



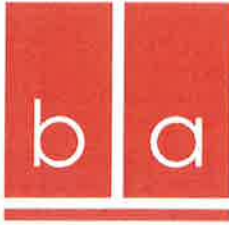
ZB / PB ~ STAFF COMMENTS TRACKING WORKSHEET

Address:	695 Springfield Avenue
Application #:	ZB-24-2237
Description/Variances:	Revised plans July 8, 2025
Sent to Staff for Comments:	July 8, 2025
Due Date:	July 11, 2025

Staff / Commission / Consultant	Delivery Method	Report Attached with Comments	Report Attached with No Objections	Not Submitted	Not Required
Eric Evers, Director Fire Chief	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Email			✓	
Ryan Peters Police Chief	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Email		✓		
Engineering: Colliers	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Email	✓			
Ralph Maritato Construction Official	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Email	✓			
John Linson City Forester	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Email	✓			
Board of Health: Westfield	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Email		✓		
Historic Preservation Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Email	✓			
Environmental Commission <i>(if required)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Email	✓			
Board Planner Burgis Associates	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Email	✓			

AT DUE DATE / UPON RECEIPT FROM ALL STAFF:

Sent to Applicant:	____/____/____
Sent to Attorney:	7 / 14 / 25



COMMUNITY PLANNING
LAND DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

B U R G I S
ASSOCIATES, INC.

PRINCIPALS:
Joseph H. Burgis PP, AICP
Edward Snieckus, Jr. PP, LLA, ASLA
David Novak PP, AICP

MEMORANDUM

To: City of Summit Zoning Board of Adjustment
From: Ed Snieckus, Jr. PP, LLA and Tom Behrens, PP, AICP
Subject: Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit (ZB-24-2237)
Preliminary/Final Major Site Plan Application
'd'(1) Use, 'd'(3) Conditional Use, 'd'(4) FAR & 'c' Bulk Variance Requests
695 Springfield Avenue
Block 1702 Lot 47
Date: July 10, 2025
BA#: 4167.14

I. INTRODUCTION

The Applicant, Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit, has submitted revised documents, plans and application materials in their request for preliminary and final major site plan approval requiring 'd'(1) use, 'd'(3) conditional use, 'd'(4) FAR and 'c' bulk variance relief to develop a new house of worship with associated site improvements at the above-referenced site. The property is located in the City's R-15 Single-Family Residential Zone which permits houses of worship as a conditional use. The extent of proposed plan revisions is summarized herein. Please refer to our prior review memorandum dated November 21, 2024 for a complete overview of the existing site conditions, proposed development and required variance relief.

II. DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED

Our office is in receipt of the following documents:

1. Correspondence prepared by John Cote, PE, LEED AP dated July 3, 2025 addressed to Marie Raffay, PE Board Engineer regarding responses to the review comments dated May 30, 2025.
2. Glare Study prepared by Louis Cherry Architecture dated May 05, 2025 and revised June 13, 2025.
3. Views from Adjacent Properties prepared by Louis Cherry Architecture dated May 05, 2025 and revised June 13, 2025.
4. Landscape Plan documents consisting of sheets L-100, L-300, LP101, LP102, and LP103 prepared by Viridian Landscape Studio dated July 21, 2025.
5. Proposed Sewer Demand Summary prepared by Langan Engineering dated July 1, 2025 and unsigned.
6. Stormwater Operations and Maintenance Manual prepared by Langan Engineering dated June 27, 2025.
7. Boundary and Topographic Survey Prepare by Langan Engineering dated December 8, 2022.

8. Site plans (20 sheets) prepared by Langan Engineering and Environmental Services, LLC last revised June 01, 2025.
9. Stormwater Management Report prepared by Langan Engineering and Environmental Services last revised June 27, 2025.

REVIEW

The Applicant shall confirm all proposed plan revisions and adjustments as they pertain to the required variance relief through testimony. The apparent site plan modification relates to the adjustments to sidewalks previously shown connecting to the west to Block 1702 Lot 48 owned by the City of Summit. The bulk requirements were also updated noting a slight reduction in the amount of Maximum Lot Coverage requirement as a result of the removal of the noted walkways. The following is a summary of proposed plan revisions and supplemental information submitted by the Applicant:

1. A revised study of glare or excessive solar light reflection that could come from the street facing glazing has been submitted. The applicant should provide testimony regarding the revisions to this document for the Boards consideration.
2. A revised study of views from adjacent properties has been submitted for review. The applicant should provide testimony regarding the revisions to this document for the Boards consideration.
3. Several sheets of the site plans have been revised including the cover sheet (GI001), site plan (CS101), grading plan (CG101), drainage plan (CG102), utility plan (CU101), soil erosion and settlement control plan (CE501) and lighting plan (LL101). These revisions pertain to the removal of the connecting walkways offsite to adjacent Lot 48 to the west of the tract.
4. Landscape Plan Sheet LP 100, 101, 102 and 103 and L-300 have all been revised to remove the off tract connection to Lot 48 and in addition now reflect the proposed 4-tandem parking spaces in the northeast corner of the site.
5. Various engineering related plan and document revisions and adjustments have been submitted relating to stormwater, drainage and sanitary sewer issues. We refer these documents to the Board Engineer for review.

II. ZONING

As previously noted, the site is located in the R-15 Zone wherein the proposed house of worship is a permitted conditional use. The zoning table below indicates the R-15 bulk requirements as compared to the existing, previously proposed and revised conditions.

Table 1 - R-15 Zone Conditional Use Requirements

Zone	Conditional Use	Existing	Prior Revised Plan	Proposed Revised Plan
Min. Lot Area	2 ac	1.74 ac	1.74 ac (V)	No Change (V)
Min. Lot Frontage	200 ft	246.1 ft	246.1 ft	246.1 ft
Min. Front Yard	50 ft	91.8 ft	50.4	50.4 ft
Min. Rear Yard	50 ft	181.8 ft	89.8 ft	No Change
Min. Side Yard (One)	50 ft	26.8 ft, >50 ft	57.3 ft, 34.5 ft (V)	57.3 ft, 34.5 ft (V)
Min. Combined Side Yard	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Max. Lot Coverage	40%	30.1%	48.9% (V)	48.7% (V)
Max. Building Coverage	15%	4%	16.2% (V)	16.2% (V)
Max. Building Height	35 ft/2 sty	<35 ft/2 sty	37.9 ft/2 sty (V)	No Change (V)
Max. FAR	25%	<25%	23.8%	23.7%
Min. Side Buffer Strip	20% Lot Width (not to exceed 50 ft)	N/A	10.4 ft, 9.8 ft (V)	No Change (V)
Min. Rear Buffer Strip	20% Lot Depth (not to exceed 50 ft)	N/A	15 ft (V)	No Change (V)
Min. Parking	1 space/3 seats or 10 sq ft of GFA (whichever is greater)	27	46 (V)	46 (V)
Min. Parking Setback	20 ft	N/A	15 ft (V)	15 ft (V)

(V) Variance relief required; (E) Existing nonconforming condition.

