



January 2, 2024

Zoning Board of Appeals
Town of Walpole
135 School Street
Walpole, Massachusetts 02081

Dear Board Members:

On behalf of Neponset Village LLC, Coneco Engineers & Scientists (Coneco) has revised Comprehensive Permit Plans (Plans) and supporting documentation in response to the comments regarding our applications to the Walpole Zoning Board of Appeals for the proposed development Neponset Village, located at 5 Pleasant Street, Walpole, Massachusetts. This letter provides our response to comments received by Coneco through the Community & Economic Development Department.

The following section contains our responses to the comments contained in the aforementioned documents. Comments that have been addressed or resolved were excluded from this letter. As an aid to the reader, *original review comments are included in italicized text* and Coneco responses to the original comments are in plain text. ***Follow up, updated, or continued review comments are in bold italicized text*** and **Coneco responses to the follow up comments are in bold text.**

Community & Economic Development (Patrick Deschenes) Comments Dated December 6, 2023:

General Comments

1. *The site's density was a topic addressed frequently at the project's last public hearing, however it has not been addressed on the revised plans. In my opinion the issue with density has to do with the proposed layout not making the best use of the space provided. Units 8-10 encroach excessively within the rear setback so much so that about half of the unit is within the rear setback. This does not need to be the case. If the project can be reduced slightly there is an opportunity to provide a better product for both abutters and future residents.*

The applicant believes that the site layout provided makes the best use of the property as a MassHousing-supported residential development. The project currently exhibits an 8.6 unit per acre ratio which is compliant with the MassHousing requirements for attached residential units.

2. *A concern brought up by the abutters was the loss of the quiet neighborhood feel to the area. Has the applicant considered readdressing their proposed architectural designs to factor in a garage and unit driveway space for each unit? This modification to the parking layout would be significant, but would provide an opportunity to reduce impervious surface and reclaim usable open space. This alteration would provide the appearance of an abutting road rather than that of a housing development.*

The applicant would like to note that one of the abutting properties is a multifamily housing development with a similar exterior parking lot. Additionally, there is a similar existing housing development within a half mile from the project. Lastly, the property abuts the manufacturing

district of the Town of Norwood. The applicant does not agree that this residential housing development is outside of current use and appearance of the area.

3. *I do not agree with the removal of the proposed gazebo amenity. While the proposed location was unsuitable due to the infiltration system, the lack of alternative location would appear to be because of the site's density and lack of usable open space.*

The applicant prefers the current amenity area layout over the previously proposed gazebo. In the applicant's experience, open grass spaces, walking paths, and sitting areas are more frequently utilized.

4. *I believe the applicant should review elements of the project dealing with better site and building design in relation to the surrounding area, and preservation of Open Space when at all possible. These elements factor into how the Board weighs the Local Concern as addressed within 760 CMR 56.07(3) (e) and (f).*

The applicant believes that the site layout provided makes the best use of the property as a MassHousing-supported residential development and believes that the information provided to date offers adequate evidence for the Board to make a decision based on the matters outlined in 760 CMR 56.07(3) (e) and (f).

Site Development Plans

Sheet 6- Site Layout Plan:

1. *Will snow storage only be utilized within the emergency access? If there is going to be a gate there it doesn't seem practical to only have that location designated for snow storage and not an additional location within the site itself.*

As stated within Appendix D – Long-term Pollution Prevention Plan of the Stormwater Management Report, the noted overburden snow storage area is only for major perpetual storm events. Snow will be stored within open landscaped areas throughout the site. The applicant believes that this provides the best solution for snow removal from both an operations and environmental standpoint.

2. *The proposed gazebo has been removed due to concerns of it being located on top of the infiltration system. Why was a new location not found? There appears to be a sidewalk put in its place around the perimeter of the infiltration system.*

The applicant prefers the current amenity area layout over the previously proposed gazebo. In the applicant's experience, open grass spaces, walking paths, and sitting areas are more frequently utilized.

