



January 10, 2020

Christopher Wider, Chairman

Town of Norfolk – Zoning Board of Appeals
One Liberty Lane
Norfolk, MA 02056

Re: Norfolk, MA – The Residences at Norfolk Station
194 Main Street
Comprehensive Permit Peer Review

Dear Chairman Wider:

BETA Group, Inc. (BETA) has completed its second peer review of the revised landscape design elements of the site plans and supporting engineering documents for the above-referenced project, based on the following materials:

- Landscape Plan Review Comment Response Letter, The Residences at Norfolk Station, dated January 3, 2020 prepared by Zenith Engineering Consultants, LLC;
- Landscape Plan sheet V-1, The Residences at Norfolk Station, 194 Main Street, Norfolk MA, dated August 29, 2018, revised January 3, 2020 prepared by Zenith Engineering Consultants, LLC
- Stormwater Management Report, The Residences at Norfolk Station, 194 Main Street, Norfolk MA, dated August 23, 2018 prepared by Zenith Engineering Consultants, LLC;
- Comprehensive Permit Plan, The Residences at Norfolk Station, 194 Main Street, Norfolk MA, plan set, twenty (20) sheets, dated August 29, 2018 prepared by Zenith Engineering Consultants, LLC;
- Fire Department Memorandum dated January 9, 2019 from Chief Cole Bushnell, Norfolk Fire Department;
- Fire Department Memo dated September 26, 2018 from Chief Cole Bushnell, Norfolk Fire Department;
- Conservation Commission comment email dated September 18, 2018;
- Norfolk Town Planner letter to the Norfolk ZBA dated October 11, 2018;
- Norfolk Town Planner letter to the MassHousing Comprehensive Permit Program dated June 7, 2018
- MassDEP Stormwater Management Standards (SMS)

We note that a revised set of site plans was submitted on October 31, 2019. Design revisions to the current Landscape plan sheet V-1 supersedes the previous plan set.

The following are our comments on the plans. Where referenced, the term “applicant” refers to either the applicant itself or its design consultants, and Section references are to the Norfolk ‘Rules & Regulations for Subdivision of Land & Site Plan Approval,’ amended September 16, 2010 (referred to herein as the Subdivision/Site Plan Regulations) or the ‘Zoning Bylaws with Amendments Through May 2014’ (referred to herein as the Zoning Bylaws).

General

The existing site is developed. The site fronts Main Street and the MBTA Commuter Rail. Significant wooded areas abut the northern and eastern property lines.

- L1 Consider providing entrance features such as stone walls, decorative fencing, up-lighting, and additional plantings to both sides of the entrance driveway near Main Street. These should be placed to avoid sightline impacts.

ZCE: Additional plantings have been added to the easterly side of the driveway.

BETA: Additional plantings and up-lighting for the proposed sign have been added. While some additional landscaping could be added to enhance the entrance since it is on Main Street, we believe the design as proposed sufficiently addresses our comment.

- L2 Consider providing vegetative screening as well as the proposed fencing along the west side of the main entrance drive. The height and type of fence should be labeled on the layout plan.

ZCE: The fence label has been added to the Layout sheet.

BETA: The fence is acceptable. No new vegetative screening is shown. The plans should indicate if any existing vegetation is proposed to be saved in lieu of new planting.

- L3 The existing stone wall along the northern property line should be labeled to be protected and retained.

ZCE: This has been added to the plans.

BETA: Comment resolved.

- L4 If feasible, relocate the proposed maintenance building and the dog play area to be approximately 15-20 feet off the stone wall. This will allow existing landforms and vegetation to remain.

ZCE: This has been completed.

BETA: The dog play area was relocated to the area formerly occupied by the dumpster pad. This is acceptable. A new location for the dumpster is not shown. Is the intent to have an outside dumpster?

- L5 The northern portion of the project site is heavily wooded. The proposed 64 cypress trees may not be needed along the entire northern property line. The main area of additional screening would be at the eastern under building parking entrance/exit and the northeast end of the proposed building. The grading along the northerly property line should be reviewed to evaluate how much of the existing vegetative screening can be maintained.

ZCE: A development has been approved for construction to the north of this site and will require the removal of some of the heavily wooded area.