1. The criteria above includes a slight reduction in the maximum lot coverage and Building FAR percentage.

Required Variance Relief

The development application requires the following variance relief:

1. 'd'(1) Use Variance. In accordance with Section 35-9.9.O.4.a., solar array canopies are considered accessory uses that are expressly prohibited in residential zones where the proposed site is located in an R-15 Zone.

2. 'd'(3) Conditional Use Variance

The proposed house of worship is a permitted conditional use in the R-15 Zone. The application proposes several deviations from the conditional use requirements for houses of worship set forth in section 35-11.2.C. of the DRO as listed below.

- A. Min. Lot Area. A minimum lot area of 2 acres is the required for houses of worship where the site has a nonconforming lot area of 1.74 acres. This represents a deviation of 11,325.6 square feet.
- B. Min. Side Yard Setback. The western building side yard setback is a nonconforming 34.5 feet where a minimum side yard setback of 50 feet is required. This represents a deviation of 26 feet or 52%.
- C. Max. Building Height. The proposed building height is 37.9 feet where a maximum height of 35 feet is permitted. This represents a deviation of 2.9 feet or 8.3%.
- D. Maximum Lot Coverage. The proposed development will result in a nonconforming lot coverage of 48.7% where a maximum lot coverage of 40% is permitted.
- E. Max. Building Coverage. The proposed combined building coverage of 16.2% exceeds the maximum permitted conditional use standard of 15%.
- F. Min. Side Buffer. A minimum buffer of 47 feet (20% lot width) is required along each side lot line where nonconforming buffers of 10.4 feet and 9.8 feet are proposed.
- G. Min. Rear Buffer. A minimum buffer of 50 feet is required along the rear lot line where a nonconforming 15 foot buffer is proposed.
- H. Min. Parking Setback. A minimum parking setback of 20 feet is required where a nonconforming parking setback of 15 feet is proposed.

3. 'c' Variances

- A. 'c' Min. Parking Requirement. The site will contain a total of 46 parking spaces where at least 100 parking spaces are required. The Applicant shall confirm the parking requirement as indicated above.
- B. 'c' Parking Location. In residential zones, all parking areas shall be located either in the required rear yard or in the buildable area of the lot in accordance with Section 35-14.P.5.a. where less than half of the proposed spaces are located in compliant locations.
- C. 'c' Min. Side Buffer. A buffer of at least 20% the lot width (47 feet each) is required along both side lot lines where the western side buffer is 10.4 feet wide and the eastern side buffer is 9.8 feet wide requiring variance relief. The Applicant shall address the buffer requirements contained in Section 35-14.7.B.

- D. 'c' Min. Rear Buffer. A buffer of at least 20% the lot depth not to exceed 50 feet is required along the rear lot line where the proposed buffer is 15 feet wide.
- E. 'c' Minimum Parking Area Trees. 1 shade tree is required in the parking area for every 10 parking spaces, or 4.2 trees in this case (42 spaces/10), where no trees are provided.
- F. 'c' Canopy above EV station prohibited. Section 35-9.9.E.5. prohibits canopies and similar roof-like structures above EV charging stations. It is unclear if the charging equipment is located directly under the canopies or deviates from the intent of this requirement.
- G. 'c' Max. Sign Letter Height. The freestanding signs will have nonconforming letter height of 7.5 inches where a maximum letter height of 6 inches is permitted.
- H. 'c' Max. Number of Freestanding Signs. 1 freestanding sign is permitted where, technically, two freestanding signs are proposed.
- I. 'c' Min. Active Accessory Structure Setback. The proposed patio and seating area located in the western side yard area will have a nonconforming side yard setback of 10.4 feet where a minimum setback of 15 feet is required for "active" accessory structures.

III. STATUTORY CRITERIA

The Applicant is required to address the following statutory criteria for the requested 'd' and 'c' variance relief:

Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA).

In reviewing this application involving a house of worship, the Board should bear in mind the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000. In brief, this Federal law establishes the following:

No government shall impose or implement a land use regulation in a manner that imposes a substantial burden on the religious exercise of a person, including a religious assembly or institution, unless the government demonstrates that imposition of the burden on that person, assembly or institution:

1. *is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest; and,*
2. *is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling governmental interest.*

SICA Test for Inherently Beneficial Use Variances (Applies to House of Worship)

Though typically applied to 'd'(1) use variances for inherently beneficial uses, the SICA balancing test should be considered in evaluating this development application for a house of worship. Inherently beneficial uses are considered to have satisfied the positive criteria set forth in N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70(d) of the Municipal Land Use Law.

In the decision *Sica v. Board of Adjustment of the Township of Wall et al.*, the Supreme Court stated that, in reviewing applications with inherently beneficial uses, the board must:

1. Identify the public interest at stake;
2. Identify the detrimental effect that will ensue from the grant of the variance, recognizing that certain impacts will result from permitting a use not normally permitted in a zone. When minimal, such impacts need not outweigh an inherently beneficial use that satisfies the positive criteria;
3. Impose reasonable conditions to reduce prospective detrimental effects, and
4. Weigh the positive and negative criteria and determine whether, on balance, the grant of the variance would cause a substantial detriment to the public good.

To address the "negative criteria," the applicant must demonstrate that the proposed variance can be granted "without substantial detriment to the public good" nor will the granting of the variance "substantially impair the intent and the purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance" of the municipality.

'd'(1) Use Variance Relief (Medici) (Applies to Solar Canopies)

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) sets forth the statutory positive and negative criteria for variance relief. It permits a Zoning Board of Adjustment to grant a 'd' variance "in particular cases and for special reasons." The courts have determined that special reasons include a showing by the applicant that the granting of the variance will effectuate the intents and purposes of the MLUL and advance the goals and objectives of the local master plan. This is the "positive criteria" of the statute.

An applicant for a 'd'(1) use variance is obligated to address the planning issues raised in *Medici v. BPR, Co.*, 107 NJ 1 (1987). In accordance with the guidelines set forth in *Medici*, an applicant for a use variance must demonstrate that special reasons are satisfied by either showing that the proposed use is one which "inherently serves the public good" or that the proposed use promotes the general welfare because the proposed site is particularly suitable for that use. The *Medici* decision provides that in conjunction with the demonstration of the negative criteria, an enhanced quality of proof must be demonstrated to indicate that the grant of the requested use variance is not inconsistent with the intent and purpose of the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

'd'(3) Conditional Use Variance

The existing house of worship constitutes an 'inherently beneficial' use. The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) defines 'inherently beneficial use' as a use which is "universally considered of value to the community because it fundamentally serves the public good and promotes the general welfare" that is generally held to satisfy the positive criteria of the statutory requirements.

