

Fieldstone Way – a senior directed townhouse condominium community

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/NARRATIVE

Residences at Fieldstone Way contemplates the construction of a total of 44 attached for-sale senior directed condominiums homes, including 11 affordable units and 33 market rate units, on a 12.05-acre parcel of land. There will be eight triplex buildings and ten duplex buildings, and the homes fronting along Great Plain Avenue will have parking in the rear of the home. The architecture will consist of two and three unit buildings, which will mimic the size and massing of other homes built in the neighborhood. The project will include a community green gathering spot and may include a public walking path connection to the Sudbury Path walking trail from Great Plain Avenue. The community will be organized as a Condominium Association for the maintenance of common areas. The project is approximately 1.2 miles from Wellesley Square and 2.0 miles from Needham Center.

Certification from the Wetlands Protection Committee (“WPC”) that the Project does not impact wetlands or buffer zone is provided by an Order of Resource Area Delineation (“ORAD”), currently effective until June 15, 2018.

The limits and extent of jurisdictional areas on site certified by the WPC in the ORAD are overlayed on the Project plans, confirming that the Project remains entirely outside of jurisdictional areas and Buffer Zone regulated under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. Accordingly, the applicant does not need to seek a Request for a Determination of Applicability (undertaken at an applicant’s option where a boundary delineation of a resource area has not yet been established). For further clarity, the Applicant is seeking a waiver from the local Wetlands Protection Bylaw (for work within Edge of Lands within 200’ of River) in order to allow for construction of the Project shown on the enclosed plans. This waiver is included among those identified in the Project waiver list which will be considered by the Zoning Board of Appeals in granting all local approvals necessary for the Project after consultation with relevant boards and committees as part of a single Comprehensive Permit.

The location of Affordable Units within the Project may be adjusted in accordance with the State’s guidelines prior to Final Approval of the Subsidizing Agency. The location of affordable units is a matter that is beyond the jurisdiction of the Zoning Board of Appeals under 40B Law and Regulations as it lies solely within the authority of the Subsidizing Agency. It remains the applicant’s responsibility to obtain Final Approval of the Subsidizing Agency in order to construct the Project.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The neighborhood surrounding the Subject Property is predominantly single-family houses ranging in size from modest 3-bedroom ranches to large 5-bedroom houses. The existing zoning for this area requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 sq. ft. On these lots houses up to 5,900 sq. ft. can be constructed without being required to seek Planning Board approval under "Large House Review". Due to the very high demand for new housing in Wellesley, many of the smaller, older homes throughout the town are being demolished and new, larger homes are being constructed in their place. This change is quickly altering the look of the neighborhoods throughout the town, and examples of it have begun to show up along this section of Great Plain Avenue. Due to the price developers can attain for a large house built to meet the demands of wealthy young families, new homes being constructed are specific the value of the property. These new homes often have five bedrooms and over 5,000 sq. ft. of living space. An example of this type of new development is a large, two-story house located two lots down from the Subject Property (see photo). Another home was recently razed and a



The Town of Wellesley has a rich history and this is reflected in the architecture scattered throughout the town. Closer to Wellesley Square, there are many examples of period architecture ranging from small cottages to larger homes. The design for the proposed townhouses has been carefully crafted to allow the new buildings to blend well with the existing varied architecture along Great Plain Avenue, while borrowing some of the design elements found in the architecture surrounding the Wellesley Square area. The conceptual architecture shows elements such as gables, covered porches, varying rooflines and corbels. These elements will help blend the new current architecture with the established architecture found within the town.



The architecture for the proposed homes will borrow design elements from homes throughout the town, like these historical houses near Wellesley Square.

The design of the two and three-unit townhouse buildings will have varied and interesting rooflines with a peak height of no more than 36 feet, which is consistent with the houses nearby. With details to help reduce the massing of the buildings such as shed dormers and varied roof types, the new townhouses will integrate nicely within the surrounding neighborhood context. The buildings will also

feature architectural details such as door and window treatments, corbels, carriage style garage doors and covered porches that will help reduce the bulk of the buildings and bring them down to a human scale.



The exterior cladding will resemble that traditionally used in New England such as clapboards, shingles and stone facing. The roof shingles will carefully be chosen to reflect a style and color that is harmonious with the siding. The overall color themes will reflect those commonly found in a New England village and will allow the structures to blend into the surrounding



environment.

Careful attention will be given to the landscaping throughout the site. Existing vegetation will be retained where feasible, and supplemented with additional plantings (see conceptual landscaping plan). The goal is to create a natural landscape throughout the new community that fits well within the context of that commonly seen in New England landscape. Fieldstones from the primitive stonewalls on the site will be gathered and set aside to be used to create new stonewalls throughout the community. An existing fieldstone outbuilding (see photo) will be relocated to the Town Green, renovated and re-purposed for the community to use as a common amenity. This style of stonework can be found in other neighborhoods in Wellesley and will establish a nice link to both the past and the surrounding neighborhoods.

