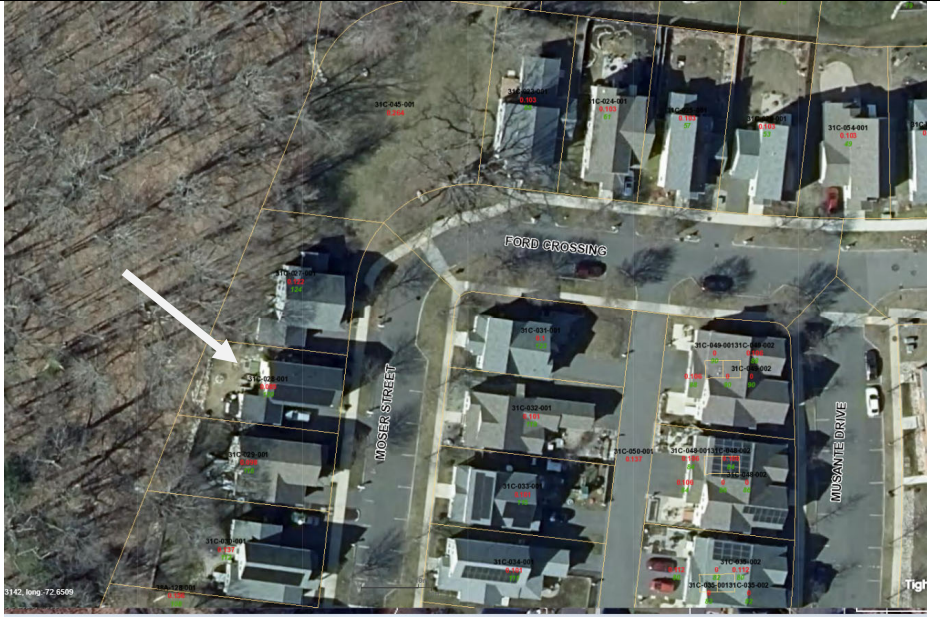


Planning & Sustainability • City of Northampton

resilience | regeneration | design | conservation | placemaking | mobility | accessibility | community development | historic | zoning | GIS | agriculture

Carolyn Misch, AICP, Director • CMisch@NorthamptonMA.gov • 413-587-1287

STAFF REPORT

PERMIT TYPE	PUBLIC HEARING DATE	PROPERTY ADDRESS/ ZONE/LOT SIZE
SITE PLAN AMENDMENT	JUN 13, 2024 7:00 PM	120 Moser St/PV / CLICK FOR PERMIT FILE Record #LU-24-19
OWNER	EXISTING USE	
JAY BREINES	SINGLE FAMILY	

Summary of Request:

The Planned Village districts have no minimum open space and no setbacks. The idea is that the developer will proposed an appropriate setback for the parcels when designing the neighborhood. During the Special Permit and Site Plan review, the setbacks were established by the building lot lines and work limit lines. Those effectively became the setback lines. It afforded more flexibility.

However, now that some of the neighborhoods are several years old, owners needs change and modifications are inevitable. New additions that expand beyond the original building limit lines there fore need review by the Planning Board.

Compliance with Zoning:

The reason this needs an amendment is because though the infill of the house matches the existing rear line, that was never approved by the Board when changes were made in the field.




There are no trees that will be effected by this application, which would be the key consideration for homes along this boundary of the former State Hospital land. There are several mature trees in this vicinity that were to be saved.

- Site Plan Review: Simple Majority vote required 4 of 7 members. This is a technical permit. The Board must determine that the standards for site plan approval can still be met with the additional significant trees removed
- Applicable Code Sections: 350-11.6 ([Site Plan Criteria](#))

Staff Recommendation:

Staff has no concerns about the request nor the change affecting the original approval of this portion of the redevelopment of the State Hospital.

PERMIT TYPE	PUBLIC HEARING DATE	PROPERTY ADDRESS/ ZONE/LOT SIZE
SPECIAL PERMIT WITH SITE PLAN	JUN 13, 2024 7:00 PM	8 View Ave/ URB / CLICK FOR PERMIT FILE Record #LU-24-11
OWNER	EXISTING USE	
SOVEREIGN BUILDERS	SINGLE FAMILY	

Summary of Request:

The applicant seeks permission to develop 12 small detached single units with access from North Street along View Ave, which is a private street owned by this owner.