BETA: Comment resolved.

- L6 Relocate the proposed bicycle parking area to be adjacent to the proposed walkway that leads from the building to the parking lot. The bike rack should be set on a concrete pad.

ZCE: This has been completed.

BETA: We believe the proposed bicycle rack is still located too far from the building. We recommend moving it closer or locate it in an area beneath the building.

- L8 Provide native plantings between the east end of the building and the proposed stormwater basin; include multi-stemmed tree (Amelanchier and Birch), and a mix of evergreen and deciduous shrubs (Bayberry, Winterberry, Inkberry, Chokeberry, Silky Dogwood, etc.).
ZCE: *This has been completed.*
BETA: Comment resolved.
- L9 Provide native seed mix containing a mix of herbaceous perennials and grasses for stormwater basin slopes, edges, and those areas not intended to be a mown lawn.
ZCE: *The basins are intended to be infiltration basins and will require sand bottoms and lawn side slopes for maintenance.*
BETA: Planting native grasses and perennials on the slopes and edges could serve the same purpose as loam and seed. However, we do not object to the proposed seeding.
- L10 Provide a more extensive vegetative screening along the MBTA Commuter line. Use a mix of native evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs.
ZCE: *This has been completed.*
BETA: The revised LA plan still shows a line of Leyland Cypress (non-native species). We continue to suggest a mix of native species be considered. Also, refer to the applicant's response for L-19. Any revisions to the screening could be a condition of approval.
- L11 Show and label existing trees to remain (trunk location, caliper and branch spread) along Main Street.
ZCE: *This has been completed.*
BETA: Comment resolved.
- L12 Consider additional shrub plantings along both sides of the proposed walk that connects Main Street and the main building entrance.
ZCE: *This has been completed.*
BETA: Comment resolved.
- L13 Provide native plantings between the south side of the building and the proposed stormwater basin along Main Street. Refer to comment L8 for plant information.
ZCE: *Spoke with Todd from Beta.*
BETA: The area around the stormwater basin is not recommended to have larger vegetation. The plan as designed is acceptable. Comment resolved.
- L14 Consider adding 3 deciduous shade trees on each side of the main building entrance along the south face of the building. This will help shade the building during the summer months and provide a bit of screening from the roadway.
ZCE: *This has been completed.*
BETA: Comment resolved.
- L15 Coordinate the foundation planting with the expansive exposed building foundations along the south east end of the front of the proposed building. The foundation planting will need to be coordinated with the louvers along the south east end of the front of the proposed building.
ZCE: *Agreed, this may require a modification at the time of completed architectural plans.*

BETA: Comment resolved.

L16 Dwarf Japanese Maple is not an appropriate plant for the end islands within the parking lot, at the garage entrance/exit and at the green spaces at the pedestrian entrance/exit from the building. Provide an upright tree underplanted with low shrubs and ground covers for these areas.
ZCE: *This has been completed.*
BETA: Comment resolved.

L17 Consider low plantings along the rear building face instead of just stone; coordinate any planting with the louvers.
ZCE: *This has been completed.*
BETA: Comment resolved.

L18 Provide accessible walkway from the parking lot to the activity areas in the rear of the site. It is noted that the revised plan submitted on 10/31/2019 included walkways within this area. We have not had the opportunity to review this.
ZCE: *This has been completed.*
BETA: Comment resolved.

L19 Specified plant material. Consider specifying 2 or 3 native evergreens for screening instead of the Leyland cypress. The Town requires a minimum of 3-inch caliper for the deciduous trees. Expand the tree and shrub palette to include other native plants.
ZCE: *A plan legend is provided at the top of the plan and the applicant like the living fence that the Leyland Cypress provides.*
BETA: See our response to comment L10. The Owner should be aware that the cypress will grow quite tall and may need pruning. Comment resolved.

L20 Planting Details. Remove trunk wrapping; it is not required for most trees.
ZCE: *This has been completed.*
BETA: Comment resolved.

If you have questions about any of the preceding comments, please feel free to contact either myself at (401) 333-2382 or Scott Ridder at 978-255-1982.

Very truly yours,

BETA Group, Inc.



William P. McGrath, P.E.
Senior Associate

cc: Proj 4980