SITE PLANNING FOR FIELDSTONE WAY

The topography of the Subject Parcel is relatively flat near Great Plain Avenue and then gradually falls off towards the rear where the wetland is located. In planning the site, we identified three distinct locations: Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3. The townhouses for each Tier, or neighborhood, have been specifically designed to follow the contours of that Tier.

In Tier 1, the topography is fairly flat along the entire width, or frontage of the parcel and for about half of its depth. The 8 triplex buildings in this neighborhood are sited so that their front elevation will face either Great Plain Avenue, or the Common Green. Their garages will be located in the back of the buildings and accesses by a common alley. This will help hide the visibility of automobiles and associated garages and allow the front façades and pocket gardens to be the focal point.

In Tier 2, the common entry road winds to each side of the Common Green before heading down the grade to Tier 3. This will allow the Common Green and the front façades of the three duplexes that flank it to be the focal point as people enter into the heart of the community (see rendering above for a sense of the architecture in this area). Our plans also include relocating the old fieldstone outbuilding that exists on the site to the Common Green and feature it as a Common Social Room. With the grade falling approximately 10 feet from the Common Green to the rear of these buildings, it allows us to create "drive under" garages for these 6 homes. Locating the garages to the rear will allow the front elevation of these buildings to be "uncluttered" by an attached garage and creates the opportunity to design very inviting homes along the edge of the Common Green. Locating the garages under these duplexes and building the foundations into the grade will also allow us to minimize the mass of the buildings. And finally, the proposed site plan also has the added benefit of providing these homes with a southern orientation to maximize natural sunlight flooding into the living spaces.

In Tier 3, the private road loops past the front yards of the seven duplexes located in this part of the neighborhood. Since the natural topography continues to fall away towards the rear of the parcel, the duplexes in this Tier will take advantage of the ability to construct walk-out basements allowing a portion of the living area to be on the lower level with full height windows and doors to the outside. Owners will have the ability to walk out of their lower level and enjoy the beauty of the meadow that extends up to the edge of the woodlands. Due to the natural topography falling off as it does and the buildings being fanned out along this grade line, these homes will sit below the grade of Great Plain Avenue greatly reducing their mass and visibility from the Great Plain Avenue. Similar to the homes in Tier 2, the 14 homes in this area will have wonderful southern and western exposure allowing for natural sunlight to fill the living areas. The views from the rear of these homes will look out over protected meadows and wetlands. And the existing woodlands that will be preserved creates a natural buffer that shields the visibility of these homes from the few abutters to the rear of the property.

The topography also will aid us in the storm water drainage for the site. Our engineer has the storm water draining by gravity to a low point near the Sudbury Aqueduct, where it will be collected, stored underground and allowed to drain slowly into the ground. With the storm water field underground, this will allow us the opportunity to create a meadow above bordered by shrubs and wildflowers. This new meadow will connect to the existing meadow to the west and be a wonderful common amenity for the community. The proposed walking path to the Sudbury Aqueduct winds alongside this area allowing the neighborhood the opportunity to enjoy the natural beauty.

The Subject Parcel benefits greatly from Great Plain Avenue having an unusually wide Right-of-Way (ROW). Along the frontage of the parcel, the ROW is approximately 40 - 45 feet from the edge of

pavement to the boundary line of the parcel. The ROW contains a sidewalk near the street and is mostly wooded up to the property line. When the 40-foot width of the ROW is added to the 14-foot building setback, the proposed buildings will be at least 54 feet from Great Plain Avenue, greatly reducing the scale of the buildings. The Applicant is also proposing to work with the Town to create a healthy natural buffer between the buildings and Great Plain Avenue.

The edges of the parcel are wooded and this offers the opportunity to provide a natural buffer in the side setback area between the proposed buildings and the abutters. The Applicant has consulted with an arborist and a landscape architect who have surveyed this area to determine the species of trees, their size and health as a first step in the creation of a Landscape Buffer Plan. The Plan will also suggest appropriate plantings that can be added to the area to enhance the desired buffer.

The townhouses at Fieldstone Way will be carefully designed to meet the needs of seniors, who want to remain living independently in a smaller, carefree environment. All the floor plans will either have first floor master bedrooms, or have the option to install an elevator to assist with movement from floor-to-floor. All of the townhouses will have front porches to allow the residents to interact with their neighbors in a very relaxed setting. Many of the townhomes will also feature a private garden area off the rear, or side of the house to allow residents to enjoy the tranquil beauty of their personal garden.