Coventry Square, Inc. v. Westwood, 138 N.J. 285 (1994) provides guidance for Boards of Adjustment in evaluating applications deviating from conditional use requirements. The case established that in considering such applications Boards must consider whether the site continues to function well despite failure to comply with conditional use standards. In addition, the applicant must address the positive and negative criteria, specifically identifying the special reasons for granting variance relief and that the development will not pose a substantial detriment to the public good and no substantial impairment to the intent of the Master Plan and Zoning ordinance.

'd'(4) FAR Variance

The application requires variance relief pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70d(4) for the proposed floor area ratio (FAR) which exceeds the zone's maximum permitted FAR of 25%. An applicant requesting a 'd' variance must demonstrate that special reasons exist for the granting of the variance, and that the granting of the variance will further the purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL). This is referred to as the positive criteria. In addition, the applicant must address the negative criteria by proving there will be no substantial detriment to the public good and no substantial impairment to the intent of the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

In *Randolph Town Center v. Randolph*, 324 N.J. Super. 412, 416 (App. Div. 1999), the Appellate Division held that a 'd'(4) FAR variance is more akin to a 'd'(3) conditional use variance than a 'd'(1) use variance. As such, the standard established for 'd'(3) variance requests in *Coventry Square v. Westwood Board of Adjustment*, 138 N.J. 285, 298-299 (1994) was applied to 'd'(4) variances. Specifically, the applicant is not obligated to show the particular suitability of the site as required for a 'd'(1) variance, but rather that the site can accommodate the problems associated with the proposed permitted use with a larger FAR than permitted by ordinance.

'c'(1) / 'c'(2) Variances

The statute provides two approaches to 'c' variance relief, commonly referred to as the 'physical features' test and the 'public benefits' test. These are identified as follows:

1. **Physical Features Test:** An applicant may be granted 'c'(1) variance relief when it is demonstrated that the noncompliant condition is caused by 1) an exceptional narrowness, shallowness, or shape of the property, 2) exceptional topographic conditions or physical features uniquely affecting a specific piece of property, or 3) by reason of extraordinary and exceptional situation uniquely affecting a specific piece of property or the structures lawfully existing thereon.
2. **Public Benefits Test:** An applicant may be granted 'c'(2) variance relief where it can prove the following: 1) that the granting of the variance will advance the intents and purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law; 2) that the benefits of granting the variance substantially outweigh any potential detriments. The benefits are required to be public benefits rather than a benefit that simply accrues to the property owner.

In addition to the above, an applicant must address the Negative Criteria of the statute. To meet the negative criteria, an applicant must demonstrate the variance can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and it will not substantially impair the intent and the purpose of the master plan and zoning ordinance.



STAFF COMMENTS REPORT

DATE: July 8, 2025

FROM: Land Use Assistant / Board Secretary

FLOOD ZONE

TO:

	Name	Title / Committee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eric Evers	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ryan Peters	Police Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering	Colliers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ralph Maritato	Construction Official

<input type="checkbox"/>	John Linson	City Forester
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Dept.	Westfield
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caroline King	Chair, HPC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Planner	Burgis Assoc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donna Patel	Environmental Commission

Property Address:	695 Springfield Avenue	Block: 1702	Lot: 47
Application #:	ZB-24-2237	Applicant Names: Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit	
Description/Variations:	Revised plans July 8, 2025		

Comments Due Date:	Friday, July 11, 2025	Please email landuse@cityofsummit.org if you are unable to meet this date.
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Attached is a copy of the plans and application for the subject property. Please review this proposal and return a copy of this memo with your comments prior to the date indicated above. Attach additional pages or reports, if necessary.

COMMENTS: No objections

Lt Charles Daly

Print Name:	<u>Lt Charles Daly</u>	Print Title:	<u>Traffic Lieutenant</u>	Date:	<u>7/10/25</u>
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Memorandum

To: Zoning Board

From: Marie Raffay, P.E.

Date: July 11, 2025

Subject: 695 Springfield Avenue **Review #3**
Block 1702, Lot 47
Summit, Union County, NJ

Summit No.: ZB-24-2237

We have reviewed the application and associated submissions prepared by the Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit, the Applicant, for the subject property as referenced below. For ease of review, our updated comments are in ***bold italics***:

- a. Application to Zoning Board of Adjustment with Memorandum in Support of the Application, signed, dated March 6, 2024;
- b. Certified List of Property Owners within 200 feet dated December 5, 2023;
- c. Architectural Drawings for the Beacon UU Church, 695 Springfield Ave. Summit, NJ, consisting of five (5) sheets, prepared by Louis Cherry, RA, signed, dated 7/18/2024;
- d. Beacon Unitarian Universalist Church Preliminary and Final Site Plans, Block 1702, Lot 47, City of Summit, Union County, New Jersey, consisting of nineteen (19) sheets, prepared by John C. Cote, PE, of Langan Engineering, signed, dated 2/23/2024, last revised ***7/1/2025***;
- e. List of Required Approvals for Summit Zoning Board Application of Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit;
- f. Site Materials Plan and Details for Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation Church, consisting of 10 sheets, prepared and signed by Tavis H. Dockwiller, LLA, of Viridian Landscape Studio, dated 7/18/2024;
- g. Stormwater Management Report for Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation Church, prepared and signed by Michael Vitello, PE, and John Cote, PE, of Langan Engineering, dated ***6/27/2025***;
- h. Stormwater Operation and Maintenance Manual for Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation Church, prepared and signed by Michael Vitello, PE, and John Cote, PE, of Langan Engineering, dated 2/21/2024, last revised ***6/27/2025***;
- i. Major/Minor Site Plan Application, prepared and signed by Marcy Beitle, President, Board of Trustees of Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit;
- j. Application for Development Worksheet signed and dated 3/6/24;

- k. *Glare Study, prepared by Louis Cherry Architecture, dated May 5, 2025, last revised June 13, 2025;*
- l. *Views from Adjacent Properties, prepared by Louis Cherry Architecture, consisting of 10 pages, last revised June 13, 2025;*
- m. *Projected sewer demand summary, prepared by Langan Engineering, dated July 1, 2025;*
- n. *Boundary, Topographic & Utility Survey, prepared by Matthew G. Sipple, P.L.S., of Langan Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc., dated December 8, 2022; and,*
- o. *Landscape plan entitled "Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation", consisting of 5 sheets, as prepared by Tavis H. Dockwiller of Viridian Landscape Studio, dated July 21, 2025.*

Based on our review of the above-referenced documents, this office offers the following comments:

