



January 17, 2024

Mr. John Lee, Chairman
135 School Street
Walpole, MA 02081
United States

**Re: Comment Letter 3
Neponset Village
Comprehensive Permit (40B) Peer Review
Walpole, Massachusetts**

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The following letter updates comments provided in our December 6, 2023 letter in consideration of supplemental material provided by the applicant including responses to comments, revised site plans, supporting documentation, and clarifying testimony presented at public hearing.

Our updates are noted below in "black" with the heading "01-17-24 Update:" Text shown in gray represents information contained in previous correspondence while new information is shown in black text. Comments resolved in prior correspondence have been noted and related discussion removed for efficiency.

We have very few outstanding comments (See Comments 21, 25, 26, 36). Our principal remaining concern is the Project's expressed intent to use Maguire Park during construction which we consider inadvisable given the clear space limitations of Maguire Park and the fact the Project's main/construction entrance is proposed off Pleasant Street clearly indicating access from Pleasant Street is workable. It remains our recommendation that the Board condition any approval in a manner that restricts use of Maguire Park for all but the emergency access it is intended to serve.

We have included a new comment (Comment 37) noting the Fire Department's expressed concern regarding proposed access and our deference to their requirements and preferences. While the documentation provided indicates a plausible fire truck travel path through the development the Project should address all concerns expressed by the Fire Department as they are the ones responsible for responding.

The following is a status summary for each comment.

Site Plans

Cover Sheet (Sheet 1)

1. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
2. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

Notes & Legend (Sheet 2)

3. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

Existing Conditions Plans (Norwood Engineering)

4. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

Demolition and Erosion Control Plan (Sheet 5)

5. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
6. Given there is relatively little demolition, and site erosion controls are relatively simple we recommend the Board request the applicant to add some basic information as to construction management and phasing to better understand how the construction will be managed on such a tight site without impacts to abutting property or the public way. At a minimum please indicate proposed accommodations for contractor parking, construction trailers, soil stockpile/material staging, material delivery, laydown and storage and associated construction period stormwater management measures. If offsite locations are required for contractor parking or material staging, please indicate as such.

12-06-23 Update: Plans revised to show thoughtful and reasonable construction phasing information however no details are provided indicating how typical construction logistics will be managed safely on such a densely developed site without burdening the public way or causing excessive impacts on abutting properties. It remains our opinion that the development team should provide at least a basic description of how construction logistics will be managed and how areas of the site will be used during construction to provide the Board an opportunity to consider construction impacts and potential related conditions. At a minimum, we recommend any condition approving a Comprehensive Permit include a *condition requiring the Project to submit a Construction Management Plan demonstrating how construction will be managed to prevent unanticipated impacts to the public way or abutting properties during construction and that it be approved by the Building Inspector prior to, or as part of, processing a building permit application or other required town authorization of construction activity.*

01-17-24 Update: Applicant is amenable to the condition noted. **Comment Resolved.**

Site Layout Plan (Sheet 6)

7. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
8. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
9. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
10. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
11. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
12. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

Site Grading and Drainage Plan (Sheets 7)

13. The proposed grading at the end of Maguire Park appears to create an awkward low point between the two 117 contours. Although not likely to result in any substantial ponding adjustment is recommended.

12-06-23 Update: Plans still suggest runoff from the new emergency access will be directed toward properties at 12 and 15 Maguire Park with no proposed collection or conveyance. We recommend the design team consider pitching the road to the west (away from 12 and 15) particularly given this areas designation as an intended location for snow storage.

01-17-24 Update: Plans revised as requested. **Comment Resolved.**

- 14. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
- 15. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
- 16. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
- 17. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
- 18. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

Site Utility Plan (Sheet 8)

- 19. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
- 20. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

Fire Apparatus Turning Analysis (Sheets 9 - 10)

- 21. The analysis indicates a fire apparatus can adequately access/navigate the site with the proposed connection to Maguire Park. We recommend any decision approving a Comprehensive Permit include a condition requiring the Maguire Park connection to be constructed and operational prior to issuing a building permit.