Note: 18 units in an expanded footprint was previously approved by the Board in 2009. That was prior to the multiple zoning amendments that gave more incentive to build smaller units with additional design standards (2013) and prior to the adoption of the significant tree ordinance for replacement of trees over 20” in DBH (2016).

Compliance with Sustainable Northampton:- This site is adjacent to the Mass Central Rail Trail, walking distance to schools, downtown, groceries and will provide small attainable ownership options for prospective buyers trying to enter the real estate market in Northampton. This site has long been planned for housing and meets the goals in the plan of creating compact units that provide options to reduce the number and length of necessary trips by vehicle while maintaining approximately half the site as undeveloped forested wetland and buffer zone abutting the bike path. (Pathways 1&7 & 8). These units will be electric for thermal loads with solar capacity (Pathways 4&5)

Compliance with Zoning:

The number of units over 6 triggers a special permit and compliance with the site plan standards as well. See applicant responses in the attachment.

There are very specific criteria in the URB table for this kind of development that were intentionally adopted based on the community's desire to direct new housing in a way that meets the City's goals and objectives for all the beneficial elements that the City wants out of housing. This was to provide a path of assurance for those investing in development and seeking to building slightly larger number of units with a reduced risk. Essentially this is a cookbook and if the applicant can meet these special provisions as well as the other requirements in site plan and traffic mitigation and tree replacement then the Board should approve the project.

A. Buildings and parking.

1) The first row of buildings along a street shall face the street and add to the streetscape. There shall not be any parking, except incidental to a driveway or roadway, between the first row of buildings and the street. Parking shall be located behind buildings or designed otherwise to minimize view from the public street. **(NOTE THAT THIS ODD SHAPE means that the driveway is what fronts the street. The location of the buildings at the end of the driveway is what will be visible and not parking)**

2) The area between the property and the road pavement shall be made to be pedestrian friendly, with sidewalks, street furniture, trees and other vegetation, all of which shall be in conformance with City standards. All landscaping incorporated as part of the applicant's design between the street and the building(s) shall facilitate and enhance the pedestrian use of sidewalks and other areas adjacent to the building. Such streetscape may include rebuilding by the applicant, as necessary, of granite curbs, ADA-compliant concrete sidewalks, tree belts, and drainage improvements incorporating low-impact development standards for any necessary drainage improvements triggered by these changes. **Note- the proposed sidewalk is bituminous. A condition should require cement.**

3) Buildings that abut existing residential properties shall incorporate building articulation alongside facades. Building projections shall be incorporated for any side façade that is longer than 30 feet.

4) Front facades shall have setbacks consistent with other buildings within the block or provide a different setback that is necessary to address any natural resources constraints. **These are all small units and not one long façade (eg of an apartment block).**

B. Streets and roadways.

1) Projects shall connect to all surrounding neighborhoods with bicycle and pedestrian access to the extent possible. a) For projects that have more than one vehicular access, driveways and roadways shall internally and externally connect to each other and dead-end streets shall be avoided whenever possible. Dead-end roadways and driveways shall never exceed 500 feet and, to the extent possible, must include a bicycle and pedestrian connection from the dead-end street to a street, common area, park or civic space.

b) For projects that have a single vehicular access, such access shall not exceed 500 feet and pedestrian access shall also be provided directly from any street to residential units. **This is what triggers the connection via TRG (due to wetlands) to Northern Ave, which creates connectivity to the neighborhood and access to the MCRT.**

2) The design standards for the length of dead-end streets, protection of natural features, sidewalks, wheelchair ramps, landscaping, utilities, and the construction method and materials for water lines, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, fire protection, sidewalks, private roads and other infrastructure shall be

those set forth in Chapter 290, Subdivision of Land. These standards shall apply even for private roadways and driveways that are not part of a subdivision, unless waived by the Planning Board. 350 Attachment 7:7 Supp 15, Feb 2024**NORTHAMPTON CODE This is where cement concrete is also triggered to match those conditions on North St.and the rest of the urban neighborhood.**

3) Driveways and private roadways shall be designed to function as private alleys, or shared streets with pedestrians and cyclists, and engineered to keep speeds below 15 miles per hour, or yield streets with separate sidewalks as shown in the subdivision regulations. Such sidewalks shall connect to sidewalks along adjacent streets.

4) Vehicular access shall connect to surrounding streets as appropriate to ensure safe and efficient flow of traffic within the surrounding neighborhood and to mitigate increases in traffic on nearby streets.

