



# • DESIGN • REVIEW • GUIDE •

## Site Plans

Burlington is well known as a community with a high quality of life, small and cohesive neighborhoods, a vibrant downtown and waterfront – all within a spectacular setting on the shores of Lake Champlain. This deserving reputation is due in part to the City's small size, entrepreneurial spirit, civic-minded citizens and activist government. One of the many factors that makes Burlington such a great place to live, work and visit is the community's attention to detail, and respect for its setting, heritage and quality urban design.

Burlington's Design Review process strives to protect the city's unique qualities and strong sense of place by carrying out citywide development and design objectives. The purpose of this *Design Review Guide* is to help applicants in preparing projects to be reviewed by the Design Review Board and the Burlington Planning Commission. Through materials such as this, the Department of Planning & Zoning seeks to make information available well before the final design of a project saving the applicant, and the city, time and money.

### WHAT IS A SITE PLAN?

A Site Plan is a bird's eye view of your property as if you were looking down at it from above. A site plan shows everything that is on your property now. This includes the footprint of any buildings (home, garage, storage shed, decks or patios) and any other improvements such as driveway, walkways, fences, swimming pool, etc. on the property. A site plan should also show any proposed buildings or improvements. Dimensions should be included for each item, and the drawing should be done to scale (i.e. 1 inch on the plan is equal to 30 feet on the ground).

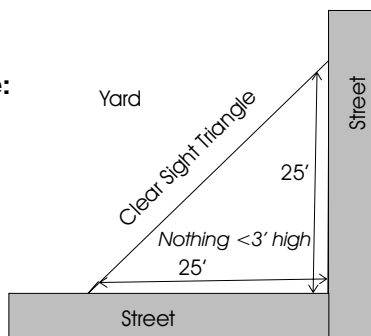
### WHY DO I NEED A SITE PLAN?

Generally speaking, a site plan is necessary whenever applying for a zoning permit. This may include a fence, an addition to your home, a new deck, storage shed, even a freestanding sign. The City uses the site plan to understand exactly what you wish to do, and to determine two important design issues: setback and coverage. This information is important to maintaining the historic patterns of Burlington's neighborhoods. The site plan becomes part of the official record and will be attached to your permit.

### DEFINITIONS:

#### Clear Sight Triangle:

When a property in a residential district is located at the intersection of two streets a "clear sight triangle" must be maintained at the corner where the two streets



come together. This is so a driver can see around the corner before making the turn. Within this area, there can be no obstruction higher than 3 feet. This includes 'see through' fences like chain link or picket.

A clear sight triangle is measured along your property line 25 feet in both directions from the intersection. Connect the two lines at their farthest point, to create a triangle at the intersection of the two streets.

#### Corner lot

If your lot is on the corner, and has frontage on two streets, you have a "corner lot." This means that you have two "front yards" for the purposes of calculating your setbacks.

