Design and Compatibility Standards of § 3207.

- J. Open Space – § 3406.G requires that at least 30% of the total campus area be reserved as common open space—which cannot include areas developed for active recreational use, such as sports courts or fields.
 - i. The Campus Master Plan details the current open space on pp. 8 and 9 with a total of approximately 32% of the campus’ area including the College Green and the green spaces in front of the buildings along College, Ridge, and West Streets. The Campus Master Plan does not confirm that all of this land will be “reserved” common open space.
 - ii. The Campus Master Plan notes additional undeveloped, open space behind Alumnx and Noble Halls. [Staff reference – Parcels G and H on the Site Plans.]

Staff Comment: There is no requirement that the “reserved” open space be marked on a Site Plan, but “reserved” does imply an area that will not be developed in the future.

Staff suggests that the Board consider this language, and whether the “reserved” area should be denoted with more detail, or if Applicant’s demonstration that more than 30% of the current campus is open space is sufficient to meet the requirements of § 3406.G.

Given that the Campus Master Plan will guide future development in this area, including where new facilities, additions, accessory structures, even ADA ramps can be built—Staff suggests that the “reserved common open space” designation is important, and should not be left to whatever management/ownership association documents are used to govern the ownership and management structure in the future.

- K. Pedestrian Access—Per § 3406.H, “all principal buildings within a campus development shall be connected with a system of sidewalk or paths.” The Board “may require the applicant to extend sidewalks along nearby public streets into the campus.”
 - i. As detailed in the Campus Master Plan and shown on the site plans, the VCFA campus include numerous city sidewalks and internal walking paths.

Staff Comment: Staff suggests that the proposal provides sufficient information regarding pedestrian access to all existing buildings for approval under § 3406.H.

- L. Vehicular Access—Per § 3406.I, “Vehicular access to a campus development shall

be provided in a manner that minimizes traffic impacts on neighborhoods streets. To the maximum extent feasible, vehicular access shall be provided from an arterial street.”

- i. As detailed in the Campus Master Plan, College Street connects Main Street with Barre Street, and carries the majority of traffic that will come to the campus.
- ii. This is an existing campus, surrounded by existing neighborhoods.

Staff Comment: Although this application doesn't propose any physical changes that would impact vehicular access, the Board may wish to consider how any of the Use changes under § 3406.E could create issues if they result in increased traffic within the existing (and unlikely to change) access routes.

This is particularly relevant when considering shifting MUR Conditional Uses to Permitted Uses within the Campus.

M. Parking—Per § 3406.J, the Campus Master Agreement must include a parking plan “consistent with § 3010” [typo in the Regulations, should read § 3011] to address the parking needs of all uses on the campus. The Campus PUD has the benefit of being able to count on-street parking on streets where both sides are owned by VCFA in the parking space tally, though that does not mean that only VCFA may use those on-street spaces.

- i. Section 3011.C and Figure 3-13 provide minimum parking ratios for various uses. Examples of current uses on the VCFA campus - Colleges require 0.3 parking spaces per student. Commercial uses with limited customer traffic (such as a newspaper office) require 1 parking space per each 600 SF of GFA. Congregate living facilities require 0.5 parking spaces for each bed.
 - a. Other uses contemplated by VCFA have different parking ratios. For example, each dwelling unit requires at least one off-street parking space. A residential care home or group home, major, would require 0.5 spaces per each dwelling unit (individual living spaces) or 0.3 spaces per bed (congregate living design). A medical clinic building would require 1 parking space per each 300 SF of GFA.
- ii. The Board may waive some or all off-street parking requirements to the extent that: (a) Applicant submits a parking study demonstrating less need; (b) Applicant meets § 3011.E shared parking requirements; (c) there is adequate on-street or public parking available within 1,000 feet of the proposed development; (d) There is an existing or proposed public transit stop within a quarter mile of the proposed development; or (e) the development will provide secure, enclosed bicycle storage and shower facilities for employees who bicycle, jog, or walk to work. § 3011.C(3).
- iii. The Shared Parking plan requirements of § 3011.E, specify that various minimum parking uses be calculated using specific percentages laid out in Figure 3-14.

- iv. Per § 3011.H(1), “[o]ff-street parking spaces shall not be less than 8½ feet wide by 18 feet deep, except for compact car spaces approved by the [] Board.”
 - a. Applicant provided a parking analysis in the Campus Master Plan, starting at p. 10, and with existing and potential future needs analyzed in Tables C–E.
 - b. VCFA calculates its total existing parking spaces as 234.

	Location	Number Spaces per Existing Conditions Site Plan	Staff Comments
Off Street Parking			
	Parcel A (1 West Street)	8 spaces	
	Parcel B (36 College St)	16 spaces	
	Parcel D (32 College St and 62 Ridge St)	55 Spaces	
	Parcel E (33, 35, 37, 39, 41, and 45 College St)	113 spaces	
On Street Parking			
	College St	31 spaces	In winter, West and College Streets have alternate side parking, so approx. ½ on-street College St spaces could be lost May only count spaces between intersection of East State St and to southern boundary of Parcel F (31 College St)
	Ridge St Extension (privately owned)	6 spaces	
	West Street	17 spaces per Existing Site Plan, 5 per Table C.	VCFA only owns both sides of the street in front of 1 West Street, so the lower number is correct.
	TOTAL	234	

Staff Comment: As noted by DPW, under the current alternating-side parking during the winter months, VCFA would only be able to count parking spaces on one-side of each of the available streets. This will reduce the 234 by approximately 16 parking spaces during the winter months.