5) Preexisting paths historically used as bicycle and pedestrian trails shall be preserved to the extent possible and marked with appropriate signage.

C. Park space.

1) All projects shall include a park/common area fully designed and constructed to be integrated into the project, which area shall be easily accessible and available for residents of the project. At a minimum, this space shall be 300 square feet or 30 square feet per dwelling unit of buildable land area, whichever is greater.

2) All such space shall be contiguous unless waived by the Planning Board upon finding that it is in the public interest and consistent with the intent and purpose of this section.

D. Environment and energy. Buildings shall meet one of the following environmental standards: 1) Home Energy Rating System (HERS) rating for the building envelope at least 25% lower than the current municipal standard at the time the special permit is requested, but in no event shall the HERS rating be greater than 47 for units of 1,200 square feet or less, and no greater than 41 for units larger than 1,200 square feet. Alternatively, for units of 1,200 square feet or less, the Planning Board may consider a comparable energy standard to the HERS rating of 47 after consultation with the Building Commissioner.

2) U.S. Green Building Council LEED New Construction Gold or Neighborhood Development Gold Certified.

E. Size, access and affordability. 1) Buildings shall meet one of the following standards: a) 11% of the units shall be “affordable units” as that term is defined in § 350-2.1 of the Code of the City of Northampton; or b) Contain 25% or more of the units no larger than 1,200 square feet gross floor area.

2) Equal access. All projects shall provide equal access to all building amenities, park and civic space and public entrances to buildings to residents of both affordable and non-affordable units. F. Internet connectivity. All projects that include infrastructure making internet connectivity available shall do so without differences in quality, capacity or speed to residents of both affordable and non-affordable units.

350-11.6 (Site Plan Criteria) 350- Attachment 7

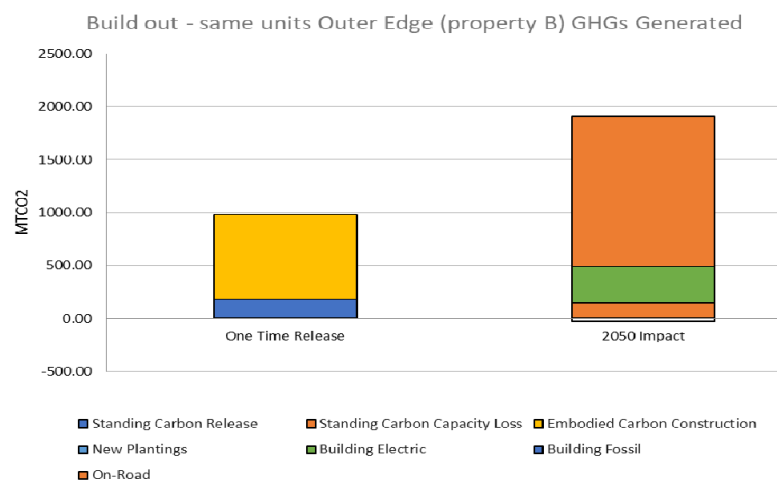
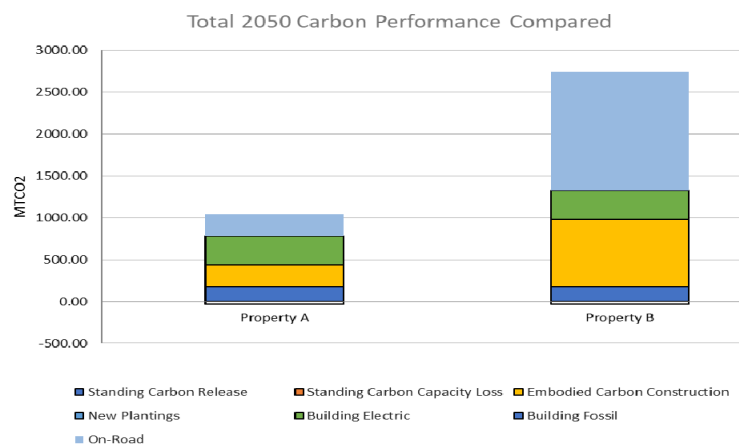
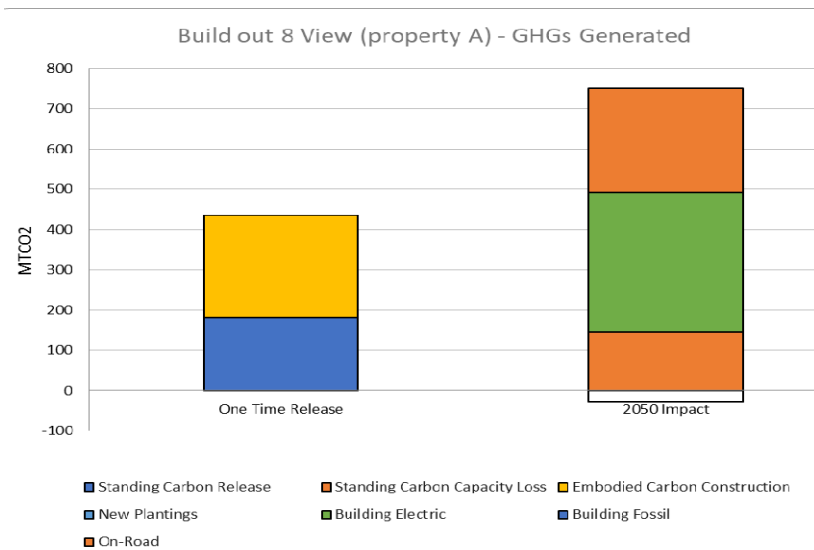
ISSUES:

