

**DESIGN
GUIDELINES**
EVALUATION TEMPLATE

NORTHLAND NEWTON DEVELOPMENT



Prepared by the City of Newton, MA
November 2019

SITE DESIGN

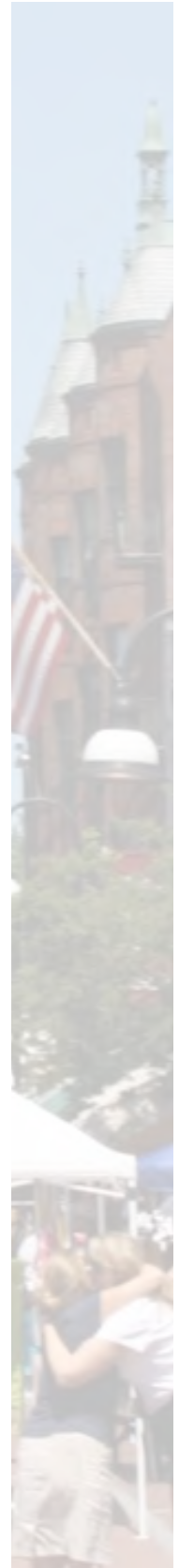
Applicant general comments for building design: (250 word max.)

The site design for the Northland Newton Development Project preserves the existing historic Mill Building, responds to the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhoods, celebrates the unique history of the site, connects to the Upper Falls Greenway, and accommodates 13 new buildings in a compact, walkable neighborhood replete with parks, plazas, open spaces, and play areas. A grid of well-scaled streets and sidewalks stitches the 22-acre site together and draws visitors to the civic heart of the project – the Village Green sitting at the intersection of Main Street and Tower Road just north of the Mill Building. In addition to the varied open spaces graced with seasonal plantings, comfortable seating, and integrated lighting, the project includes a unique through-block open space, called the Laneway, that accommodates residents, provides pedestrian permeability, and provides a unique sense of place. While the overall framework of the project reflects the previously approved Special Permit, there has been significant refinement of the public realm design with a particular focus on varied and comfortable furnishings, high quality paving, extensive and diverse landscape plantings and integrated lighting. In addition, the proponent has developed a comprehensive wayfinding and signage plan, interpretive program and lighting master plan, portions of which are included here and will be discussed at future Urban Design Commission meetings.

The Proponent and their design team look forward to presenting the current design evolution of this exciting project to the City of Newton and the Commission.

General city comments:

Consistent Not Consistent



SITE DESIGN **NO. 1** CONNECTIVITY TO SURROUNDING CONTEXT

GOAL | Large-scaled developments should focus on addressing transitions to their abutting contexts – which can be diverse in nature – knitting together with existing fabric in ways that are sensitive to surrounding communities.

A. VEHICULAR CONNECTIVITY

A.01 | Street Types

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the street typology, hierarchy and configuration reflect the Special Permit plans, as demonstrated by the attached Schematic Design Documents. The street designs have been refined with more specificity of materials and detailing and refinement of on-street parking configurations, as indicated on the plans, however, the number and location of vehicular access points, roadway intersections, and functional priorities of each street remain unchanged. The Street designs adequately accommodate all vehicle types and provide safe pedestrian environments.

City Response:

Please include shuttle route as well. What's the significance of the arrows?

Document references: Diagram D-1 – Road Network and Vehicular Access, Diagram D-5 – Vehicular Circulation and the NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

A.02 | Pedestrian / Vehicle Interface

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the pedestrian environment associated with the street network reflects the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. Generous sidewalks, plentiful street trees, on-street parallel parking, marked crosswalks with access ramps, raised intersections along Pettee Lane, conveniently located and well-marked entrances to below-grade parking, a dedicated bike lane, a clear hierarchy of street types and intersection configurations, and an interconnected system of open spaces ensure a safe, attractive, and welcoming environment for pedestrians, bicycles, and motor vehicles.

City Response:

Please include the raised intersection detail. Approval from Fire Department is also required.

