

## **205 Kent Street - Conditional Use Permit Application**

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Note: Descriptions and answers provided on the following pages are to be read in conjunction with the 205 Kent Street CUP Application Presentation attached to this application.

**Property Information**

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**Project Location:**

205 Kent Street, Blacksburg, VA, 24060

**Tax Parcel:**

012630

**Lot Size:**

0.341 acres

**Current Zoning District:**

Old Town Residential

**Current Use of Property:**

Vacant, last used as student housing with attached garage accessed via existing rear alley

**Proposed Use of Property:**

'Office' use with accessory 'Club' use with parking accessed via existing rear alley

**Conditional Use Requested:**

**CUP Application 01**

'Office' use with accessory 'Club' use (Section 3061)

**CUP Application 02**

Utilize alley to access rear parking area (Section 5719)

## **Project Description (Question 1)**

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### **The Cranwell Foundation:**

The Cranwell Foundation (CF) will become the brick and mortar extension of the Bill and Ellen Cranwell Charitable trust, continuing and furthering the impact of the Cranwell family's philanthropic endeavors. The CF will continue the Cranwell's support of the international student community at Virginia Tech (VT) and in Blacksburg through the established connection with the Cranwell International Center, culture and arts initiatives in the New River Valley, and increase awareness of and support mindfulness practices. The establishment of the CF and its permanent home will also allow the Cranwell family to pursue new avenues to support both the Blacksburg and Virginia Tech communities as well as the New River Valley at large.

The Cranwell Foundation is pursuing locating this permanent home at 205 Kent Street, a property currently owned by the Cranwell family. The 205 Kent Street property contains an existing two-story house that has been unoccupied for many years and was last used as student housing. The CF proposes to adaptively re-use and rehabilitate this existing structure and to add new floor area at ground level, located to the rear of the property.

The primary use of the proposed development at 205 Kent Street is to house an office for the Cranwell Foundation, providing a headquarters for its permanent staff to manage the day-to-day operations and to fulfill the Foundation's mission. The CF plans to have no more than a maximum of five (5) permanent staff members.

In service to the Foundation's mission, the proposed development of 205 Kent Street includes a multi-purpose space to allow for small gatherings. For example, this space could accommodate an international student dance group at Virginia Tech who needs space to prepare for an upcoming performance or host a meeting for a student group. Alternatively, a small group of 15 students, faculty, and community members may convene to hold a round table discussion surrounding a current issue facing the Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, and New River Valley community. Additionally, a small group may gather to investigate a new mindfulness practice or technique and discuss ways to promote its use within the community. These are a few of the potential ways 205 Kent Street could be used to facilitate, promote, and support the Cranwell Foundation's mission.

On a limited basis, the Cranwell Foundation will host larger functions, such as potentially hosting speakers, lectures, and musical performances that are connected to the Foundation's mission as well as a limited number of fundraising functions (which may include private gatherings) and outreach events.

In all cases, these gatherings and functions are anticipated to take place on an occasional basis and will not be regularly scheduled. The CF anticipates no more than an annual maximum of an average of one (1) gathering per week with more than 30 attendees; and an annual maximum of sixteen (16) functions with more than 50 attendees. These functions will generally take place during evening hours and weekends and are anticipated to be attended by both the Virginia Tech community (students, faculty, and staff) as well as the Blacksburg/New River Valley community at large.

## **Project Description (Question 1)**

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### **Location Study:**

205 Kent Street is located in the block defined by Kent Street, Washington Street, Otey Street, and Wall Street (referred to as the Kent Street Block). The property is located directly across Kent Street from Virginia Tech's campus and just south of Virginia Tech's new Creativity and Innovation district. Based on Virginia Tech's 2047 Master Plan, the Creativity and Innovation District will increase the density of university buildings in downtown Blacksburg including the Creativity and Innovation District Living Learning Center which is currently under construction just north of Wall Street.

Within the Kent Street Block, as well as the Old Town Residential zoning district as a whole, there is significant precedent for use types requiring a conditional use permit. The Kent Street Block contains eight (8) properties (not including 205 Kent Street). One (1) of the eight properties is a single family residence. Five (5) of the remaining properties are utilized as multifamily housing (i.e. housing for VT students), one of which also contains a religious institution affiliated with Virginia Tech. The fifth property is utilized as office space for an attorney's office.

Based on the current zoning code for the Old Town Residential District, these properties would require a Conditional Use Permit - the lone single family home is the outlier within the Kent Street Block.

Extending the area of analysis to include the opposite side of both Otey Street and Washington Street, there are eight (8) properties utilized for either 'office' or 'assembly / club' use. Two (2) of these properties, both located on Otey Street, the Wesley Foundation and the Virginia Tech Newman Catholic Community are comparable uses to the proposed use of 205 Kent Street - they contain both office space and assembly or event space. Per publicly available information, the Wesley Foundation hosts three (3) regularly scheduled events per week and the VT Newman Community hosts thirty (30) regularly scheduled events per week. Further, the Wesley Foundation exceeds the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and Coverage requirements for the Old Town Residential district based on available GIS information and observation of the site. In addition, the Wesley Foundation provides 5 parking spaces for a building with a total area of ±11,700 square feet.

### **Blacksburg Strategic Plan:**

The recently completed Blacksburg Strategic Plan (BSP) documents the vision for the Town of Blacksburg as it continues to evolve and grow. Several key points addressed in the BSP for the Otey District are:

- Broaden use categories
- Rehabilitation of existing homes feasible if uses expanded
- Establish development opportunities
- Enhance public realm
- Access and visibility to historic buildings
- Celebration and rehab of historic buildings
- Investments in walkability and vibrancy
- Human scale development
- Downtown districting
- Expansion of Downtown
- VT to increase density of campus adjacent to downtown
- Development complimentary to VT CID

The proposed development of 205 Kent Street touches on and addresses each of these key points through its adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of an existing structure, continuing the precedent of broadening uses within the Old Town Residential District, utilizing public parking, and encouraging walkability.

