

March 17, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

From: Joe Barger
NEPA Coordinator

Subject: Categorical Exclusion
Record of Environmental Consideration

Project Title: Phase III, Foster Hall Renovation

Location: Champlain College
163 S. Willard Street
Burlington, VT 05401

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and associated implementing regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) require that all major actions by federal agencies be reviewed with respect to the environmental consequences on the human environment. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is providing a congressionally directed funding grant for the Phase III, Foster Hall Renovation at Champlain College. Consequently, NEPA and the associated implementing regulations apply to this project.

This memorandum provides a Record of Environmental Consideration and summarizes the determination that the Phase III, Foster Hall Renovation at Champlain College has been found to be categorically excluded from any further environmental review under NEPA.

Description of the Action

This project includes the renovation of Foster Hall on the Champlain College campus. The renovation includes two small additions to Foster Hall (a total of 923 square feet of additional floor space) and general upgrade of all interior space.

Foster Hall is a 6,911 square foot, two story building constructed in 1982. The building has had several minor renovations over the past 43 years. The building currently houses computer

science laboratories, hybrid classroom/lab space, general purpose classrooms, and student collaboration spaces.

The renovated Foster Hall will serve as Champlain's new Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) Building to include classrooms, labs, and collaborative space. This project will help broaden the portfolio of STEAM degrees and add new future-focused programs such as in health and the bio-life sciences. It also enhances Champlain College's ability to create new teaching and research possibilities.

Specific Considerations of this Action and any Extraordinary Circumstances

- Existing Site

This project will be limited to small additions (923 Square feet) and interior work on Foster Hall. Only minor impacts are expected to the existing site.

- Endangered Species and Critical Habitats

This project will mainly impact the interior of Foster Hall. No endangered species or critical habitats are expected to be impacted by the minor additions to be constructed.

- Wetlands, Flooding Potential and Resilience

The site is located outside of any 100- and 500-year flood hazard areas (FEMA). The renovations planned are valued at less than half the cost of a full building replacement.

- Stormwater

Minor impacts to the exterior of Foster Hall are expected. Stormwater management practices will be implemented during construction to control erosion.

- Building Staffing/Utilities

Staffing and student populations are not expected to increase significantly due to the planned renovations. Utility use (i.e., electricity, natural gas, water, sewer) is not expected to change significantly due to the renovations planned.

Local roadways have capacity for a temporary increase in traffic during construction.

- Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Energy use in Foster Hall is not expected to change significantly due to the renovations planned. Consequently, air pollutant emissions and greenhouse gas emissions related to energy use are not expected to increase or decrease significantly. Some energy saving measures will be implemented in the renovations including updated mechanical systems (HVAC) and electrical fixtures. Additionally, a new energy efficient entrance and some new windows will be installed.

- **Hazardous Materials**

Asbestos and lead based paint may be found in the construction areas of this project. Any of these materials which may be disturbed during construction will be properly handled and disposed in compliance with State and Federal regulations.

- **Historic/Cultural Significance**

No adverse impacts to historic properties are expected. See Attachment A.

Effects of the Action

No significant adverse impacts on the environment are expected from this action.

Categorical Exclusion

The activities associated with this project fall within the criteria of the following Department of Commerce Categorical Exclusion (CATEX):

A-1 Minor renovations and additions to buildings, roads, airfields, grounds, equipment, and other facilities that do not result in a change in the functional use of the real property (e.g. realigning interior spaces of an existing building, adding a small storage shed to an existing building, retrofitting for energy conservation, or installing a small antenna on an already existing antenna tower that does not cause the total height to exceed 200 feet and where the FCC would not require an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement for the installation). This CE does not apply in instances where the project must be submitted to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) for review and NCPC determines that it does not have an applicable Categorical Exclusion.

This project is considered a minor renovation of a building that does not change the functional use of the real property. The project does not require review by the NCPC.

The proposed activity: Phase III, Foster Hall Renovation at Champlain College is categorically excluded from the need for further environmental review under NEPA. Any changes to the above project will require additional NEPA review.

Joe Barger
NIST NEPA Coordinator

3/18/25

Date

Robert C. Vaughn
NIST Chief Facilities Management Officer

Date

Attachment A
Historic Preservation Review

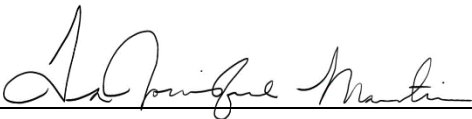
TO: Record
FROM: TaJonique Martin
DATE: 2025 March 6
SUBJ: Champlain University – Foster Hall

The proposed scope of work for Foster Hall consists of a 6,911 square foot renovation and a building addition of 923 square feet. Per the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Section 106 review applies to properties that are 50 years old or older, unless otherwise determined eligible for the NRHP. Foster Hall was constructed in 1982, making it less than 50 years old. It is also noted that though the addition being added will result in ground disturbance, it will occur on previously disturbed ground.

Based on this, the property does not meet the age threshold for Section 106 review, nor will the ground disturbance trigger consultation with any interested parties (SHPO/THPO). No further historic preservation review is required at this time.

Please let me know if you need any additional information.

TaJonique Martin,
NIST Historic Preservation Architect



March 6, 2025