Document references: Diagram D-6 Sidewalk Connections and NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

B. OPEN SPACE NETWORK: PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE CONNECTIVITY

B.01 | Wayfinding Signage

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The Applicant is currently developing a comprehensive wayfinding and signage plan for the project. The plan provides wayfinding at critical nodes in the project area to identify public parking, bicycle parking/storage and other important public amenities. Included is a summary plan for the program. This plan/ program will be presented to the Urban Design Commission in a future meeting.

City Response:

Applicant will submit a more detail sign package at a later date.

Document references: W1, W2, W3 - Wayfinding Signage Overall Plans

C. CULTURAL / HISTORICAL CONNECTIVITY

C.01 | Palimpsest

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The Applicant has entered into an agreement with the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) and Newton Historical Commission (NHC) to celebrate the rich history of the site. The Applicant will restore the historic Saco Pettee Mill (156 Oak Street) and develop an interpretive program that highlights the historical importance of the site through interpretive panels and the re-use of historic relics.

City Response:

Please provide more detail about how culture and history of the site is being preserved and recorded.

Document references: _____



SITE DESIGN BLOCK STRUCTURE

NO. 2

GOAL | The block structure of the development should promote a thoughtfully scaled, walkable public realm where quality streetscapes and diverse open spaces are reinforced by street patterns, as well as building siting and design.

A. TERMINATING VIEWS AND FRAMING VIEWS

A.01| Hierarchy in Design

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the block structure reflects the Special permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. Quality street environments together with diverse public open spaces provide the framework for a walkable community that meshes with context of the surrounding neighborhoods. Major view corridors are terminated by important public open spaces, such as the Village Green, Community/ Splash Park and South Meadow Brook Park.

City Response:

Please provide more detail about hierarchy of building design. Will be reviewed at the time of building review as well.

Document references: Diagrams D2 - Site Context of Proposed Buildings, D3 – Unified Public Realm, D4 – Block Structure and Building Frontage and D6 Sidewalk Connections. NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

SITE DESIGN BUILDING / STREET RELATIONSHIP

NO. 3

GOAL | The place-making qualities of individual blocks starts with the siting of a building, its relationship to adjacent buildings, how its ground level shapes the pedestrian experience and by the mix of uses continued within it.

A. CONTINUITY OF STREET WALL

A.01| Well-defined Pedestrian Experience

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the pedestrian experience is well-defined and reflects the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. Street walls/ facades align providing for a consistent pedestrian experience.

City Response:

Appears to be consistent. Include D7 as document reference as well, Pedestrian connection to the Mill building is important.

Document references: Diagrams D2 - Site Context of Proposed Buildings, D3 – Unified Public Realm, D4 – Block Structure and Building Frontage and D6 Sidewalk Connections. NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

A.02| Ground Level Facades

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the ground level facades provide continuity, and reflects the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. The façade details will be reviewed later as part of the building design presentations.

City Response:

Will be reviewed at the same time as building review.

Document references: Diagram D4 – Block Structure and Building Frontage and NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020



A.03| Building Alignment

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes the ground level facades vary to accommodate various uses at the street level, and reflects the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. In particular, the western edge of Building 6 is configured to accommodate a free-standing iconic pavilion and to establish a strong physical and visual relationship between the Tower Road corridor and the Village Green. In addition, the footprints of Buildings 5 and 6 have been configured to accommodate pedestrian movement, permeability, and connections between and among adjacent sidewalks and open spaces.

City Response:

Appears to be consistent at the site plan scale. May be reviewed more in detail with building review.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

A.04| Public-Private Transition Zones

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes the public-private transition zones have been created on residential streets, and reflects the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. The laneways at buildings 5 and 6, Oak Street Park for building 4 and building 14 all have buffers to the residential uses.

City Response:

Appears to be consistent.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

B. MID-BLOCK PEDESTRIAN CONNECTORS

B.01| Wrapping Storefronts

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

This guideline will be reviewed in upcoming building reviews/ retail storefront design guidelines

City Response:

Will be reviewed at the same time as building review.

Document references:

C. REINFORCE A HIERARCHY OF STREETS WITHIN A NEIGHBORHOOD

C.01| Complete Streets

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that all streets in the development are complete streets, which reflect the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. Street hierarchy and design have been established to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel for all types of mobility and for users of all ages and abilities that is unchanged from the approved special permit documents.