205 Kent Street achieves and realizes the tenets of the BSP and has the potential to be a catalyst for further development of the Otey district consistent with the goals of utilizing existing structures, broadening uses, and extending and enhancing the downtown public realm of Blacksburg.

## **Project Description (Question 1)**

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### **Traffic and Parking:**

205 Kent Street proposes to provide six (6) parking spaces located at the rear of the site accessed via the mid-block alley connecting to Washington Street, which will accommodate onsite parking for the permanent CF staff members indicated previously. Per the parking requirements for general office space indicated in the Blacksburg Zoning Ordinance, 205 Kent Street is required to provide 5.3 parking spaces for its 1,600 gross square feet of office space. (Note: For this calculation, the total floor area of the existing structure is counted as office space.)

Further, if 205 Kent Street were developed for multi-family housing, six (6) parking spaces would be required as the site can accommodate 5 beds per OTR zoning regulations requiring 5.5 parking spaces.

As the 'club' use of 205 Kent Street is accessory to the primary use of 'office' onsite parking is not required or provided per discussion with the Town of Blacksburg Planning Department Staff. Guests of the Cranwell Foundation will utilize ample public parking available in downtown Blacksburg and arrive by foot at 205 Kent Street. For functions, parking at 205 Kent Street will not be available for the general public and will be reserved for guests requiring on-site parking. Information and invitations for formal functions will include the location of available public parking and walking directions from that parking to 205 Kent Street.

As demonstrated above, 205 Kent Street is providing the same amount of parking and therefore will generate the same use of the rear alley to access that parking as a multifamily development on the site, and as such, the location, access, and number of parking spaces is consistent with the adjacent properties located within the Kent Street Block.

### **Site Access and Walkability:**

As previously mentioned, functions hosted at the Cranwell Foundation will utilize public parking available in downtown Blacksburg, with guests arriving by foot at 205 Kent Street. The Kent Square garage, Squires parking lot, and Architecture Annex parking lot are located within a five (5) minute walk of 205 Kent Street. The route from each of these parking areas, as well as general street parking, follows sidewalks which are well lit established pedestrian corridors between Downtown Blacksburg and the Virginia Tech campus. From these pedestrian corridors, guests have the option to access the property from either Kent Street or the alley.

Currently, the west side (or 'University' side) of Kent Street has a sidewalk, while the east side (or 'town' side) of Kent Street, between Washington and Wall Streets, does not have sidewalk. Street lighting is installed on the west side of Kent Street.

Guests arriving via Kent Street will utilize the 'University side' sidewalk and then cross Kent Street to the 205 Kent Street entry path. The implementation of a cross walk and/or signage on Kent Street to alert drivers to crossing pedestrians as been discussed with Town Planning staff but no resolution has been reached.

The proposed redevelopment of 205 Kent Street is designed to accommodate the construction of a sidewalk on the east side of Kent Street as the surrounding properties evolve. This project has the potential to be a catalyst for improvements to the existing pedestrian oriented infrastructure on Kent Street - a significant pedestrian corridor and entrance to Virginia Tech.

## **Project Description (Question 1)**

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### **Sustainability:**

The Cranwell Foundation proposes to utilize several sustainable measures in the execution of the project.

First, in the big picture sense of sustainability, the project proposes to adaptively re-use the existing structure at 205 Kent Street. It is more sustainable to rehabilitate and reuse existing buildings in comparison to demolition and construction of a new building. While adaptive reuse and rehabilitation is more difficult and more expensive, it is important to the Cranwell Foundation to restore and reuse an elegant downtown Blacksburg building.

Second, the Cranwell Foundation plans to pursue Passive House Institute United States (PHIUS+) Certification for the project. Passive House is a design methodology based on extremely efficient thermal envelopes that minimize heat transmission and air leakage and is considered the most stringent energy metric in the world. To achieve PHIUS certification a project must meet specific targets for energy use and envelope efficiency including a source energy limit of 11.1 kilowatt-hours per square-foot of internal conditioned floor area and 0.6 air changes per hour for envelope air leakage.

In conjunction with Passive House design strategies, the Cranwell Foundation will explore the utilization of other sustainable measures including:

- Photo-voltaic arrays to offset energy usage (to be further investigated)
- Permeable paving to manage stormwater
- Vegetated roof for new construction (to be further investigated)
- CF to promote alternative modes of transportation for Staff and guests

The combination of these strategies will result in a building that is at the forefront of energy efficient design and construction.

## **Project Description (Question 1)**

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### **Architecture and Materials:**

The proposed design for the Cranwell Foundation at 205 Kent Street is based on two central and interconnected strategies.

The first strategy is the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of the existing structure on the site. The exterior of this structure will be extensively rehabilitated through the following:

- Exterior existing brick to be re-pointed, repaired, and rehabilitated
- Exterior wood and metal work to be restored, rehabilitated, and repaired
- New high performance windows installed

Additionally, to enhance the outcome of this restorative effort and minimize the project's visible impact from Kent Street, the new construction portion of the project is located to the rear of the site, behind the existing structure.

To further enhance the restoration of the existing structure as well as to increase the safety of the property, the project proposes to remove the existing retaining wall along Kent Street and grade the front lawn to meet the elevation of the street allowing for the future construction of a sidewalk as the adjacent properties on Kent Street evolve.

The second strategy employed is that of the garden house or courtyard house - an inward facing building oriented towards a central court yard. This strategy is utilized in the design of 205 Kent Street to create an intimate and private building for the Cranwell Foundation, screening the activities of CF from the surrounding neighborhood and vice versa. While 205 Kent Street will be utilized in a non-residential capacity, a single family home on this property may have a very similar design to achieve a similar intimate and private environment.

The architectural manifestation of these strategies is a single story addition located behind the existing structure with a series of landscape walls screening the property boundaries. This addition is wrapped in an elegant and articulated brick pattern further screening the property from the parking area and alley. Brick is used as the primary exterior material because of its residential character and the precedent and prevalence of brick construction in Blacksburg for both residential and non-residential buildings. In addition to brick, several other materials are used in a limited capacity on the exterior of the building including concrete, gabion baskets, and blackened steel.