3. *Bicycle storage is shown at the lower left side of the site. How many bicycles does this accommodate? Also I would recommend moving this closer to the entrance of the site so a bicyclist does not need to traverse the entire length of the parking lot in order to get to Pleasant Street.*

Two uncovered bicycle storage locations, accommodating six bicycles each, are now provided to accommodate this concern and the concern brought forth by the updated engineering peer review letter.

Landscaping Plans:

Sheet L1.21 – Hardscape and Material Plans:

1. *Will the proposed picnic tables be on a concrete pad like the ornamental benches or are they movable? They are not labeled as such but just want to be sure there will be no concrete pads on top of the infiltration system.*

The picnic tables will be movable to accommodate the needs of the residents. The applicant disagrees that no concrete pads can be installed above the infiltration system. While deep concrete foundation to support a gazebo or a significantly large concrete pad to support the forces felt by dumpster loading could be a concerning, small pads and sidewalks over infiltration systems are standard practice in stormwater design.

2. *There is limited space between the patio space for units 8 through 10 and the proposed fence. While the proposed location of the fence make sense, this concern goes back to site design and availability of usable open space. I would encourage the applicant to reconsider density, or even the parking configuration, in order to provide better separation for these units and the site's rear setback.*

The applicant believes that the site layout provided makes the best use of the property as a MassHousing-supported residential development.

Sheet L1.22 – Site Lighting Plan:

1. *No concern with site/parking lighting locations. Will each unit have lighting at their own entrance as well?*

Each unit will have a wall mounted sconce or similar fixture near the exterior doorways.

2. *Can lighting cut sheets be provided?*

Cut sheets for the site lamp posts have been provided with this submission.

Tetra Teck – Peer Review (Sean P. Reardon, P.E.) Comment Letter 2 Dated December 6, 2023:

Site Plans

Demolition and Erosion Control Plan (Sheet 5)

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.

A Construction Phasing Plan has been provided showing the anticipated phasing for construction. Once the site has been cleared, contractor parking, trailer, stockpile/material, will occur within the site limit of work. Preliminary delivery of clearing equipment, sediment and erosion controls materials, and contractor parking will occur on the proposed project site at the end of Maguire park until the main entrance on Pleasant Street is opened. Coordination with the town, including a police detail, will be necessary during the initial clearing at the Pleasant Street entrance.

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.

Detailed construction logistics are typically controlled by the projects assigned site contractor. A site contractor cannot be chosen until the project has been approved by the town and put out for project bidding. The assigned contractor will then have to coordinate and create a project schedule to complete the approved plans. The applicant is amendable to the condition that construction management associated with public way impacts, such as curb cuts, utility connections, or other unanticipated impacts to other public areas, shall be coordinated the town's Building Inspector as required.

Site Layout Plan (Sheet 6)

7. *Recommend including proposed reconstruction of Maguire Park and the reconstruction of the Pleasant Street sidewalk on the Site Layout Plan.*

The proposed reconstruction of Maguire Park and reconstruction of Pleasant Street sidewalk labels and hatching have been added to the site layout sheet.

12-06-23 Update: Plans revised to show information requested. We recommend any condition approving a Comprehensive Permit include a condition requiring the Project to complete the Maguire Park reconstruction and Pleasant Street sidewalk prior to issuance of an occupancy permit. Comment Resolved

The applicant is amendable to this condition.

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.*

Spot grade has been added and shows positive drainage will occur throughout the connection to Maquire Park.

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.*

The emergency access has been redesigned to direct runoff towards the snow storage area as suggested.

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.*

The applicant is amenable to a condition that requires the gravel base course of the site's access roadway and connection to Maquire Park be constructed and tested by the fire department to ensure the access is functional. Requiring that the connection is fully constructed and operational prior to a building permit places an undo burden on the construction schedule as this will limit the initial installation of foundations which typically occur ahead of placing bituminous pavement base courses.

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.*

The applicant is amendable to a similar condition if said condition allows access through Maquire Park during the Phase 1 Site Clearing and Preparation.