1. The 75,958-square foot (1.74-acre) property is located on the northern side of Springfield Avenue.
2. The property is in the R-15 Residential Zone, with surrounding properties zoned as R-15 as well.
3. The Applicant has provided topographic information from a survey prepared by Langan Engineering dated December 8, 2022. The property slopes down from the northwest corner at elevation 361 to the southwest corner at elevation 343.
4. The property is mostly rectangular in shape with approximately 227-feet of frontage along Springfield Avenue, a rear yard width of approximately 235-feet, and an average depth of approximately 324-feet.
5. The property is improved with a two-story brick and vinyl building with concrete porches, brick patio, asphalt driveway, asphalt parking lot, two story wood frame detached garage, rock/masonry walls, and related site improvements.
6. The Applicant is proposing to demolish the existing structures on the property and replace them with a 300-seat sanctuary, church offices, classrooms for religious study, and other spaces dedicated to church use. The Applicant is also proposing to construct a 42-space parking area, solar panels in the parking area, and extensive landscaping. The Applicant should confirm the improvements in testimony. **5/30/25 - The Applicant has revised the plans to include four tandem parking stalls at the northeast corner of the project. This increases the amount of available parking on-site to 46 spaces. The Applicant should provide testimony regarding the use of the tandem spaces for larger events.**
7. The Applicant notes that the proposed Limit of Disturbance on the property is approximately 1.66 acres (72,310 square feet).
8. The Applicant is proposing an increase in Building Coverage of 8,811square feet from 3,038 square feet (4%) to 11,849 square feet (15.6%), where the maximum permitted in the R-15 Zone is 15%. **5/30/25 - The Applicant has revised the plans to reduce the originally**

proposed building footprint. The Applicant is now increasing the Building Coverage of 8,811 square feet from 3,038 square feet (4%) to 11,795 square feet as reflected in the revised stormwater management report. The Applicant should confirm that the zoning table, stormwater management report and the architectural plans have been coordinated. **7/11/2025 - The building footprint has been reduced to 11,430 square feet and the building coverage calculation has been updated to 16.2% as it was adjusted to include overhangs. Since revised architectural plans were not submitted with this revision, the Applicant should provide testimony on the revisions to the building footprint and confirm in testimony that the architectural plans have been coordinated with this change.**

9. The Applicant is proposing an increase of 12,533-square feet in lot coverage from 22,863-square feet (30.1%) to 35,396-square feet (46.6%), where the maximum permitted in the R-15 Zone is 40%. **5/30/25 - The Applicant has revised the plans to increase the originally proposed lot coverage. The Applicant is now increasing the lot coverage of 22,863-square feet (30.1%) to 37,143-square feet (48.9%) for an increase of 14,280-square feet. The Applicant should confirm that the zoning table, stormwater management report and the architectural plans have been coordinated. 7/11/2025 - The Applicant has provided testimony and should confirm no further changes to the building coverage have affected the lot coverage.**
10. The Applicant is seeking a number of 'c' and 'd' variances. We defer to the Board Planner for review and comment for zoning review.
11. Information should be provided regarding the capacity of the existing and proposed sewer and additional flow. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the need for TWA permit. **The Applicant has provided a projected sewer demand summary table which shows a proposed total of 110 gallons per day. The Applicant shall be responsible for obtaining a TWA permit.**
12. There are several utility crossings on site. The Applicant shall ensure there will be no pipe conflicts during installation.
13. The maximum height of the solar canopy array is unclear as depicted on the architectural plan details. There are conflicting elevations of the solar canopy elevation. Is the canopy on a tilt or is it level? What is the height of the highest and lowest points of the canopy? The Applicant should confirm that the solar array canopy will conform to City ordinances. **The Architectural plans have provided a detail of the canopy and testimony was provided indicating that the height is approximately 12 feet. We take no further exception.**
14. How will snow and rain drain from the solar panels? The Applicant should provide information and testimony regarding any proposed drainage system for the solar array canopies. All drains should have a clean-out at the downspout. **The Applicant has provided testimony that the solar panels will have a gutter-based system to direct drainage.**

15. The Applicant is providing four (4) electric vehicle charging stations and providing signage indicating that vehicles may park only when charging. The Applicant should confirm in testimony. **The Applicant has updated the site plans to reflect signage indicating no parking except while charging signs will be placed at the four (4) charging station parking spots. A note should be added to call out the location and sign code of signage proposed around the site for clarity.**
16. The Applicant should confirm the location of all mechanical equipment and generators and ensure that they are properly screened. **The Applicant should ensure there is sufficient screening for the transformer pad at the southwest corner of the site.**
17. It does not appear that a detail of the green roof has been provided. The Applicant should provide a detail and provide testimony. **The Applicant has acknowledged the comment and will provide a detail at the time of building permit submission.**

Stormwater:

18. The project disturbs more than one (1) acre of land; therefore, is considered a "major development" as defined by NJAC 7:8. **7/11/25 - Advisory Comment.**
19. The Applicant is proposing to meet the Green Infrastructure (GI) Standards by utilizing GI BMPs from Table 5-1, consisting of porous pavement systems with underdrains at 3 locations, small-scale (subsurface) infiltration systems at two locations, rain garden with underdrain at one location, and manufactured treatment devices (MTD) at three locations (WQ-301 & WQ-302). **7/11/25 - Advisory Comment.**
20. The Applicant proposes to meet the groundwater recharge requirement per N.J.A.C. 7:8-5.4(b)1i by demonstrating through hydrologic and hydraulic analysis that the site and its stormwater management measures maintain 100 percent of the average annual pre-construction groundwater recharge volume for the site. **7/11/25 - Comment Addressed.**
21. The project is exempt from the Stormwater Runoff Quality Standards since the proposed improvements will not result in the creation of one-quarter acre or more of "regulated motor vehicle surface." It is noted that the proposed GI Best Management Practices (BMP) will treat runoff generated by the proposed motor vehicle surface areas and reduce the post-construction load of total suspended solids (TSS) by 80 percent. **7/11/25 - Advisory Comment.**
22. The Applicant is proposing to meet the stormwater quantity requirement per NJAC 7:8-5.6(b)3 by designing the stormwater management measures so that the post-construction peak runoff rates for the current and projected 2, 10, and 100-year storm events, as defined and determined pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:8-5.7(c) and (d), respectively, are 50, 75, and 80 percent, respectively, of the pre-construction peak runoff rates. Please clarify how emergency overflow with respect to each location will be accommodated per NJAC 5:21-7.8. **7/11/25 - Comment Addressed.**