The design and material choices for the addition were made to complement and enhance the existing structure rather than to replicate or copy that structure. The relationship and harmony between new and existing materials will allow both the existing structure and the addition to each be an honest representation of the thinking, purpose, and time for which they were constructed.

## **Harmony with District (Question 2)**

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**Demonstrate how the proposed use will be in harmony with the purposes of the specific district in which it will be placed.**

### **Alley Access to Property (CUP Application 02):**

Based on the design of the existing structure, the existing topography, and existing site conditions, 205 Kent Street has historically been and is currently accessed via the alley at the rear of the property. Presently, five (5) of the eight (8) properties (not including 205 Kent Street) within the Kent Street block access their parking via the alley, including the 205 Kent Street's adjacent neighbors.

Vehicular access to 205 Kent Street via Kent Street would result in a parking area located in front of the existing structure. This access would be extremely difficult to achieve, and if achievable would be undesirable (from a planning perspective) for several reasons. The slope of Kent Street, in combination with surrounding development, limits visibility and would yield a parking area that would be difficult to enter and exit. Further, Kent Street is a main entry corridor to Virginia Tech's campus, heavily trafficked by bicycles and pedestrians. Accessing the property via Kent Street would require vehicles to turn and maneuver in a heavily utilized pedestrian thoroughfare.

Finally, the Blacksburg Strategic Plan (BSP) calls for activation of alleys and under utilized spaces. The project is designed such that the West side (facing Kent Street) and the East side (facing the alley) of the property are given equal weight as primary elevations and entrances. This dual orientation allows the property to adapt appropriately as the surrounding block and Blacksburg evolve and as reliance on the automobile wanes. The surrounding block has the potential to grow in the vision of the BSP to utilize the alley as an active pedestrian thoroughfare with 205 Kent Street becoming a key part of that urban pedestrian environment.

### **Proposed Use (CUP Application 01):**

The proposed development at 205 Kent Street for the Cranwell Foundation is not only in harmony with the Old Town Residential district but is also symbiotic with the newly created Blacksburg Strategic Plan as demonstrated in the previous pages. The proposed development of the property is consistent with the existing mix of uses within the Old Town Residential zoning district.

The proposed design for the Cranwell Foundation, through its siting, massing, organization, and materiality, is residential in nature and designed to complement and enhance the property's existing structure as well as the neighborhood at large. The proposed design also reduces the visual impact of the project on the surrounding neighborhood by placing all new floor area at ground level, minimizing the height of the building, and locating the addition to the rear of the property. The proposed design is less tall and contains less floor area than many of the surrounding properties used for non-residential purposes including Virginia Tech's student dormitories located across Kent Street and the previously discussed Wesley Foundation and VT Newman Community.

### **Impact on Surrounding Neighborhood (Question 3)**

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**Demonstrate how there will be no undue adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhood in terms of public health, safety, or general welfare.**

#### **Alley Access to Property (CUP Application 02):**

As demonstrated in Question 2, accessing the property from Kent Street would result in an undue adverse impact for the neighborhood both in terms of safety but also due to a parking area being located in a visible location on the property. Utilizing the alley to access parking in the rear of the site results in no adverse impact on the surrounding neighborhood. This use is consistent with adjacent and surrounding properties both in terms of the number of parking spaces provided as well as the general use of the alley to access parking areas. In addition, the alley is the historical means of vehicular access to 205 Kent Street. Finally, the alley is in good condition and is easily maneuverable.

#### **Proposed Use (CUP Application 01):**

The proposed development at 205 Kent Street for the Cranwell Foundation will not adversely impact the surrounding neighborhood but will rather have a beneficial impact on the public health, safety, and general welfare of the Old Town Residential district.

Removing the existing Kent Street retaining wall will not only improve the appearance of the property but will also make the property safer by eliminating the fall risk into Kent Street. Further, the existing structure is in disrepair and vacant. Rehabilitating the existing structure (in combination with the addition and proposed use of the property) will replace an eye sore in the neighborhood with a property that is not only safer but contributes to and benefits the urban and cultural fabric of downtown Blacksburg.

Finally, occupied and properly maintained properties are always more safe than unoccupied properties. The proposed use of the property will do more than simply beautify, occupy, and maintain the property. The Cranwell Foundation, both in terms of its physical manifestation as a building as well as its mission and public outreach as an organization, will yield a vibrant urban space consistent with and supporting the vision of downtown Blacksburg.

**Stormwater Management Concept (prepared by Hurt & Proffitt)**

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**Overview:**

Stormwater management design for the project will comply with the Town of Blacksburg Stormwater Management Ordinance and the applicable Virginia Department of Environmental Quality regulations. The site is approximately 0.34 acres and will disturb more than 5000 sf. Currently, the site is mostly flat, with D type soils (Udorthants and Urban Land) and contains old trees in poor condition. The redevelopment of the site will result in regrading the front portion of the property and providing new trees.

Based on the current layout of the proposed development, the impervious cover will increase from approximately 3170 sf (0.073 acre) to 8295 sf (0.19 acres) which will include 1809 sf of pervious pavement. Conceptually, the approach for the project would be as follows:

**Water Quality:**

With an increase in impervious cover, the VRRM Redevelopment Spreadsheet shows a required reduction of 0.23 lb/yr of Total Phosphorus. The pervious pavement accounts for a removal of 0.05 lb/year leaving 0.18 lb/yr to address. Due to the small size of the site, there is not sufficient room to reach the required reduction using other methods, so Nutrient Credits will be purchased. Nutrient banks in our area have sufficient coverage to provide the required credits.

**Water Quantity**

There is no storm sewer on site or adjacent to the study site. Currently, stormwater sheet flows across the site and either onto the adjacent property or into Kent Street. At the study site, Kent Street does not have curb and gutter. The water flows down Kent Street approximately 250' to the curb and gutter beginning at the Wall Street intersection and then along the gutter pan approximately 500 more feet to the nearest storm inlet in front of the Virginia Tech Graduate Life Center. This inlet is located in a Zone A flood plain.