City Response:

Appears to be consistent. Please include bike lane as well.

Document references: Diagram D5 Vehicular Circulation and NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

C.02| Mixed-Use Streets

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, The Applicant believes that the Street sections have been designed to uses that they front onto, which reflect the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents.

City Response:

Please include a street section for Needham Street sidewalk as well (especially in front of building 7).

Document references: Diagrams D4 Block Structure and Building Frontage and D6 Sidewalk Connections. NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020



D. INTERFACE BETWEEN BUILDINGS AND STREETS

D.01 | Ground Floor Transparency

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

City Response:

This guideline will be reviewed in upcoming building reviews/storefronts and retail storefront design guidelines.

Will be reviewed at the same time as building review.

Document references: _____

SITE DESIGN OPEN SPACE INTEGRATION

NO. 4

GOAL | While continuity of street wall can be critical to a well-defined block, the integration of open space at a variety of scales offers opportunities for unique environments and the accommodation of public amenities.

A. VARIATION OF SIDEWALK WIDTHS

A.01 | Sidewalk Design

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the sidewalk widths and materials have been designed to respond to the adjacent uses, which reflect the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. For the retail frontages in the projects, sidewalks have been widened to accommodate outdoor dining and other exterior activities. Sidewalks are narrower on residential street frontages, wider on the retail corridor of Main Street, and generous at crosswalks, bulb-outs, raised intersections, and adjacent to the Mobility Hub

City Response:

Staff recommends to change paving materials to help define clear zones (frontage zone, pedestrian zone, amenity zone). Please refer to Newton Street Design Guide. Also, as mentioned earlier please include sidewalk design for the sidewalk in front of building 7

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

B. LINEAR PARKS, ALLEYWAYS AND THROUGH-BLOCK CONNECTORS

B.01 | Designing Back Alleys

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the back alleys (Laneways) have been designed for the large interior blocks at the center of the site, reflecting the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. The Laneways can be accessed by vehicles via mountable curbs along Pettee Lane, Tower Road, and the Unnamed Street. In addition, they are fully accessible to pedestrians from surrounding buildings, adjacent sidewalks, and directly from Charlemont Street and from Pettee Lane near the Leasing Office. These through-block connections include generous plantings, seating, and other site amenities.

City Response:

Appears to be consistent.

Document references: Diagrams D6 Sidewalk Connections and D7 Enhanced Pedestrian Connections and NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

C. INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC ART [LOCAL, HISTORIC]

C.01 | Historic Relics

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

As part of the historic interpretation program being developed by the Applicant, significant historic relics will be re-purposed on the site as iconic features and opportunities for educational benefits. Highlights include the relocation of the existing silos on the site to Mill Park, the reuse of the train shed roof trusses in the pavilion structure at the Village Green and the incorporation of various industrial relics as sculptural and artistic installations.

City Response:

Please provide more detail about how culture and history of the site is being preserved and recorded..

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020



D. ADA COMPATIBILITY

D.01 | Accessible Open Space

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the entire project conforms to all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB), reflecting the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. In particular, all pathways and special features are accessible, the pedestrian bridge through Mill Park is fully accessible, as are the top, middle, and bottom landscape terraces in Mill Park; and highly visible public elevators are provided in Building 3 to provide access between the Village Green and Mill Park and Main Street.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

City Response:

Appears to be consistent. Staff will review with ADA Coordinator to confirm consistency.

SITE DESIGN STREETSCAPE / OPEN SPACE DESIGN ELEMENTS

NO. 5

GOAL | An engaging public realm should offer a diverse range of highly articulated and well-appointed pedestrian environments that are functional in all seasons.

A. URBAN FURNITURE

A.01 | Movable and Fixed

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The proposed seating and furniture design as outlined in the attached Schematic Design documents is a combination of fixed and movable seating, depending on location and open space use. Fixed seating is both built-in permanent seating (seat walls), stand-alone custom furnishings, and high-quality products. Seating is provided in all open spaces, including the Village Green, Mill Park, Oak Street Park and the Mobility Plaza. Movable furniture will be provided in select multi-purpose open space areas, particularly the Village Green and Mobility Plaza, and outdoor dining areas associated with restaurant uses.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

City Response:

Please provide more detail about the furniture.