23. Please revise the plans and/or Stormwater Management Report (SWM) to address the following minor inconsistencies.
- a. Proposed UND-INF1-1: The one (1) foot rectangular weir crest elevation differs between the Outlet Control Structure Detail on Sheet CG502 and the Pond report stage-discharge. Please revise for consistency. 5/30/25 - Comment Not Addressed. The table in the "Underground Infiltration Basin Outlet Control Structures" detail indicates a crest elevation of 350.60' whereas the stormwater routing calculations and the drainage plan indicate that a crest elevation of 350.80'. Please revise for consistency. **7/11/25 - Comment Addressed.**
 - b. Proposed Rain Garden: The Outlet Control Structure Detail on CG503 indicates a four (4) inch orifice at elevation 351.75 however the pond report stage-discharge does not include an orifice. Please revise for consistency. 5/30/25 - Comment Not Addressed. The table in the "Rain Garden Outlet Control Structure" detail and the drainage plan indicates the 4" underdrain with an invert of 351.75'. This is not included in the pond report for the rain garden. Please revise the routing calculations to include this orifice. **7/11/25 - Comment Partially Addressed. The invert of the underdrain on the site plans and stormwater management report are not consistent and must be amended.**
24. The Applicant is proposing an outfall and Conduit Outlet Protection (C.O.P) at HW 2-1. We defer further review and approval to the Somerset-Union Soil Conservation District. **5/30/25 - Continuing Comment.**
25. The Applicant proposes an on-site stormwater conveyance system consisting of High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) pipe. The following shall apply:
- a. Per section 5:21-7.3 (c) of the RSIS, velocities in closed conduits flow shall be at least two feet per second to promote self-cleansing. The pipe calculations indicate average velocities that are significantly below the minimum requirement. Please revise for compliance. 5/30/25 - Comment Not Addressed. The following pipe runs do not satisfy this requirement: Lines 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 18, 19, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 in the first set of pipe calculations and lines 1, 2, 6, 8, and 9. The pipe layout must be revised accordingly. **7/11/25 - Comment Addressed.**
 - b. Please revise to address minor inconsistencies between the pipe calculations and drainage plan CG102. 5/30/25 - Comment Partially Addressed. The following inconsistencies between the plans and the pipe calculations must be addressed:
 - i. The pipe slope and inverts for line 7 are not consistent. **7/11/25 - Comment Partially Addressed. The pipe sizes of the roof leader pipes are not consistent.**
 - ii. The grate elevations for WQ-1-3, NMH1-1, OCS1-3, and WQ1-2. **7/11/25 - Comment Addressed.**
 - iii. The leader for line 17 is missing from the site plans **7/11/25 - Comment Addressed.**

26. Based on the geotechnical report, groundwater was encountered at TP-7, within the vicinity of proposed Porous Pavement System-1, at approximate elevation 347. The bottom of the storage bed is proposed at elevation 348, therefore the minimum one (1) foot clearance required for infiltration systems with underdrains is provided. Please revise the section detail and O&M Manual to indicate the SHWT elevation at proposed Porous Pavement System-1. 5/30/25 - Comment Not Addressed. Please provide an updated stormwater maintenance plan and revised the "Underground Infiltration Basin 1-1 Section" detail. **7/11/25 - Comment Addressed.**
27. Per NJAC 7:8-5.2(m), the proposed BMPs (porous pavement systems, small scale infiltration basins, rain garden and MTDs) must be reflected in a deed notice recorded in the Office of the County Clerk. A form of deed notice should be submitted to the City for approval prior to filing. **5/30/25 - Continuing comment.**

Site Circulation:

28. The Applicant is requesting a variance for minimum number of parking spaces. 100 spaces are required where 42 are proposed. The Applicant is proposing to use 58 off-site parking spaces on the north side of Springfield Avenue but provides no further information or documentation to support this. The Applicant should provide testimony. **5/30/25 - The plans have been revised to include four tandem parking spaces for a total of 46 proposed parking spaces. The Applicant is now proposing 54 off-site parking spaces. The Applicant should provide testimony on the use of the tandem spaces. 7/11/2025 - The plans have been updated to accommodate the decrease in seats, resulting in a new parking requirement of 79 spaces. The Applicant is now proposing 46 parking spaces on-site and an additional 33 off-site parking spaces.**
29. The Applicant is requesting a variance for minimum parking lot landscaping. One shade tree per ten parking spaces is required where no parking lot landscaping is provided. The Applicant should provide testimony.
30. Fire Truck Circulation plan has been provided. A gap in the solar array canopy has been provided to allow for truck maneuvering. It is unclear how a truck will maneuver when the parking spaces are full. We defer further comment to the City Fire Official.
31. The Applicant should provide testimony on the site circulation including pickup and drop-off for all programs and events on site.
32. The Applicant is proposing a trash storage area at the northwest corner of the building. A nine (9) foot high wood screen fence is proposed to screen the collection. The Applicant should provide testimony on the amount of trash and recycling anticipated to be collected and how the trash and recycling will be collected.
33. The Applicant should provide testimony on ADA site circulation from the parking lot to the building.

34. The Applicant should provide testimony on the pedestrian access for the parking lot to the building and the outdoor facilities.
35. Dimensions should be added to parking spaces around the curve north of the ADA spaces to ensure that the narrowest point of width still complies with City ordinance. The Applicant should provide testimony on the dimensioning of the spaces. ***The Applicant has revised the plans to show the minimum parking stall width of 9 feet on sheet CS101. This is in compliance with the City of Summit Ordinance which requires a minimum parking space width of 9 feet.***
36. The solar canopies as shown on the architectural plans show supporting columns however the location of the columns is lacking on the site plan. It is unclear where the supporting columns are to be located. The location of columns should be shown in the site plan. The Applicant should provide testimony regarding the columns and any potential interference with vehicles parking.
37. ***We have reviewed the glare study and it appears to have been prepared using accepted industry modeling practices and accounts for seasonal sun angles and times of day. The materials specified for the construction do not appear to pose a safety or nuisance concern for drivers or surrounding properties. We take no exception to the findings in the study so long as the building material and orientation remain consistent with those analyzed.***

Miscellaneous:

38. The Applicant appears to propose removal of 30 trees from the property. We defer to the City Forester for review and approval of the proposed improvements.
39. The Applicant shall be aware of their responsibility to repair any damage to improvements within the City right-of-way including, but not limited to, curb and asphalt caused by construction activities associated with the installation of the improvements on the subject lot.
40. The Applicant has noted that they will maintain a silt fence for the entire duration of construction.
41. The Applicant shall remove all excavated and excess soil from the site and shall not use excess soils elsewhere on site.
42. The Applicant shall be aware that if stormwater runoff drainage problems occur on their property and/or neighboring properties because of the construction of the proposed improvements, it is the Applicant's responsibility to remedy that drainage issue.
43. As a condition of approval, signed digital plans shall be transferred to the City of Summit for use in updating the GIS database for the property. Coordination with the City's Engineering Department shall be the responsibility of the Applicant after the application is approved by the City and prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

44. *The Landscaping plans prepared by Viridian Landscape Studio show a date of July 21, 2025 which is after the submission date. This should be revised to the correct date of the plan.*

Should the Board approve the project, the approval may be subject to the issuance of a grading permit (Chapter 35, Article 15) and any required Board conditions. The Applicant should verify the need for a grading permit with the City which will not be issued until all conditions of the resolution of approval are satisfied.