- Trees- There are 29 trees over 20” being removed for this project. The City does not prohibit tree removal on property. However, the tree replacement requirements for trees over 20” does require

trees to be replanted. The applicant is meeting that requirements. Tree protection is not included and should be conditioned.

Of note, our office recently commissioned a carbon calculator to help evaluate projects from a carbon footprint perspective. This tool allows us to analyze impacts of projects based on their location, building construction methods, energy codes, trees removed and type of vehicles anticipated on site. This is merely to discuss building impacts.

Using this tool and incorporating the total number and size of trees coming down on this project built in this location as compared to a similar project built in a location further away from the center of town towards the western portion of the City, the following results are apparent:



- Stormwater- There are two main infiltrators collecting stormwater. DPW asked for revised plans on May 31 but has not received any updates. I presume that the stormwater permit will not be issued before Thursday, therefore it is likely the Board will have to continue the hearing.

- Traffic Mitigation- The project will result in 11 new units over the previous single family home. The total required mitigation is \$11,000 in one time payment in lieu of mitigation for the incremental peak hour trips generated for this project.

Staff Recommendation:

There may be technical issues with this project, particularly stormwater that may warrant continuation of the hearing. However, overall this project represents the type of new housing construction that will fit demand while allow access to homeownership and building equity.

Staff recommends approval of this project with conditions to address issues identified and those that may arise during the hearing. Developing a list of conditions in addition to the standard include:

Preconstruction plans incorporating conditions that include- cement concrete sidewalks, detailed tree protection for those noted and others that arise.

Prior to site work- certification by an arborist that the tree protection has been installed according to arborist recommendation.

Prior to CO- Traffic mitigation and tree replacement mitigation as well as lighting as-builts.

If the Board can close the hearing, due to DPW permit or other issues the Board would like to have more information about, then continue to the July meeting. (June 27 is already booked)

OTHER ITEMS-

Hearing format based on previous discussions:

1. Public should probably be reminded of the steps for public hearing at each meeting and potentially before each hearing within the meeting if new people come in
2. The Board considers issues raised by commenters as part of the evaluation of a project's impact (positive or negative). Each issue raised = 1 issue no matter how many people confirm that they have the same concern. It is not more important, the more people who state it to be so.
3. No need to repeat comments if others have already stated it. (above)
4. No need to speak comments if written comments of the same have already been submitted.
5. The Board chair can also confirm receipt of any written comments that have arrived prior to the meeting indicating that they are part of the record and part of consideration.
6. The advertised meeting is in person with a zoom option. Note that if anyone wants to participate, they should send comments in. Technical difficulties with zoom will not be a reason to cancel the meeting.
7. Members of the public participating by zoom should have their video off until recognized to speak.
8. A quorum of the board must be in person, some board members may participate remotely
9. All presentations must be in person by the applicant.
10. No presentations shall be given online.
11. Take all in person comments first. Upon finishing, open zoom comments.
12. Zoom comments limited to 1 minute and instruction to avoid repeat issues that have been stated.
13. Once recognized to speak, staff will unmute speaker.
14. Require all applicants or their representatives to appear in person
15. If Board members are participating remotely, then roll call will be used for vote tally
16. Test for 6 months