A.02 | Durable Materials

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The Applicant is currently working with a highly reputable exterior furniture manufacturer on developing the custom furniture palette for the project. Fixed seating, custom furniture and movable seating will be all be constructed of durable materials adequate for all season use and providing a variety of comfortable seating options for residents and visitors.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

City Response:

Please provide more detail about the furniture.

B. WALLS AND FENCES

B.01 | Embellish with Landscaping

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The project as proposed has very few walls or screens. There is very little surface parking (Other than on-street) and most loading/service/trash areas are interior to the buildings. The only mechanical equipment that will be ground-mounted are electrical transformers, which will be screened with landscape. There will be screening and fencing at the splash/ community park to screen the equipment, and screening along portions of the laneways to screen ground floor residential units

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

City Response:

Please show screening detail for the mechanical equipment at the splash/community park. Staff spoke to the applicant about utility meters and there will be very few gas meters provided for restaurants which will be provided in niches.



B.02| Quality Materials

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

Where screen fencing is required, it will be wood , painted metal, or other high quality materials and buffered with landscape.

City Response:

Please show more detail.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020

C. LANDSCAPING AND STREET TREES

C.01| Indigenous Species

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the proposed planting palette reflects the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. The palette proposed in the schematic design documents expands on the varieties of deciduous, evergreen and ornamental trees to provide appropriate shade, more variety and emphasize seasonal interest. The schematic design plant list also adds shrubs, ground covers, perennials, grasses and bulbs not originally included in the special permit documents. The proposed plant list provides a diverse list of plants that are native, hardy to New England and provide seasonal interest.

City Response:

See attached list of recommended trees from Marc Welch, Deputy Commissioner, Parks, Recreation and Culture Department. Marc discourages use of grates, they do not benefit the tree, are hard to maintain, and usually end up becoming a hazard.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020, Sheets L-0.0 (Plant Schedule), L-0.4 Planting Plan – Overall site.

C.02| Consistent with Surrounding Context

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the proposed planting palette is drawn from the regional ecology, local environmental conditions, and the hardiness of the New England geography and reflects the surrounding landscape context which reflects the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents.

City Response:

Please refer to the tree planting list provided.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020, Sheets L-0.0 (Plant Schedule), L-0.4 Planting Plan – Overall site.

C.03| Street Tree Design

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the street tree design reflects the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. The street tree spacing varies but is generally around 25', depending on character, adjacent uses, open space considerations, and circulation requirements. In addition, street trees will be planted in either continuous planting soil strips (Petee Lane, Tower Road), or a structural soil system (Main Street, Charlemont Street), to provide adequate soil volumes to ensure the ultimate long term success of the street tree system.

City Response:

Staff recommends consulting with Marc Welch regarding tree planting strategy.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents dated 09/18/2020, Sheets L-0.0 (Plant Schedule), L-0.4 Planting Plan – Overall site.

D. LIGHTING

D.01| Activate the Ground Level

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The Applicant has developed a lighting master plan for the project, focused on the public realm and pedestrian areas. The site lighting will include a hierarchy of lighting types that establish a distinctive sense of place and an attractive night time character and will provide wayfinding, security, and visual interest to assist in activating the ground plane. Lighting is shown on the schematic design drawings as a placeholder but will be further developed and refined.

City Response:

Please provide more details about lighting.

Document references: Diagrams L1- Intensity Map and L2 - Color Temperature by Zone



D.02| Coordinate Site and Building Lighting

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The lighting master plan for the project has been developed by the same lighting designer who has been engaged to design both the exterior of the buildings and the public realm and pedestrian areas of the full project site. Accordingly, the comprehensive site lighting plan will be fully coordinated and integrated with the building lighting strategies.

City Response:

Please provide more detail about lighting. Needham Street lights should match city standards. Please refer to the Newton Street Design Guide for city standards regarding pole and fixture selection).

Document references: Diagrams L1- Intensity Map and L2 - Color Temperature by Zone

E. PAVING

E.01| Quality Materials

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The project has developed a hierarchy of pedestrian paving materials, patterns, and colors to reinforce and define the various zones of the public realm. The paving materials are pedestrian-scaled, mostly consisting of concrete unit pavers and stone pavers. The paving material palette will continue to be enhanced and developed as the project progresses.