An analysis point is identified on the site at the lower Southwest corner confirming that stormwater quantity can be adequately addressed for the proposed site. See attached drainage area maps. Study Point #1 is adjacent to Kent Street. The 1 year storm Energy Balance equation for channel protection and 10 year storm peak flow reduction for flooding protection are met for adequacy.

	1 Year Pre Q (cfs)	1 Year Pre RV (ft3)	1 Year Post Q (cfs)	1 Year Post RV (ft3)	10 Year Pre Q (cfs)	10 Year Post Q (cfs)
Analysis Point	0.53	1,445	0.80	1,807	1.4	1.8

1 Year Energy Balance Equation:

- Study Point #1:  $Q \leq 0.9 \cdot (0.53 \cdot 1445) / 1807 = 0.38 \text{ cfs}$

The site grading and drainage before and after construction do not allow all of the water to be collected and discharged from a single point. Thus, to meet energy balance, the collected water must be over detained to further reduce the flow accounting for flow released from other areas of

**Stormwater Management Concept (prepared by Hurt & Proffitt)**

the site. On the drainage area map, portions of the site that are not able to be collected shown will continue to sheet flow from the site. VA DEQ regulation 9VAC25-870-66D allows for sheet flow from the site without any “further water quantity controls required,” assuming that the sheet flow will not “cause or contribute to erosion, sedimentation, or flooding of down gradient properties or resources.” The amount of the site that will continue to sheet flow is significantly less area than the existing conditions.

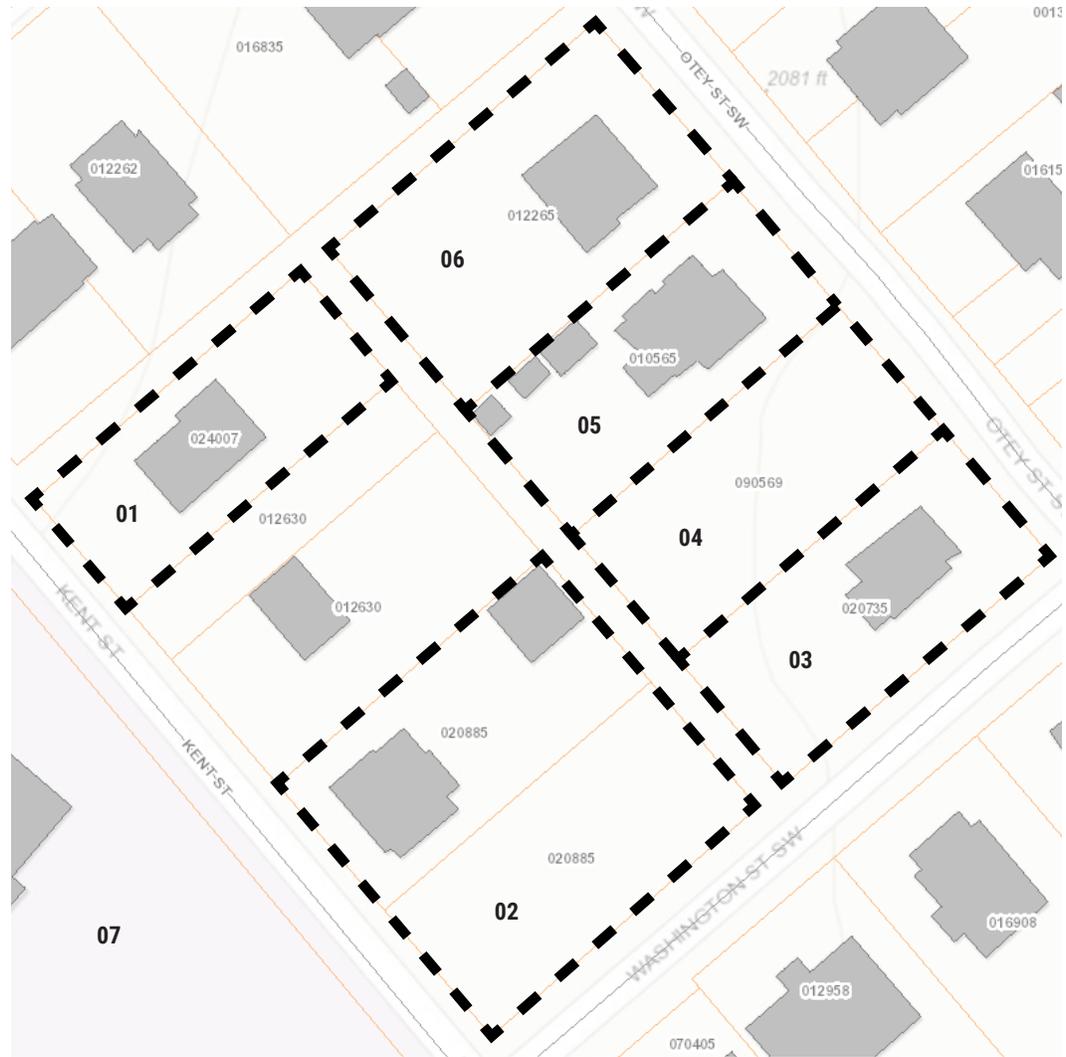
The stormwater that is collected will be stored in the collection pipes and in the gravel sub-base of the pervious pavement and released slowly at a single point. An impervious liner will prevent water from infiltrating into the soil from the gravel storage area. At the discharge point of the system, a manhole fitted with a weir wall using two different orifice sizes (3” for the 1-year storm and 12” for the 10-year storm) will be used to regulate the release rate of the detained stormwater and will be discharged at the lower rate to meet the allowable energy balance for the entire site. Upon exiting the discharge point, this water also will be converted to sheet flow across the front lawn and flow directly into Kent Street.