If you have any questions or require anything further, please contact me.

MKR/gd

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STAFF COMMENTS REPORT

DATE: July 8, 2025

FROM: Land Use Assistant / Board Secretary

FLOOD ZONE

TO:

	Name	Title / Committee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eric Evers	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ryan Peters	Police Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering	Colliers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ralph Maritato	Construction Official

<input type="checkbox"/>	John Linson	City Forester
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Dept.	Westfield
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caroline King	Chair, HPC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Planner	Burgis Assoc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donna Patel	Environmental Commission

Property Address:	695 Springfield Avenue	Block: 1702	Lot: 47
Application #:	ZB-24-2237	Applicant Names: Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit	
Description/Variations:	Revised plans July 8, 2025		

Comments Due Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 **Please email landuse@cityofsummit.org if you are unable to meet this date.**

Attached is a copy of the plans and application for the subject property. Please review this proposal and return a copy of this memo with your comments prior to the date indicated above. Attach additional pages or reports, if necessary.

COMMENTS: _____

Plans must include detailed information on all structural elements, fire ratings, fire separations, and other fire safety requirements, all bathrooms must comply to the plumbing code requirements, as well as carbon monoxide control, air exchange, ADA compliance at each level and exterior of building. An HVAC test and air balance report are also required. Additionally, the plans must adhere to all current building codes.

- Please note that if any part of the proposed retaining wall exceeds 4 feet in height, building permits will be required. These permits must be accompanied by signed and sealed plans from a licensed Architect or Engineer.
- According to N.J.A.C. 5:23-2.14 (g), walls are measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall. Ensure that all measurements are accurately documented to comply with this regulation.
- Site conditions may necessitate the installation of a guard on the retaining wall for safety.
- If the project includes steps, please be aware that handrails and/or guardrails may be required for safety compliance.

Print Name:	Ralph Maritato	Print Title:	Construction Official	Date:	7-9-25
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STAFF COMMENTS REPORT

DATE: July 8, 2025

FROM: Land Use Assistant / Board Secretary

FLOOD ZONE

TO:

	Name	Title / Committee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eric Evers	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ryan Peters	Police Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering	Colliers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ralph Maritato	Construction Official

<input type="checkbox"/>	John Linson	City Forester
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Dept.	Westfield
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caroline King	Chair, HPC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Planner	Burgis Assoc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donna Patel	Environmental Commission

Property Address:	695 Springfield Avenue	Block: 1702	Lot: 47
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Description/Variations:	Revised plans July 8, 2025		

Comments Due Date:	Friday, July 11, 2025	Please email landuse@cityofsummit.org if you are unable to meet this date.
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Attached is a copy of the plans and application for the subject property. Please review this proposal and return a copy of this memo with your comments prior to the date indicated above. Attach additional pages or reports, if necessary.

COMMENTS: *From my original comments, there are a couple of trees in the northwest corner that we would like to preserve. The landscape Plan LP101 provides reasonable screening of all proposed improvements.*

Print Name:	John Linson	Print Title:	Forester	Date:	7/11/25
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STAFF COMMENTS REPORT

DATE: July 8, 2025

FROM: Land Use Assistant / Board Secretary

FLOOD ZONE

TO:

	Name	Title / Committee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eric Evers	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ryan Peters	Police Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering	Colliers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ralph Maritato	Construction Official

<input type="checkbox"/>	John Linson	City Forester
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Dept.	Westfield
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caroline King	Chair, HPC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Planner	Burgis Assoc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Donna Patel	Environmental Commission

Property Address:	695 Springfield Avenue	Block: 1702	Lot: 47
Application #:	ZB-24-2237	Applicant Names: Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit	
Description/Variations:	Revised plans July 8, 2025		

Comments Due Date:	Friday, July 11, 2025	Please email landuse@cityofsummit.org if you are unable to meet this date.
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Attached is a copy of the plans and application for the subject property. Please review this proposal and return a copy of this memo with your comments prior to the date indicated above. Attach additional pages or reports, if necessary.

COMMENTS: no comments

Print Name:	<u>George Karasias</u>	Print Title:	<u>AEHS</u>	Date:	<u>7/10/25</u>
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STAFF COMMENTS REPORT

DATE: July 8, 2025

FROM: Land Use Assistant / Board Secretary

FLOOD ZONE

TO:

Name	Title / Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> Eric Evers	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Ryan Peters	Police Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	Colliers
<input type="checkbox"/> Ralph Maritato	Construction Official

<input type="checkbox"/> John Linson	City Forester
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Dept.	Westfield
<input type="checkbox"/> Caroline King	Chair, HPC
<input type="checkbox"/> Planner	Burgis Assoc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Donna Patel	Environmental Commission

Property Address:	695 Springfield Avenue	Block: 1702	Lot: 47
Application #:	ZB-24-2237	Applicant Names: Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit	
Description/Variations:	Revised plans July 8, 2025		

Comments Due Date:	Friday, July 11, 2025	Please email landuse@cityofsummit.org if you are unable to meet this date.
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Attached is a copy of the plans and application for the subject property. Please review this proposal and return a copy of this memo with your comments prior to the date indicated above. Attach additional pages or reports, if necessary.

COMMENTS: _____

The revised plans do not address any issues raised by the HPC. The HPC has no comment wrt to the revisions that refer to parking, building coverage, sewer demand, and stormwater management. The view from adjacent properties and glare/lighting studies do not address the HPC comments dated 11/18/24 and 5/20/25.

The HPC objects to the application in its current form and would recommend that the applicant seek a design solution that is more contextual; sensitive to the neighborhood and surroundings; and more consistent with the Development Design Guidelines in the DRO and the City's Master Plan. The HPC emphasizes that Adaptive Reuse is one of the greenest techniques that can be employed. Reuse is a great way to be sustainable while respecting the history of the community. We would suggest the applicant consider incorporating the existing principal structure into the design of the complex and could be a location for the meeting rooms, offices and other secondary functions that occupy the proposed sprawling footprint.

As reviewed in November 2024:

695 Springfield Avenue: Red Cross/Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit. Revised plans for: Major Site plan approval, preliminary and final. Propose to demolish existing structures and replace with new. New structures will be used as classrooms, offices and church space. Propose 42 space parking area, solar panels in parking area, and landscaping improvements.