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.*

Additional plantings are now proposed along the entirety of the property boundary behind Units 20-24.

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.*

Additional plantings have been added to the plans as requested.

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.*

Photometrics have been supplied with this submission.

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.*

Adjustments to the location of the lamp posts have been made as requested.

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

Stormwater Management Report

31. *The Project will disturb more than an acre of land area which typically required to obtain coverage under a NPDES Construction General Permit which includes preparation of a project-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). We recommend any decision approving the Comprehensive Permit include a condition requiring the Project to provide proof of NPDES Permit coverage and a copy of the SWPPP prior to the start of land clearing activity.*

The applicant is amenable to this condition.

12-06-23 Update: *Response indicates no objection to the recommended condition. We recommend any decision approving the Comprehensive Permit include a condition requiring the Project to provide proof of NPDES Permit coverage and a copy of the SWPPP prior to the start of construction. Comment Resolved.*

The applicant is amendable to this condition.

Traffic Report

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

A bike rack storage structure is shown on the layout plan.

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.*

Two uncovered bicycle storage locations are now provided to accommodate this concern and the concern brought forth by the updated staff review letter.

Walpole Fire Department(Allen R. Hover, Deputy Fire Chief) Comments Dated November 28, 2023:

1. *We find the current hydrant layout unacceptable. We prefer to work with the applicant(s) and the Walpole Water Department before permitting.*

The applicant has adjusted the fire hydrant layout per the direction of the Fire Department and is amendable to additional adjustments to the fire hydrant layout if deemed necessary by the Fire Department.

2. *We have concerns with the proposed fire department access. Each WFD response will require utilizing the gated emergency egress road to delay egress. The proposed site does not provide a safe means for larger vehicles to turn around for egress. We request a cul-de-sac turnaround be required.*

The applicant is willing to either provide or exclude a gate for the proposed emergency access from the project as determined by the Fire Department and the Zoning Board. Signage has been added to the Plans indicating “NO THRU TRAFFIC, EMERGENCY & MAINTENANCE USE ONLY. DO NOT BLOCK.”

3. *Using the opposite travel lane is prohibited in the design of all new fire apparatus access roads (18.2.3.5.8).*

The updated fire apparatus turning analysis with the newly provided Tower Ladder specifications show that there will be no use of the opposite travel lane for the proposed accessway lanes and the emergency access roadway.

4. *Fire department access roads connecting to roadways shall be provided with curb cuts extending at least 2' beyond each edge of the fire apparatus access road (18.2.3.5.3.3).*

The proposed curb cut for the main site entrance is approximately 75 feet, while the proposed main access roadway width is 24 feet. The emergency access road is an extension of the existing Maguire Park roadway and does not have a curb cut. The applicant is amendable to adjusting the roadway entrance curb cuts per the direction of the Fire Department.

5. *Fire apparatus access roads shall be designed and maintained to support the imposed loads of fire apparatus and shall be provided with an all-weather driving surface (18.2.3.5.2).*

The typical pavement section shown on sheet 15 is the proposed section for both the main access road and the emergency access road. This section is based on the Town of Walpole's Typical Roadway Cross Section Detail.

6. *Approved signs and roadway surface markings must be provided and maintained to identify fire apparatus access roads and prohibit obstruction. Please add to the plans.*

Additional signage and pavement markings have been added to the project layout as requested and per discussions with the Fire Department. The applicant is amendable to adjusting the site signage and pavement marking per the direction of the Fire Department.

7. *Fire department access roads shall be provided at the project's start and maintained throughout construction. Permanent markings will not be required until before occupancy.*


Acknowledged.

8. *Please see our attached specifications for our Tower Ladder and add to your swept path analysis in accordance with 527 CMR 1.00.*

The turning analysis has been revised showing the Tower Ladder specifications provided.

Please feel free to contact me at (508) 697-3191 ext. 108 or ddmitruk@coneco.com if you have any questions or require additional information.

Best Regards,



Damien Dmitruk, P.E.
Principal of Engineering