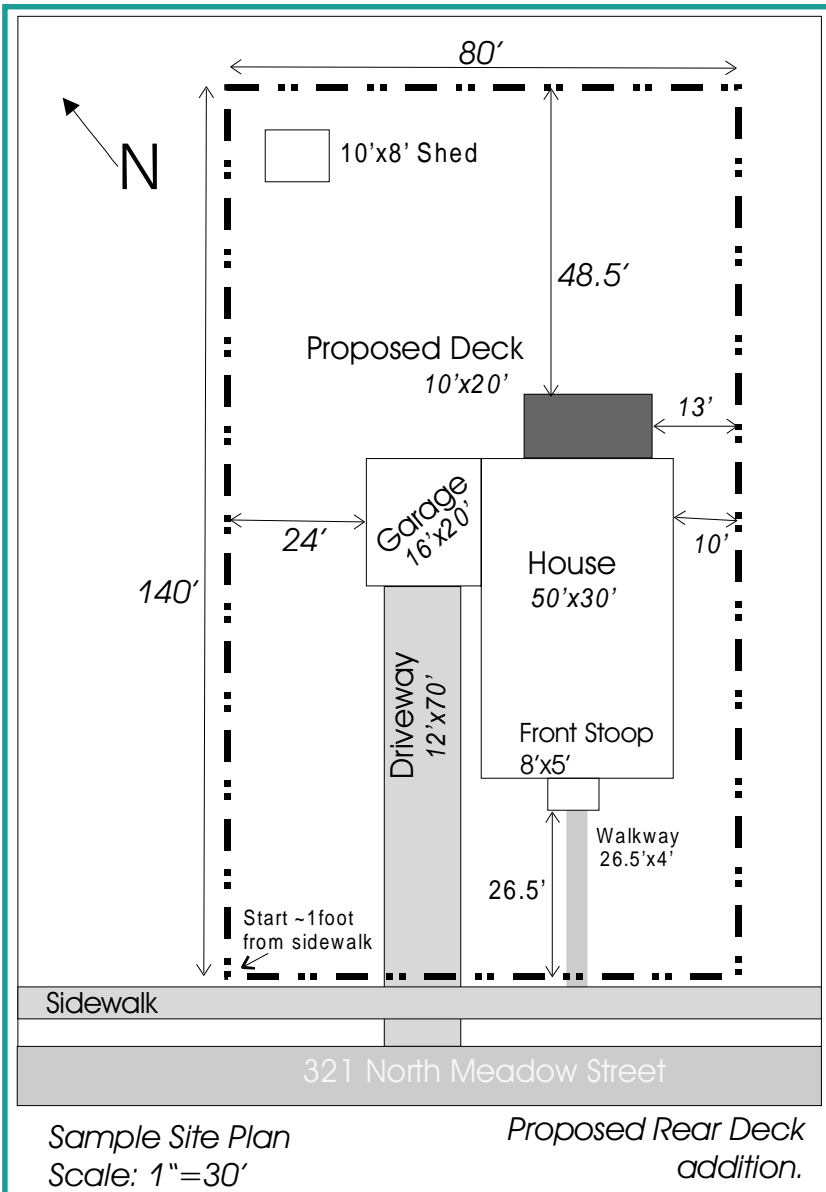
#### Coverage

Coverage refers to the total percentage of hard (or impervious) surface on your property. It basically includes everything *except* grass and landscaped areas. To calculate coverage, add up the square footage of all buildings (ground floor only) and other site improvements such as walkways, driveways and decks; multiply by 100, and then divide by the total square footage of your lot. Do this for both the existing site **and** then again for the proposed changes to your property.

Lot coverage requirements apply everywhere in Burlington, and ranges from 35-100% depending on the zoning district.

#### Setback

A "setback" (front, side and rear) is the distance from the property line to any structure or site improvement. The front yard setback is typically measured from one foot away from your side of the sidewalk. If you don't have a sidewalk, the City still owns the area where it normally would be placed. Each street is a different width, so contact the Dept. of Public Works for more information.



### SAMPLE COVERAGE CALCULATION

#### Existing:

House (50'x30')	1,500 sqft.
Garage ((16'x20')	320 sqft.
Drive (12'x70')	840 sqft.
Front Stoop (8'x5')	40 sqft.
<u>Front Walk (26.5'x4')</u>	<u>106 sqft.</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,806 sqft.</b>

Lot Size (140'x80') 11,200 sqft.

**Existing Coverage** (2806/11,200) x 100 = **25%**

#### Proposed:

<i>Proposed Deck (10'x20')</i>	<i>200 sqft.</i>
House (50'x30')	1,500 sqft.
Garage ((16'x20')	320 sqft.
Drive (12'x70')	840 sqft.
Front Stoop (8'x5')	40 sqft.
<u>Front Walk (26.5'x4')</u>	<u>106 sqft.</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,006 sqft.</b>

Lot Size (140'x80') 11,200 sqft.

**Proposed Coverage** (3006/11,200) x 100 = **27%**

### WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

*zoning requirements and general information*

- **Burlington Dept. of Planning & Zoning**  
149 Church St., Burlington City Hall  
Burlington, VT 05401  
802.865.7188

*building permits and public rights-of-way*

- **Burlington Dept. of Public Works**  
645 Pine St.  
Burlington, VT 05401  
802.863.9094

*property information and tax maps*

- **Burlington Assessor's Office**  
Burlington City Hall, Room 10  
Burlington, VT 05620-0501  
802.865.7111

*deeds and land records*

- **Burlington City Clerk and Treasurer's Office**  
Burlington City Hall, Room 23  
Burlington, VT 05620-0501  
802.865.7000

*Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for older properties*

- **UVM Special Collections**  
Bailey-Howe Library  
University of Vermont

This information has been prepared with the assistance of a matching grant from the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation through the National Park Service, US Department of the Interior under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

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Prepared by the Burlington Department of Planning & Zoning, 1999.