- The scale and massing of the proposed sanctuary structure and the significant loss of tree cover across the whole property will create a stark change along Springfield Avenue and the surrounding properties.
- The front-facing façade consists of two sections of large blank walls (approximately 40' long x 30' tall and 60' x 30' tall) of EIFS stucco and wood planking, a portion of which projects in the required front yard setback as close as 42.7' to the Springfield Avenue right-of-way. The proposed streetscape is inconsistent with the Development Design Guidelines (DDG) in the City's Developments Regulations Ordinance (DRO).
- The applicant's efforts to include green and sustainable elements in this application are commendable and the HPC would like to point out that Adaptive Reuse is one of the greenest techniques that can be employed. Reuse is a great way to be sustainable while respecting the history of the community. We would suggest the applicant consider incorporating the existing principal structure into the design of the complex and could be a location for the meeting rooms, offices and other secondary functions that occupy the proposed sprawling footprint.
- The original house was built in 1901 as private residence and was later adaptively reused as American Red Cross offices for many decades. As noted in the Historic Sites Survey (<https://www.summitlibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Springfield-Ave-to-Waldron-Ave-Vol-8-part-2.pdf> p65-66) "The house was built as the home of David Leslie Young, who moved to Summit from Brooklyn in 1900. The Young family had a lumber and millwork business in New York City, and artisans from the shop are said to have supervised construction of the house's interior. The Young family occupied the house until 1945. In 1959, it was purchased by the Red Cross, and has been used as their offices since that time. The house was a notable architectural achievement, harmoniously combining elements of Tudor half timbering, Mediterranean stucco and arcades, and prairie style emphasis of roof and chimney."
- Of particular note are the deep porches and terraces on the exterior and the unique entry rotunda and elaborate millwork inside portions of the home.
- The HPC objects to the application in its current form and would recommend that the applicant seek a design solution that is more contextual; sensitive to the neighborhood and surroundings; and more consistent with the Development Design Guidelines in the DRO and the City's Master Plan.

With respect to the February 2025 review: additional documents - traffic study.

- The HPC has no comment

Regarding the proposal to demolish existing structures and replace with new:

- None of the comments from the HPC review from November 2024 have been addressed.
- There has not been any substantive change in the proposed design of the structure.
- The revisions in the current proposal still require twelve (12) variances.
 1. Land Use
 2. Area, Bulk & Yard Requirements: Min. Lot Area (AC)
 3. Area, Bulk & Yard Requirements: Min. Side Yard Building Setback (FT) each side
 4. Area, Bulk & Yard Requirements: Max. Building Height (Stories/FT)
 5. Area, Bulk & Yard Requirements: Max. Lot Coverage (%)
 6. Area, Bulk & Yard Requirements: Max. Building Coverage (%)
 7. Area, Bulk & Yard Requirements: Side Yard Buffer (%)
 8. Area, Bulk & Yard Requirements: Rear Yard Buffer (FT)
 9. Area, Bulk & Yard Requirements: Min. Parking Setback (FT)
 10. Accessory Structure: Accessory Use (Solar Canopy)
 11. Driveway, Parking & Loading Regulations: Min. Number of Parking Spaces
 12. Driveway, Parking & Loading Regulations: Min. Parking Lot Landscaping
- The proposed design does not follow the Development Regulations Ordinance (DRO), Development Design Guidelines, refer to 35 Attachment 1, Appendix A. 35-19.1

- Scale: "Scale refers to the relative size of a building in terms of height, footprint, and volume. New buildings shall be of the same general scale or size as adjacent buildings." The proposed structure requires twelve variances.
- Massing: "Massing refers to the volumetric relationship between various parts of the building. The new construction shall be of the same general massing as adjacent buildings." The proposed front-facing façade consists of two sections of large blank walls that total approximately 100' long x 30' tall.
- Height: "The height of proposed buildings or additions shall be visually compatible with adjacent buildings... Considerations include maintaining overall proportions and the compatibility of the visual lines that give a sense of height of the building. These include rooflines, eave lines, and cornice lines." The proposed 30' height is continuous through much of the structure.
- Materials: "To create a harmonious streetscape, new buildings shall be constructed of the same or compatible materials as that of its neighbors." Exterior Insulation Finishing Systems (EIFS), sometimes referred to as synthetic stucco, is a type of cladding that provides wall exteriors with an insulated finished surface. The proposed EIFS stucco and wood planking is inconsistent with the materials of the neighboring structures.
- Roof: "New buildings and additions shall have roof lines that are in harmony with neighboring buildings of similar style..." The 30' proposed roof proximate a straight vertical wall in contrast the the Red Cross building's pitched roof with ridge and eave lines, and is not in harmony with neighboring buildings.
- Siting: The existing Red Cross structure has a front yard set back of 91.8 feet; the proposed structure will be almost 42 feet closer to the edge of the property. Per the DRO Development Design Guidelines, 35 Attachment 1, Appendix A, Siting "In the cases of new construction, the building, parking and landscaping shall be sited in a manner compatible with neighboring buildings."
- The proposed design is inconsistent with the 2000 Master Plan Historic Plan Element, the Master Plan Reexamination Report November 2006, and Master Plan Re-examination 2016 as The Red Cross was defined as historic.
 - 2000 Master Plan: <https://www.cityofsummit.org/DocumentCenter/View/1396/2000-City-of-Summit-Master-Plan?bidId=> PDF p72, p76
 - 1. That it is in the public interest to identify and conserve sites and districts of historic interest.
 - 2. That the designation of historic sites and districts take into consideration not only the age of a structure, but its historic, cultural, sociological, archeological or architectural significance from a local, regional, statewide or national perspective.
 - Criteria 1. Important to the general development of the area and the unique cultural heritage of their communities.
 - Criteria 2. Significant examples of an architectural style or period.
 - Criteria 4. Associated with important persons or groups, with a social or political movement, or with an historical event.
 - Master Plan Reexamination Report November 2006 <https://www.cityofsummit.org/DocumentCenter/View/1394/2006-City-of-Summit-Reexamination?bidId=> p51 (PDF p54)
 - Historic Preservation Objectives:
 - To recognize and preserve the historic character of the City.
 - To explore incentives to encourage the maintenance and façade restoration of historically notable buildings.
 - To encourage the preservation of historic buildings and landmarks that are significant to Summit's past.
 - Master Plan Re-examination 2016 https://www.cityofsummit.org/DocumentCenter/View/1602/Summit_ReVision_FINAL-Dec-2016?bidId= PDF p13
 - Goal 01: Guide Development to Maintain and Enhance Character of Summit
 - Objective 1.03: PDF p16
 - PROTECT EXISTING SITES THAT ARE OF HISTORIC VALUE TO PRESERVE THE CITY'S HISTORIC CHARACTER
 - Criteria: Site's historic, architectural or aesthetic value
 - Criteria: Historic listing or eligibility
 - Criteria: Setting, design, arrangement, texture, details, scale, shape, materials, finish, color, streetscape, and relationship of those characteristics to the surrounding neighborhood
 - Criteria: Extent to which proposed changes would alter the public's view of the property
 - Criteria: Importance of the site to the character of the City as a whole and adverse effects proposed changes may have on that character

- The HPC objects to the application in its revised form. The HPC emphasizes that Adaptive Reuse is one of the greenest techniques that can be employed. Reuse is a great way to be sustainable while respecting the history of the community. We would suggest the applicant consider incorporating the existing principal structure into the design of the complex and could be a location for the meeting rooms, offices and other secondary functions that occupy the proposed sprawling footprint.
- HPC restates the recommendation that the applicant seek a design solution that is more contextual; sensitive to the neighborhood and surroundings; and more consistent with the Development Design Guidelines in the DRO and the City's Master Plan.