- c. VCFA has calculated total minimum required parking spaces for current uses as 193 — 165, plus an additional 28 deeded spaces for Harris Hall. This includes factoring VCFA’s own parking needs

(separate from its tenants) under both the college (0.3 per student – though calculated as 1 per each room) and grade school (1 per each 300 SF of office and 0.1 per student) ratios.

- d. Beginning in 2023, VCFA residency programs will move out of state, reducing the need for parking for that use (the VCFA specific needs will be calculated based solely on the “Office” Use given the lack of in-person students) and opening up buildings for new uses. The Conceptual Site Plan shows where potential new parking could be created, and Tables C and E indicate how that parking could be allocated to reconfigured uses in the various buildings.

Staff Comment: The new, angled on-street parking shown as a potential on the Conceptual Site Plan is not necessarily something that the Department of Public Works would approve. See comments from Mr. Line. Given this, the potential for new on-street parking is speculative.

Staff suggests focusing on the new off-street parking options when considering any parking-related conditions of approval for the Campus Development.

Staff Findings: Applicant has more than enough parking spaces for the existing uses, and given the future reduced need for VCFA-specific parking, the existing parking provides flexibility for new uses to be added to the campus without an immediate need to construct new parking. Further, should new parking be required, there are off-street areas available for construction of such prior to researching modified on-street parking options.

Further, as detailed in Table E, some of the potential uses for existing buildings could easily share parking with other uses – given that the parking needs would not usually overlap (i.e., residential versus office). Any application for a change of use where a shared parking plan was required to demonstrate available parking (i.e., parking in the same lot but at different times) would require review of the specific shared parking plan by the Board. See § 3011.C(3).

Given the above, Staff suggests that this application has demonstrated sufficient parking capacity – both current and future – for approval under § 3406.J and § 3010; provided that all future changes of use or construction of new parking areas goes through the appropriate permit approval processes.

- N. Signage—Per § 3406.K, a Campus PUD must have an approved common scheme signage plan, and the campus development is considered a “common scheme premises” under § 3012.
 - i. A “common scheme premises” under § 3012 are sites that consist of more than one parcel sharing a common entrance form the street, and are allowed “one ground-mounted sign associated with all the uses and/or occupants of buildings and/or land within the site, even though one or more of those uses or building or land occupants are not located on the same parcel as the sign,

- and without regard for the number of landowners.”
- ii. Specifically, under § 3406.K, the Campus is allowed an entrance sign not more than 32 SF in area and 12 feet in height at its principal street entrance.
 - iii. Any secondary entrance may have a sign that is not more than 32 SF in area and 12 feet in height.
 - iv. All other signage must be designed and located so as to be primarily visible from within the campus.
 - v. The Board may approve waivers to the standards not to exceed 100% in size and 50% in height, provided the additional size shall not negatively affect the character of the neighborhood.
 - a. Applicant has summarized the existing signage on p. 12 of the Campus Master Plan, and included the location of its entrance sign on the Site Plan.
 - b. Applicant requests approval from the Board to wait to update the campus-wide Sign Plan in a later update to the Campus Master Plan.
 - c. There is no further documentation of the existing signs.

Staff Comment re: Applicable Sign Standards: The remaining sign standards and limits from § 3012 are not otherwise addressed in § 3406.K, and Staff is therefore of the opinion those aspects of § 3012 remain in effect for all other signage that VCFA may propose in the future, either for the college or its tenants. This includes building-mounted, building/parcel-specific ground mounted, directory, instructional and wayfinding, and special use sign standards, sign lighting standards, etc.

Staff Comment: Staff suggests that there’s unlikely to be any harm with approving a College Master Plan where buildings are already in place, and future uses or tenants are not yet known with only a limited Sign Plan that reflects the current signage. However, Staff recommends that photographs of all existing signs be provided to the Zoning Administrator prior to any Campus Development PUD permit issuance. Further, that the Board bar new signage until Applicant or a future Campus Ownership Association obtains for Board approval of an amended Campus Master Plan with an updated signage plan.

Staff Recommended Motion: *[Staff Reminder – Motions must be made in the affirmative.]*

- ❖ Motion to grant the request for approval of a Campus Development PUD with the associated Campus Master Plan governing future development of 31–33, 35–37, 39, 41 and 45 College Streets, 62 Ridge Street, and 1 West Street, as presented in Application #Z-2022-0140, and supporting and supplemental materials, subject to the following conditions of approval:
 - I. Within thirty (30) days of this decision and prior to permit issuance, Applicant shall provide the Zoning Administrator with:
 - A final Campus Master Plan incorporating all changes per the conditions of approval stated herein, including, but not limited to listing College Street as a major collector road under the FHWA classification system,

designating the area(s) of reserved open space, [Board to fill in any others, e.g., adjustment to list of uses shifted from conditional to permitted];

- Photographs of and measurements for all existing outdoor signs on the campus.
- II. No new signs may be erected until Applicant or a future association with management rights for the Campus has obtained Board approval of an Amended Campus Master Plan with a comprehensive Sign Plan.
 - III. All future development, even where specifically contemplated by the Campus Master Plan approved by this Decision, shall be subject to applicable permit approvals.
 - IV. [Additional conditions as specified by the Board... i.e., traffic impacts, limits on building conversions or other limits on Use types]