

**DALTON DRIVE/FT. ETHAN ALLEN, COLCHESTER/ESSEX, VT**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION EASEMENT**

**History and Background of Officer's Row at Fort Ethan Allen**

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- From 1894 to 1944 Fort Ethan Allen was an Army installation.
- In 1964 the ownership of the buildings along Dalton Drive was transferred to UVM for housing faculty, staff and students.
- In 1988, The Vermont Housing Finance Agency negotiated with the University to buy the Fort's 30 acres and the buildings on it.
- VHFA received several grants from public sources including the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) to aid in the restoration and preservation of the land and buildings.
- Under the VHFA, the houses of Officers' Row were rehabilitated.
- VHFA worked with what is now Efficiency Vermont to achieve a four star energy rating on the buildings.
- In 1989 the redevelopment project won a national honor award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- These buildings were and continue to be very important for the State of Vermont.
- A lot of public money went into preserving and protecting the buildings
- As a condition of funding and in order to protect this public investment, the state required that a historic preservation easement be placed on the buildings and held by VHCB and the Preservation Trust of Vermont (1991)

**What is an Easement?**

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An easement is a legal agreement between a property owner (the grantor) and the holder of the easement (the grantee), which governs the current and future owners' treatment of the property. The intent of the easement is to preserve in perpetuity Vermont buildings with outstanding historic significance.

The purposes of our easements are (1) assure that the significant exterior features, finishes and structural soundness of significant historic buildings will be retained and maintained substantially in their current condition so that their historic and architectural integrity is not lost; and (2) to prevent any use or change of the building that will significantly compromise their integrity.

*Our historic preservation easements are permanent and perpetual. When you purchased your home on Dalton Drive, you purchased it subject to the terms of the historic preservation easement.*

## **What Does it Mean to Own a Building with an Easement?**

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### **Things that You Are Required to Do:**

- Pay your taxes
- Insure your Building
- Maintain the facades in a good and sound state of repair
- Maintain the structural soundness and safety of the Building

### **Things You Can't Do:**

- Demolish, remove or raze the Building
- Increase the height of the facades or the Buildings
- Adversely affect the structural soundness of the facades or buildings
- Erect anything that would prevent the buildings from being visible from the street level (unless you are doing work on the building)
- Permit any work on the facades that materially alters their state (like stucco the front of your building)
- Dump ashes, trash, rubbish or any other unsightly or offensive material

### **Things You Need Permission For:**

- Alteration of exterior facades (including masonry work)
- Partial Removal of exterior facades
- Construction on exterior facades
- Remodeling of exterior facades
- Change in color or surfacing of exterior facades
- Installing satellite dishes, camping accommodations, mobile homes
- Install signs (except history, occupancy or sale or lease of the building)
- Substantially change the landscape around the buildings (Landscape Plan)
- Examples include: replacing rear doors, change exterior light fixtures, modifying third floor windows to meet code requirements, installing satellite dishes, fixing roofs

### **Things You Do Not Need Permission For: Ordinary and Necessary Maintenance and Repairs. Examples include:**

- Painting the building the same color
- Cleaning wood and glass
- Repairing a broken baluster, floorboard, etc. in-kind
- Fixing broken hardware on a door
- Replacing broken window glass
- Reattaching a loose slate
- Other routine building up-keep chores that improve the building and restore it to its previous condition

## Who grants you Permission?

- The Preservation Trust of Vermont grants you permission. Meg Campbell is the contact.
- Just so it is clear, the Dalton Drive Neighborhood Association does not have the authority to grant you permission, nor does the local or state Life Safety Code person, nor does your architect or builder. PTV almost always works in partnership with these people.
- The Preservation Trust of Vermont has an Easement Review Committee that consists of trained preservation professionals from the PTV Staff, Board and VHCB. At times, we also invite the Division for Historic Preservation for their input. According to the easement, our guidelines are the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitation Historic Buildings, a set of national preservation standards.
- When in doubt about something, it is highly recommended that you contact Meg Campbell via phone, email, or snail mail to discuss your requests for change.
- It is *\*never\** better to go ahead with something and think that it will be fine or plan to ask for forgiveness later.
- If you do something that is expressly prohibited, you have violated the terms of the easement.
- If you do something without permission that requires permission, you have violated the terms of the easement.
- The easement lays out steps that PTV (in partnership with VHCB) is required to take if an easement violation has been discovered.
- These steps include notification and demanding corrective action, and if things aren't resolved, taking you to court and recovering damages.

## Stewardship

- PTV staff makes at least annual visits to the property to meet with the DDNA leadership, discuss what has happened over the last year and plans for the next year, and concerns about the buildings
- Notes and current photographs are assembled into a written report that is on file with PTV, VHCB and the DDNA
- In general, PTV aims to act as a resource for all property owners. We work together to offer sound advice, connect you with preservation resources and professionals, advocate for you and the historic building, and when available, provide grant funding.

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