

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD
APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL PERMIT
LOWER FALLS VILLAGE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
RESIDENTIAL INCENTIVE OVERLAY DISTRICT



Town Hall, 525 Washington Street, Wellesley, MA 02181. Tel. (781) 431-1019 ext. 230. Fax (781) 237-6495 or 239-1043

Date: 2/28/2020

Petitioner: Wellesley Park LLC

Mailing Address: 49 Coolidge Street, Brookline, MA 02446

Telephone: 617.721.3342

Land Owner of Record: Wellesley Park LLC

Address of Subject Property: 140, 144, 148 Weston Road

Proposed Use of Property: Multifamily Residential

Lot Area: 55,698 +/- SF

Existing Building Floor Area: n/a Floor Area of Proposed Construction: 73,060 SF

Existing Floor Area Ratio: n/a Proposed Floor Area Ratio: 1.31

Existing Number of Stories: n/a Proposed: 3 Existing Building Height: n/a Proposed: 36 FT

You must provide four separate written narratives describing how your project:

1. is consistent with the Wellesley Lower Falls Plan, Zoning, Urban Design and Landscape Guidelines;
2. provides and/or contributes toward pedestrian and bicycle amenities, accommodates bicycle and pedestrian circulation and safety;
3. provides and/or contributes toward the improvement of pedestrian access to the river;
4. provides and/or contributes toward the creation of a village center, town green or mini-park to further enhance the pedestrian experience in Lower Falls.

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WELLESLEY PARK
Wellesley, MA 02482

February 28, 2020

RESIDENT INCENTIVE OVERLAY DISTRICT
RIO Questions 1, 2, 3 & 4

1. *The Planning Board shall receive a report from the Design Review Board finding that the proposed project is consistent with the Design Criteria listed in Section 22 and, for projects located in the Lower Falls RIO District, that the proposed project is consistent with the Wellesley Lower Falls Plan, Zoning, Urban Design and Landscape Guidelines ("Lower Falls Guidelines") adopted, and from time to time amended, by the Planning Board.*

C. Design Criteria

The Design Review Board shall review requests for special permits under this Section 22 based on the following standards:

- I. Preservation and enhancement of landscaping. The landscape shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practicable, by minimizing tree and soil removal, and any grade changes shall be in keeping with the general appearance of neighboring developed areas.

The proposed building takes advantage of the natural grading of the existing depressed topography to the rear of the parcel, to minimize building height observed from Weston Road. The building setbacks from Weston Road provides additional landscaped buffer along the property frontage, and a 'recessed courtyard' off the resident lobby/clubroom taking advantage of the existing grade of the abutting properties.

- II. Relation of buildings to environment. Proposed development shall be related harmoniously to the terrain and to the use, scale, and architecture of existing buildings in the vicinity that have functional or visual relationship to the proposed buildings. Proposed buildings shall be related to their surroundings with respect to:

a. height

Consistent with the Development Agreement (DA) and the RIO District zoning requirements, the proposed building is 36 feet in height, measured from the existing average grade. It takes advantage of the natural grading of the existing depressed topography to the rear of the parcel, to minimize building height observed from Weston Road.

b. street facade

Consistent with the Development Agreement (DA), street façade of the proposed building is composed of a 2-story main building and a stepped back 3rd story penthouse, to minimize the scale of a 3 story building observed from Weston Road. The residential entry and the elevation of 1st floor is lower than the elevation at Weston Road.

The exterior of the building has been designed in a way to play off of architectural elements found some of the neighboring homes. With the implementation of sloped roofs elements, articulated bays and a handful of fiber cement clapboard siding, board and trim details will further work to breakdown the scale of the proposed building. Windows throughout will be designed with muntins to give a more traditional feel while also providing plentiful natural light for the residents.

c. rhythm of solids and voids

The proposed building has a series of recessed balconies and window bay projections that cast shadow lines along the building facades to create visual interests and scale.

d. spacing of buildings or signs

The proposed development has 2 vehicular driveways -- an entry driveway to the south, and an exit driveway to the north. A freestanding sign is proposed near the southern entry driveway, with dimensions consistent with the RIO District signage requirements.

e. materials, textures, and color

The proposed building elevations incorporates varied materials, texture and colors to create visual interests and scale.

f. roof slopes

The exterior of the proposed building has been designed in a way to play off of architectural elements found some of the neighboring homes. With the implementation of sloped roofs elements, articulated bays and a handful of fiber cement clapboard siding, board and trim details will further work to breakdown the scale of the proposed building.

g. scale

Consistent with the Development Agreement (DA) and the College Heights Neighborhood Group meetings, the proposed building footprint, location and massing provide a scale appropriate to the subject site.

III. Open space - All open space (landscaped and usable) shall be designed to add to the visual amenities of the area by maximizing its visibility for persons passing the site or overlooking it from nearby properties.

The proposed development has 2 main landscaped open space – a landscaped buffer off Weston Road, and a ‘recessed courtyard’ off the resident lobby/clubroom. The recessed courtyard is inspired by the Sunken Garden at the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University. The recessed courtyard has a flexible lawn space with lounge seating under a pergola, and an outdoor BBQ grill station. In addition, the proposed development abuts town owned park land at North40, with direct connection to the Crosstown Trail, Morse Pond, and the Community Garden.

- IV. Signs and advertising devices - The size, location, design, color, texture, lighting and materials of signs and advertising devices shall be in harmony with significant architectural features of existing and proposed buildings and structures and with surrounding properties.

The proposed development has 2 signs – a freestanding sign near the property entry driveway, and a wall sign by the resident entry lobby. The freestanding sign would have backlit letters with property name and address, which the wall sign would call out the street number only.

- V. Heritage - Removal or disruption of historic, traditional or significant uses, structures, or architectural elements shall be minimized insofar as practicable, whether these exist on the site or on adjacent properties.

Consistent with the Development Agreement (DA), the proposed development will convert an existing single family house (140 Weston Road) to a two-family house at a later date.

2. *The proposed project shall provide and/or contribute toward pedestrian and bicycle amenities and shall, as applicable, accommodate pedestrian and bicycle circulation and safety in accordance with nationally recognized and accepted standards.*

The proposed development provides secure bike storage for all units within the garage and in exterior bike racks off the landscape open space. A proposed sidewalk along Weston Road connects the property to an existing signalized crosswalk at the intersection of Weston Road and Linden Street.

3. *The proposed project shall provide and/or contribute toward the improvement of pedestrian or public transit, and access to a river, open space, public trails or other public amenities.*

The proposed development abuts town owned conservation land at North40, with direct connection to the Crosstown Trail, Morse Pond, and the Community Garden. A proposed sidewalk along Weston Road connects the property to an existing signalized crosswalk at the intersection of Weston Road and Linden Street, with safe pedestrian access to the Wellesley Square Station and shops, restaurants along Central Street.

4. *The proposed project shall provide and/or contribute toward the creation of a village center, town green, or mini-park within or adjacent to the RIO.*

A proposed development provides a safe pedestrian access from property to Central Street, which promotes patronage to the shops, restaurants along Central Street and adds to the vibrancy at Wellesley Square.