Final flow values are as follows:

	Non captured sheet flow	Flow captured and detained	Peak release rate for detained flow	Combined peak release rate	Allowable Peak Discharge Rate
1 year storm	0.18 cfs	0.64 cfs	0.25 cfs	0.38 cfs	(Energy Balance) 0.38 cfs
10 year storm	0.48 cfs	1.34 cfs	0.99 cfs	1.38 cfs	(Pre-development) 1.38 cfs

The combined release rate for the 1 year storm is equal to the Energy Balance allowable discharge rate. For the flooding analysis, the 10 year storm was routed and combined with the released flow and the post-development release equal to the pre-development peak.

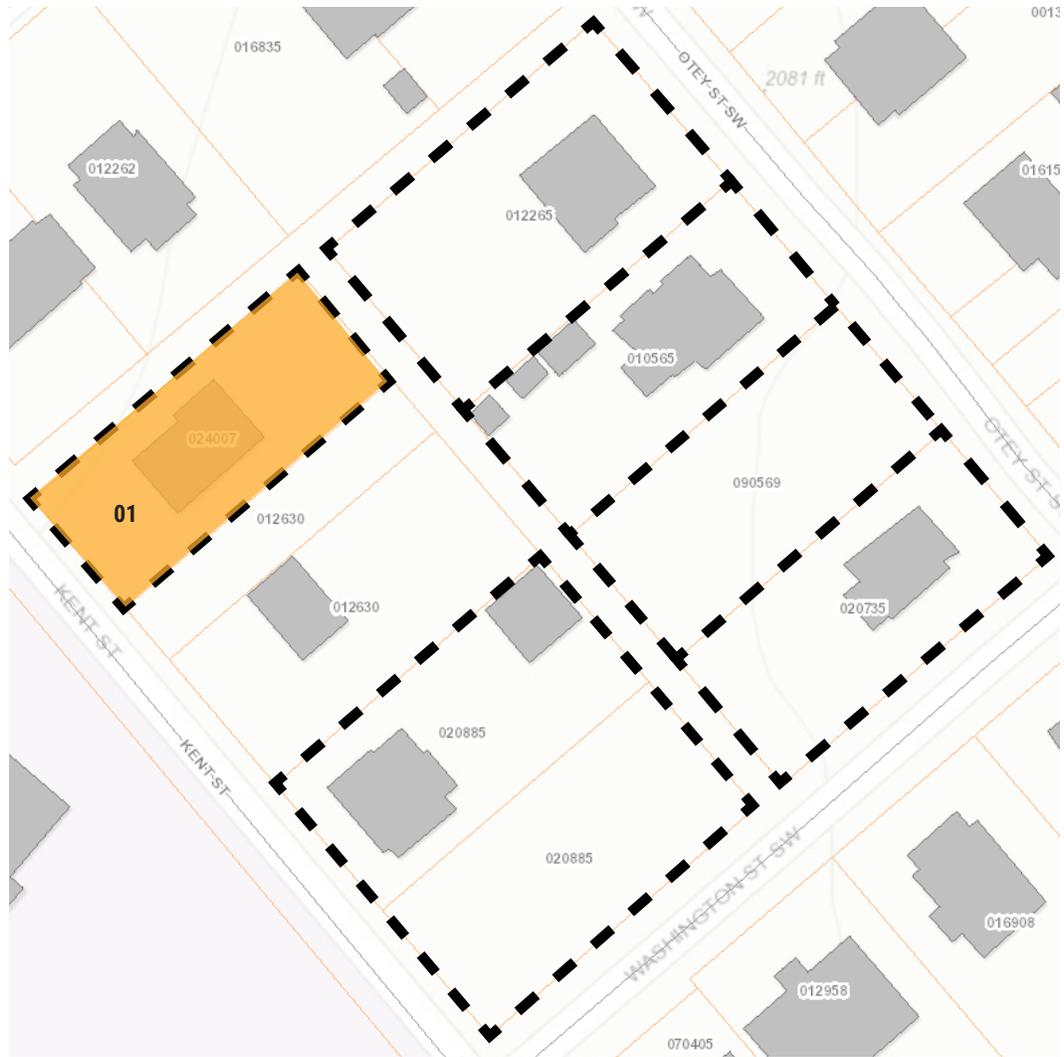
**Surrounding Property Information**



**Parcels**

- 01 Parcel ID: 024007
- 02 Parcel ID: 020885
- 03 Parcel ID: 020735
- 04 Parcel ID: 090569 Note: Parcel 04 and 05 share the same owner
- 05 Parcel ID: 010565
- 06 Parcel ID: 012265
- 07 Parcel ID: 070905 **SEE FOLLOWING PAGES FOR PARCEL INFORMATION**