City Response:

Staff recommends using different paving materials for different zones. It's included in some of the areas but not all.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents date 09/18/2020

E.02| Design for All Seasons

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The proposed pedestrian paving materials have a proven record of withstanding New England weather. The specific materials are designed to hold up to snow removal, salt and other maintenance requirements, but as important is the detailing and installation. All pavers will be set on a concrete base, or other high-quality setting beds as appropriate, ensuring durability and longevity.

City Response:

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents date 09/18/2020

E.03| Permeable Pavers

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The project proposes permeable pavers at select locations, particularly in the street tree zone along the major streets.

City Response:

Staff recommends use of permeable pavers around the trees on major streets, particularly Main Street and Needham Street. Please highlight areas with permeable pavers.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents date 09/18/2020

**SITE DESIGN
SIGNAGE**

NO. 6

GOAL | Signage, at the Site Design level, is critical for both wayfinding and branding and, as such, should be integrally designed to reinforce the quality of the built environment and the public realm.



A. CONSISTENCY

A.01 | Sign Family

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The Applicant has developed a wayfinding and signage plan that will be presented at a later meeting.

City Response:

Will be reviewed at a later time.

Document references: W1, W2, W3 - Wayfinding Signage Overall Plans

B. QUALITY AND AESTHETICS

B.01 | High Quality Materials

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

The Applicant has developed a wayfinding and signage plan that will be presented at a later meeting.

City Response:

Will be reviewed at a later time.

Document references: W1, W2, W3 - Wayfinding Signage Overall Plans

SITE DESIGN PARKING AND SERVICE

NO. 7

GOAL | Parking and service areas should be visually unobtrusive and designed to be accessed from specific locations that minimize impacts on key pedestrian environments and abutters.

A. LOCATION AND ACCESS

A.01 | Architectural Treatments / Liners

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the location and access to proposed parking reflects the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. The project proposes no above-grade structured parking, all structured parking is below-grade. In addition, all loading/service/ trash functions are internal to each building.

City Response:

Appears to be consistent.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents date 09/18/2020

A.02 | Minimize Pedestrian Impacts

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the project minimizes pedestrian impacts reflecting the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. Garage entries/ exits have been minimized/ consolidated and have been located proximate to the main vehicular access roadways. Sidewalks, pedestrian circulation routes, and generous open spaces have been provided throughout the project to ensure attractive and high-quality open space are available to residents and visitors. Pedestrian crossings will be clearly marked as will elevator lobbies and access to/from below-grade parking areas.

City Response:

Please show more details about how this will be achieved in Mobility Hub area. The garage entry/ exits should be reviewed in more detail at the building review level.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents date 09/18/2020



A.03| Sidewalk Continuity

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the project provides a continuity of sidewalks at garage entries and reflects the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. Due to the intensity of use at the garage entries/ exits, curb cuts are proposed in most locations to clearly identify the entries/exits to minimize pedestrian/ vehicle conflicts. Mountable curbs (as opposed to curb-cuts) and continuous sidewalk paving along Pettee Lane, Tower Road, and Unnamed Street help to prioritize pedestrians over vehicles at all access points to the Laneways.

City Response:

The change in paving material at garage entrances is helpful. Will there be signs as well?

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents date 09/18/2020

B. SCREENING AND LANDSCAPING

B.01| Visual Buffers

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the project provides visual buffers as needed, reflecting the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. The project has very few surface parking spots other than parallel parking on the street network.

City Response:

Please include more details about the visual buffers (for mechanical equipment at the Splash Park and Mobility Hub).

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents date 09/18/2020

B.02| Landscaped Parking Areas

Applicant response: (100 word max.)

In accordance with the approved Special Permit documents, the Applicant believes that the project provides landscape in surface parking areas reflecting the Special Permit plans, as indicated in the attached Schematic Design Documents. The project has very few surface parking spots other than parallel parking on the street network.

City Response:

Appears to be consistent.

Document references: NND Schematic Design Documents date 09/18/2020

