

EMBARC

981 & 1015 East Street / The Sanctuary on East
Walpole, MA

PROJECT NARRATIVE

Located on East Street, two blocks from Walpole Town Common and Center, The Sanctuary on East is proposed on three contiguous lots currently housing two single family homes and Gilmore's Pet Supply Company and outbuildings. These lots are currently zoned as Industrial (IND).

The Proposed project will be a single 6-story multifamily residential building containing 142 apartment units over a below grade garage. Construction will consist of 5 stories of Wood (Type 3A) over a Concrete (Type 1A) garage. The program features a mix of Studio, 1BR, 2BR, and 3 BR units ranging in size from 500 SQFT for a Studio to 1,295 SQFT for a three bedroom.

The enclosed parking garage will contain 59 full-size parking spaces with an additional 112 full and compact surface spaces for a total of 171 spaces. This yields a total parking ratio of 1.20. The Garage parking will be accessed by a ramp and will be below grade.

The massing and exterior design of the building is a direct result of the unique site characteristics and inherent site constraints. In addition, over the course of many meetings, the Walpole Fire Department also issued several mandates and requests relating to building design and site access. For example, the Fire Department issued a request that life safety personnel have 360-degree vehicular access around the entirety of the building without the need for a T-turn around or a Cul-de-Sac. While challenging from a site planning standpoint due to the shallow depth of the subject parcel, the Applicant was able to accommodate this critical request, and the 360 degree access is reflected in the current plan.

The project site is adjacent to active train tracks. While previous iterations had the building relatively tight to the property line and tracks, the current design has pulled the building away from the train tracks to improve the acoustical comfort of the tenants. The project site also abuts the Westbury Farms Building and retail areas. Based on feedback received during collaborations with municipal departments and the Board of Selectmen, the building has been pulled away from the abutting parcel, as well as shifting the massing significantly inward within the parcel, to diminish the building height adjacent to the existing structure. Currently there are no shadows being cast on any residential units.

The overall building program also reflects a municipal request to engage the public realm on East Street without a parallel configuration that would create a wall-like feel. As the building intersects East Street at non-rectilinear angles, it creates opportunities for public engagement, resulting in volumes that break up the massing to a more residential scale. The project has also designated exterior areas on the East side of the parcel to allow for, and encourage use by, the general public, which was also a municipal request.

The exterior design aesthetic leverages the unique volumes with material changes to further breakdown the perceived massing from East Street. The building design features detailed articulation of building corners with volumes and materials “pulling in” in between. The use of fiber cement of varying sizes, colors, and textures allows a residential feel to be maintained, while the use of storefront and built-up cornices at street level works to engage the public.

The ground floor of the building reflects a primary objective to orient all active building spaces along the various pockets created on East Street. Uses include a Library, a Lounge, Leasing offices, Ride Share Waiting and a Co-Working component (also available to the general public). Making the best use of its solar orientation, the project includes an indoor year-round pool and fitness facilities with south facing glazing. Building services including utilities, move-ins and trash removal are located facing the train tracks and are not visible from East Street.

A range of apartment unit types are located on all six levels of the building, 8 of which will be designed as Group 2A units, and the remainder Group 1. The units are designed to provide layouts that promote open kitchen/living/dining spaces, with comfortably sized bedrooms, bathrooms, laundry, and storage areas. All apartments will have in-unit washer and dryers, along with individual heating and cooling systems. Specific attention will be placed on making this a sustainable project, carefully selecting products including appliances, light fixtures, plumbing fixtures, and building materials. The project will include car charging stations and the roof will be constructed to be “solar-ready”.