As stated in the November 18, 2024 review, the scale and massing of the proposed sanctuary structure and the significant loss of tree cover across the whole property will create a stark change along Springfield Avenue and the surrounding properties.

The front-facing façade consists of two sections of large blank walls (approximately 40' long x 30' tall and 60' x 30' tall) of EIFS stucco and wood planking, a portion of which projects in the required front yard setback as close as 42.7' to the Springfield Avenue right-of-way. The proposed streetscape is inconsistent with the Development Design Guidelines (DDG) in the City's Developments Regulations Ordinance (DRO).

The applicant's efforts to include green and sustainable elements in this application are commendable and the HPC would like to point out that Adaptive Reuse is one of the greenest techniques that can be employed. Reuse is a great way to be sustainable while respecting the history of the community. We would suggest the applicant consider incorporating the existing principal structure into the design of the complex and could be a location for the meeting rooms, offices and other secondary functions that occupy the proposed sprawling footprint.

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Of particular note are the deep porches and terraces on the exterior and the unique entry rotunda and elaborate millwork inside portions of the home.

The HPC objects to the application in its current form and would recommend that the applicant seek a design solution that is more contextual; sensitive to the neighborhood and surroundings; and more consistent with the Development Design Guidelines in the DRO and the City's Master Plan.

Print Name:	Caroline King	Print Title:	Chair	Date:	07.10.2025
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STAFF COMMENTS REPORT

DATE: July 8, 2025

FROM: Land Use Assistant / Board Secretary

FLOOD ZONE

TO:

	Name	Title / Committee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eric Evers	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ryan Peters	Police Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering	Colliers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ralph Maritato	Construction Official

<input type="checkbox"/>	John Linson	City Forester
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Dept.	Westfield
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caroline King	Chair, HPC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Planner	Burgis Assoc.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Donna Patel	Environmental Commission

Property Address:	695 Springfield Avenue	Block: 1702	Lot: 47
Application #:	ZB-24-2237	Applicant Names: Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit	
Description/Variations:	Revised plans July 8, 2025		

Comments Due Date: Friday, July 11, 2025 Please email landuse@cityofsummit.org if you are unable to meet this date.

Attached is a copy of the plans and application for the subject property. Please review this proposal and return a copy of this memo with your comments prior to the date indicated above. Attach additional pages or reports, if necessary.

COMMENTS: On behalf of the Summit Environmental Commission, please see our previous comments dated November 15, 2024.

Print Name:	Donna Goggin Patel	Print Title:	Chair, Environmental Comm.	Date:	7/10/2025
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DATE: 10.29.24
FROM: Stephanie Soulios, Land Use Assistant / Board Secretary
TO: Environmental Comm.

FLOOD ZONE

<input type="checkbox"/>	Roger Dornbierer	Zoning Officer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eric Evers	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Steven Zagorski	Police Chief
<input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering	Colliers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ralph Maritato	Construction Official

<input type="checkbox"/>	John Linson	City Forester
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Dept.	Westfield
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caroline King	Chair, HPC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Planner	Burgis Assoc.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lara Mendenhall	Environmental Commission

Property Address:	695 Springfield Ave	Block: 1702	Lot: 47
Application #:	Zb-24-2237	Applicant Names: Beacon Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit	
Description/Variances:	Preliminary and final site plan approval, conditional use, D1 variance for installation of freestanding solar panels in parking area; D3 variances for deviations from standards of conditional use: lot size less than 2 acres, front yard less than 50 feet, side yard setback/ buffer less than 50 feet, lot coverage exceeding 40 percent, bldg. covg exceeding 15 percent, parking setback less than 20 ft, rear yard buffer less than twenty percent of lot depth. C variances for number of onsite parking spaces, front and side yard setbacks and buffers, rear yard buffers and size of a monument sign identifying the church		

Comments Due Date:	November 18, 2024	Please email landuse@cityofsummit.org if you are unable to meet this date.
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Attached is a copy of the plans and application for the subject property. Please review this proposal and return a copy of this memo with your comments prior to the date indicated above. Attach additional pages or reports, if necessary.

COMMENTS:

This application is for a plan to demolish the existing buildings and to build a new structure and parking area with freestanding solar panels.

On behalf of the Environmental Commission (EC), I do not object to the requested variance.

The EC is thrilled to see the inclusion of sustainable building practices, rooftop solar and solar canopies, bike racks, a green roof, natural lighting, energy efficient HVAC and lighting systems, native plant and tree landscaping, porous pavement, and outdoor educational and community spaces.

We are also glad to see that the applicants consulted with the City Forrester on the removal and replacement of existing trees.

We see the following benefits from the design:

1. Minimizing lawn space and landscaping with a wide variety of [native trees and plants](#) which are beautiful, will provide habitat for birds and butterflies, and require far fewer inputs than nonnatives (water, fertilizer, and pesticides), reducing costs and protecting waterways. The list of plants is impressive. (See also: [Guide to Landscaping with Native Plants](#))
2. Planting native [shade trees](#) will assist with stormwater runoff, provide shade, etc
3. Using [green infrastructure](#) such as [perVIOUS hardscape materials](#) for patios and parking areas will assist with drainage, reduce stormwater runoff, mitigate heat island effects, and decrease VOC (Volatile organic compounds) emissions from asphalt paving and markings.
4. Freestanding solar panels will provide clean electricity and shade the paved areas, further reducing the heat island effect.
5. The [green roof](#) will insulate the building, absorb water, etc.
6. Rooftop solar and energy efficient HVAC and lighting will reduce energy demand.

These may have already been considered, but could also be options:

1. HVAC systems using [heat pumps](#) to further reduce energy demand.
2. Battery storage and a [microgrid system](#) rather than a backup generator

Print Name:	Lara Mendenhall	Print Title:	Environmental Commission	Date:	Nov 15, 2024
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