


TOWN OF HINGHAM
COMMUNITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

April 9, 2018

Emily Wentworth, Senior Planner
Zoning Board of Appeals
210 Central Street
Hingham, MA 02043



RE: River Stone Comprehensive Permit

Dear Emily,

I have reviewed the revised submittals as well as the comments previously provided by the Planning Board on April 26, 2016 and respectfully offer the following comments:

1. This project remains an extremely intensive and dense proposal for this suburban location and as such the extent of the waivers should be reduced to allow the developer to provide appropriate buffers and setbacks for safety and environmental considerations, and to promote better site and building design in relation to the surroundings. The setbacks of the units from the adjacent roadways and neighboring houses is not sufficient and out of scale.
2. There is not enough open space for children and/or recreational common space in this very dense development. The applicant should be required to provide play equipment on site for children, at a location accessible by a continuous sidewalk system, as well as benches or seating areas.
3. The separation distance between structures should be at least 20' to allow public safety vehicles to circumnavigate the buildings, and in support of privacy and quality of life for the residents.
4. The width of roadway pavement should be at least 24' and there should be a snow shelf on either side of the roadway. In addition, there should be some plan to remove the snow from the site so that it does not obstruct sight lines, sidewalks or the minimum required street width.
5. All portions of the project should be designed so that the length of the residential driveways allow for parking in front of the garage without the vehicle overhanging the roadway or the sidewalk. The residents should not have to walk into the roadway to get around the vehicle parked in the driveway. Road D does not seem to meet this suggested

design standard, and we suggest that all residential driveways in the project should meet this design standard.

6. There should be a *continuous sidewalk network on both sides of the roadway throughout the project*, and from the visitor parking spaces to the units to ensure public safety.
7. There should be street trees installed along Ward Street not less than 50' on center and they should be installed prior to the issuance of the first certificate of occupancy.
8. Units 19-23 are designed to have the "rear" of the building facing the public way. *All sides of the structures facing the public way or a private way should be designed to look like the front of the structure* and fit in the streetscape. These particular units appear to have decks off of the structures which further reduce the setback from the road and will be visually unappealing. There should be street trees along the public way and these units should be limited to at grade patios in addition to the requirement for the facades to be designed as the front of the structures.
9. The setbacks to the resource areas should be increased to move the development as well as the limits of disturbance away from said resources. A row of boulders 25' on center with an evergreen tree (species to be approved by conservation agent, minimum height 6-8') planted between each boulder should be installed to permanently demarcate the limits of clearing adjacent to the resources in support of ongoing awareness of the resources and protection of the resources. This should be installed prior to issuance of the first certificate of occupancy.
10. Application of pesticides and fertilizers should similarly be limited (type and quantity) to be protective of the wetland resources and water supply.
11. Given the proximity of the development to adjacent homes and the public way it would be advisable to increase the setbacks. In addition, a photometric plan should be provided prior to issuance of building permits, and, all light fixtures should be dark sky compliant with recessed lenses only.
12. The applicant should be required to provide play equipment on site for children, at a location accessible by a continuous sidewalk system.
13. Information in the record indicates potentially high groundwater levels. Applicant should be required to have additional test pits throughout the site to identify depth to groundwater. This should occur prior to the issuance of any building permits.
14. An earthwork cut/fill calculation should be provided prior to the issuance of any building permits.
15. The dead end sections should be designed consistent with the fire departments standard detail for a hammerhead to facilitate the turning movements of emergency vehicles, residents and visitors. The present design does not seem to comply which is problematic

given the density of the development. The final design plans should be provided and be reviewed for adequacy prior to the issuance of any building permits.

16. The visitor parking spaces should have a year round landscaped berm to prevent headlight glare from causing a nuisance to vehicles on adjacent driveways, or adjacent units. Staff recommends a substantial hedgerow.
17. The landscape plan provided with the project is insufficient as proposed and does nothing to soften the urban heat island effect or provide a softened streetscape for the residents in keeping with the Town overall. Staff recommends street trees 50' on center on both sides of the way. Staff also recommends a 20' vegetated buffer around the perimeter of the site comprised of a mix of shrubs, and evergreen and deciduous trees to provide a screening effect for residents and abutters.

Very truly yours,



Mary Savage-Dunham,
Director of Community Planning