**Surrounding Property Information**



**01**

**PARCEL ID: 024007**

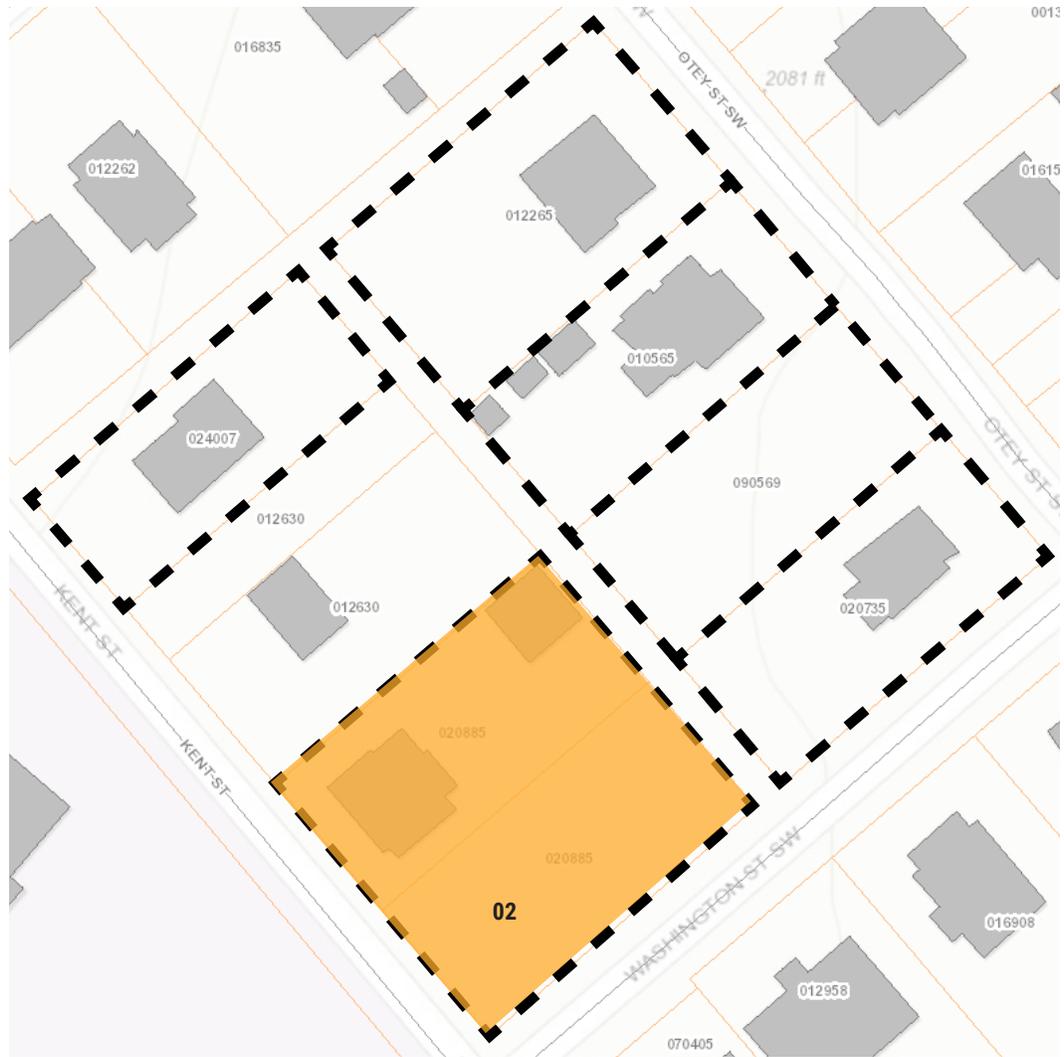
Owner:

KENT STREET PROPERTY LLC ETAL C/O JULIE WILLARD

Address:

502 MONTE VISTA DR  
BLACKSBURG VA 24060

**Surrounding Property Information**



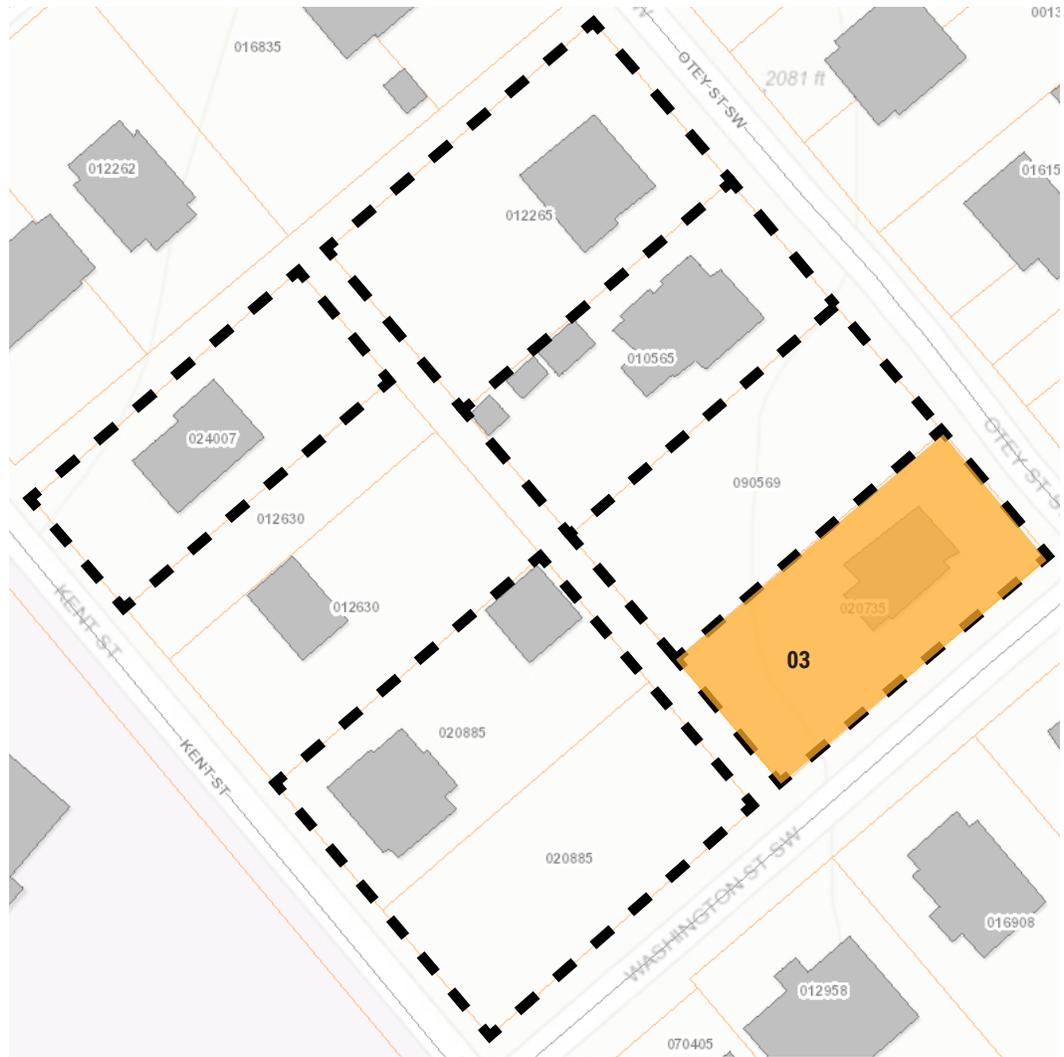
**02**

**PARCEL ID: 020885**

Owner:  
SLM PROPERTIES LLC

Address:  
601 LUCAS DR  
BLACKSBURG VA 24060

**Surrounding Property Information**



**03**

**PARCEL ID: 020735**

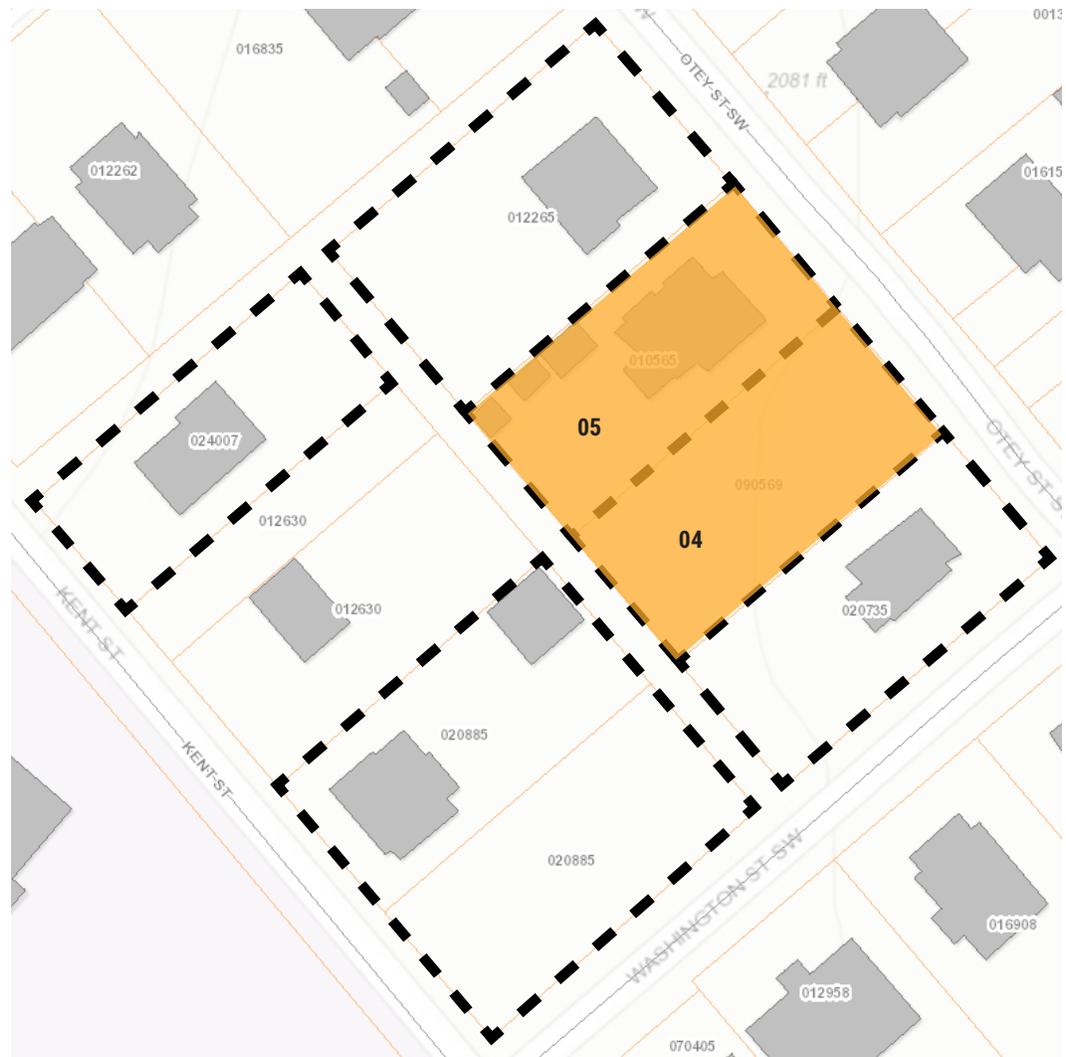
Owner:

GIFFORD ROBERT R M JR

Address:

229 N CHURCH ST UNIT 203  
CHARLOTTE NC 28202

**Surrounding Property Information**



**04 / 05**

**PARCEL ID: 090569 / 010565**

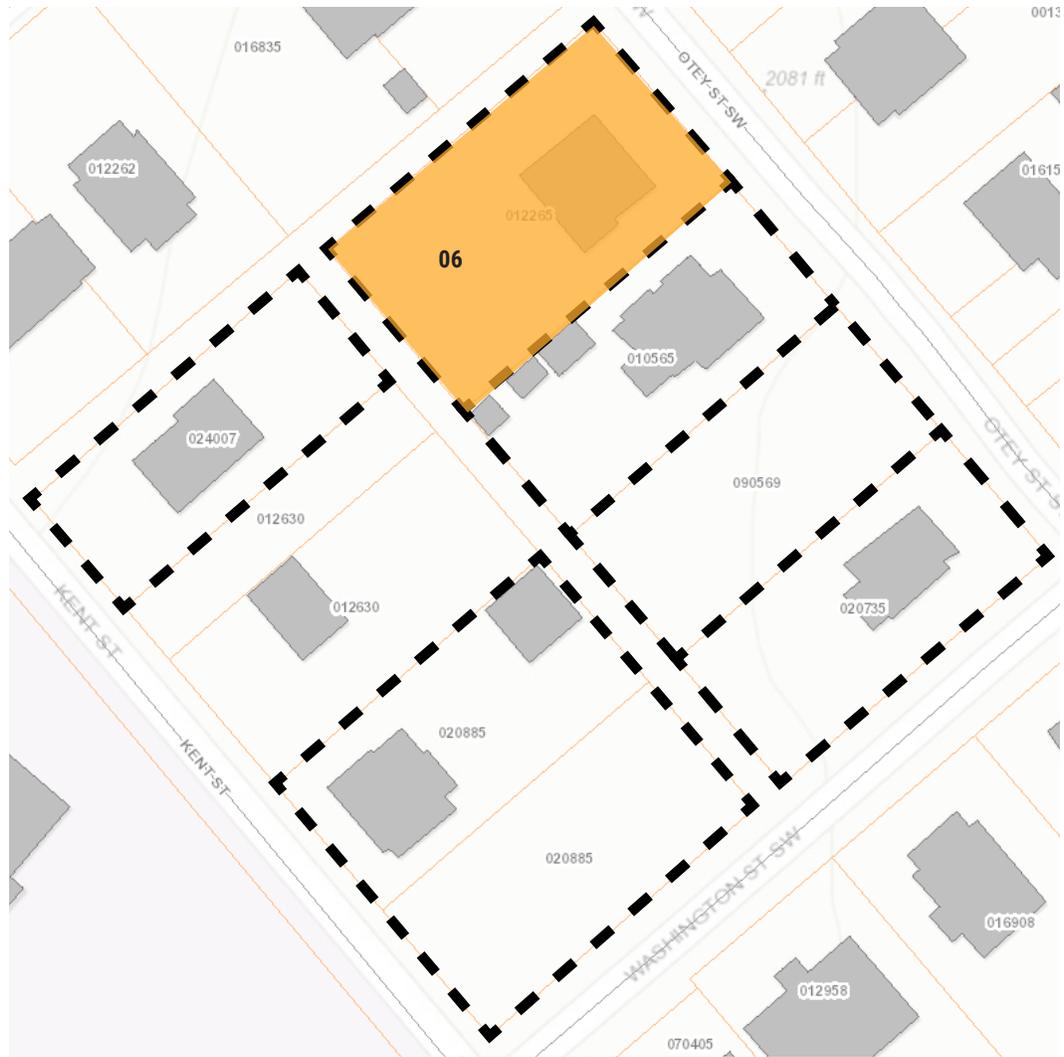
Owner:

MATTOX RICKEY T MATTOX BARBARA C

Address:

206 OTEY ST  
BLACKSBURG VA 24060

**Surrounding Property Information**



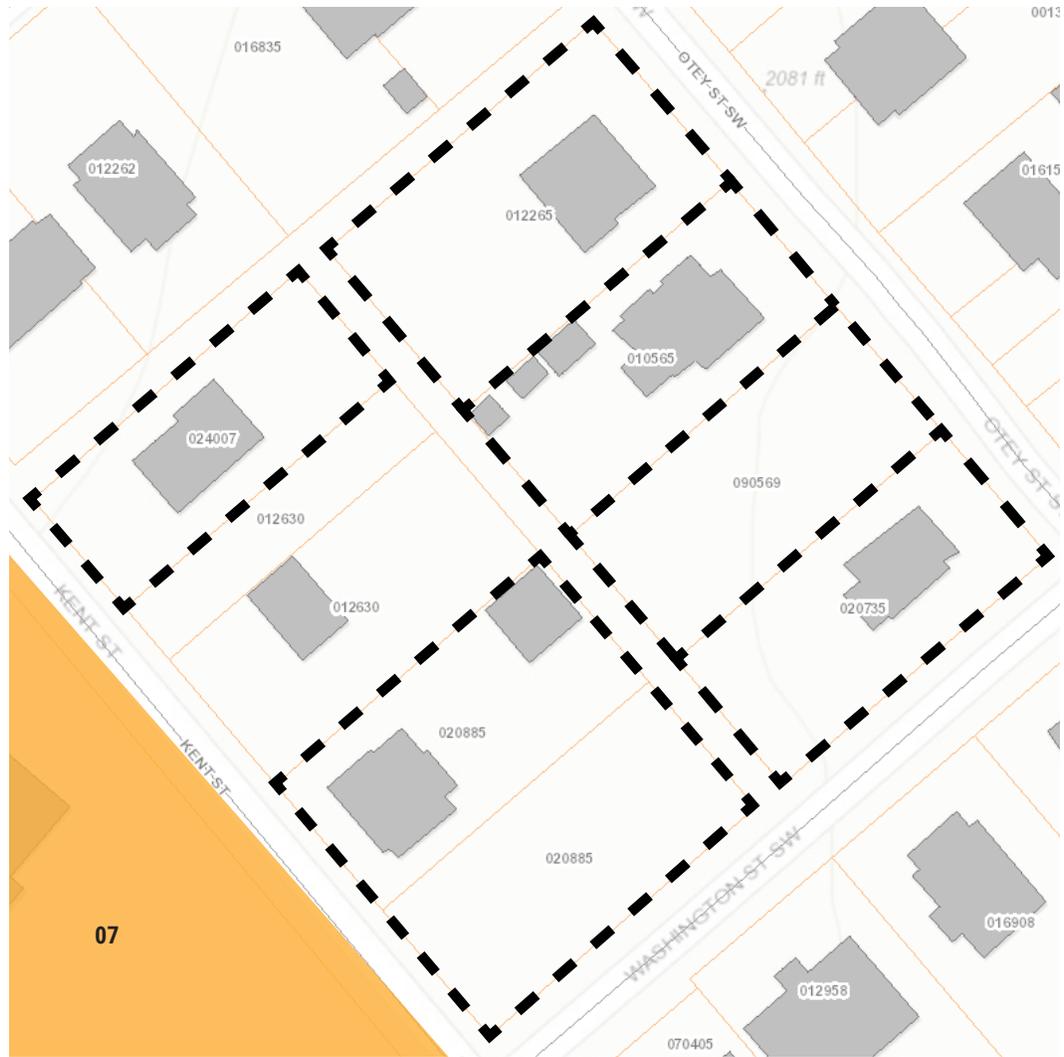
**06**

**PARCEL ID: 012265**

Owner:  
CHABAD OF VIRGINIA

Address:  
212 GASKINS RD  
RICHMOND VA 23233

**Surrounding Property Information**



**07**

**PARCEL ID: 070905**

Owner:

VPI BLDGS & LAND