12-06-23 Update: Response indicates a requirement that the emergency access route be "fully constructed and operational prior to a building permit" is unreasonable and we agree. We did not intend to suggest as such but rather only seek to ensure that adequate emergency through-access is available before construction of the homes begins and is always maintained thereafter particularly during the period where timber framing is being erected on multiple units in close proximity to each other and adjacent homes without the benefit of proposed sprinklers. We recommend any condition approving a Comprehensive Permit include a condition requiring the Project to construct and maintain the proposed emergency access route as required by the Walpole Fire Department, including proposed access control gate, prior to the erection of any timber framing and that the Maguire Park entrance not be used for construction access or laydown.

01-17-24 Update: Response suggests Maguire Park will be used during Site Clearing and Preparation. Given the narrowness of Maguire Park and the closeness of the homes to the street we continue to recommend the Board limit construction access to the Project's proposed entrance off Pleasant Street as shown on the Demolition and Erosion Control Plan. We see no compelling reason that any construction mobilization must be from Maguire Park.

Details (Sheets 12 - 18)

- 22. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

Hardscape and Materials Plan (Sheet L1.21)

- 23. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.
- 24. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

Planting Plan (Sheet LP1.21)

- 25. Planting Plan and Plant Schedule seem reasonable. However, no planting is proposed over most of the area behind Units 20 -24 which face the abutting residential building. We recommend the Board

request the applicant to consider installing a fence or similar screening element along that property boundary due to the lack of any significant buffer and the anticipated ground level activity.

12-06-23 Update: Plans have been revised to show a continuous hedge along the project boundary with abutting residential property and included appropriate plant selection and reasonable spacing. However, we recommend the Board consider requiring supplemental planting be provided along the western boundary of 15 Maguire Park and a portion of 12 Maguire Park to screen those areas which are impacted similarly since it's doubtful that the little existing vegetation scheduled to remain will provide adequate screening or relief.

01-17-24 Update: Response indicates landscape plan has been revised to address the comment however the landscape plan included with the revised submission appears to be the same as prior submission.

Lighting Plan (Sheet L1.22)

26. We did not see a Lighting Plan in the submittal materials but noticed light fixtures noted on some of the plans. We recommend the Board request the applicant to provide a Lighting/Photometric Plan indicating the proposed location and type of exterior light fixtures to be used and the anticipate light levels so any impacts on abutting parcels can be considered.

12-06-23 Update: Site Lighting Plan (Sheet L1.22) and photometrics (also labeled Sheet L1.22) were provided and appear reasonable with one exception. We recommend lights currently proposed at the end of the access drive (Sta. 5+75) be moved to locations further inside the development and ideally near the proposed accessible spaces and ramps (Sta. 4+75) to avoid unnecessary light impact on abutting property while providing more useable light in priority areas on site.

01-17-24 Update: Plans revised as requested. However, we recommend a light be added near Unit 4 to address lack of illumination in the area.

Planting Details (Sheet LP3.01 – LP3.02)

27. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

Stormwater Management Report

28. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

29. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

30. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

31. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

Traffic Report

32. The Traffic Report does not mention bike parking. We recommend the site plan include a space for bike storage.

12-06-23 Update: Plans revised to add a covered bike storage shed at the end of the site access drive. The proposed location seems unnecessarily close to the home at 15 Maguire Park, and we

recommend relocating to a more central location such as near the lawn area light pole. While we appreciate the utility of covered bike storage, we do not consider covering a requirement.

01-17-24 Update: Plans revised to address comment. **Comment Resolved.**

33. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

34. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

35. Comment Resolved 12-06-23.

December 6, 2023 Update

36. Having two sidewalks traversing the relatively small lawn area seems redundant and unnecessarily increases impervious cover. We recommend the applicant consider eliminating one of the sidewalks, and potentially the concrete bench pads, in the interest of maximizing available open space and flexibility for its use.

01-17-24 Update: This comment was not addressed on the Plans or responses. It remains our opinion that two sidewalks crossing the open space detracts unnecessarily from the useable open space which is already in very short supply. We recommend the Project forego the additional walk on the west side of the lawn and relocate, if not eliminate, the proposed benches. The benches seem redundant with the picnic tables and occupy otherwise useable open space.

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37. It is our understanding the Fire Department has not accepted the emergency access proposed. Please be advised, we defer to the Fire Departments preference/requirements. Given the density proposed and the lack of any available space, any resulting access changes are likely to trigger other substantive site changes. We recommend the Project address all Fire Department requirements.

We appreciate the Project's responses and look forward to their addressing the final few outstanding items. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact us at (508) 786-2200.

Very truly yours,



Sean P. Reardon, P.E.
Vice President

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