

MEMO

To: Arlington Zoning Board
Fr: Stephanie Kiefer, Esq.
Re: Thorndike Place
Date: August 3, 2021

As requested by the Board, the below is a summary of the proposed Thorndike Place 40B Project (the “Project”), as the concept design was most recently revised in May 2021 and updated in response to comments made within the Board’s last hearing on June 10, 2021.

THORNDIKE PLACE OVERVIEW

RESIDENTIAL COMPONENTS

The Project consists of two primary residential components: a) twelve (12) homeownership units as contained within six (6) duplex-style buildings and b) a 124-unit Independent Senior living residence (62+) with services, located in a four-story rental structure behind the duplex-style units. Each type of housing (the homeownership duplex units and the senior rental housing) will provide for 25% of the units be made available to low and moderate income families in accordance with the programmatic requirements of Chapter 40B; specifically three (3) of the duplex units will be affordable and 31 of the senior rental units will be affordable units subject to a Regulatory Agreement.

A. Duplex Units Overview

The twelve (12) duplex units, housed in six (6) structures are set back 20 feet along the Dorothy Road frontage. Except for the end duplex units (referenced as Duplex 1 and Duplex 12) to the west and the east, the balance of the single-family duplex homes will share a driveway with the neighboring duplex structure. The duplex unit design is consistent with and complimentary of the existing single-family and duplex-styles homes along Dorothy Road and/or otherwise in the neighborhood.

The duplex driveways are located between the duplex buildings, allowing each individual duplex unit to have a sizeable front yard directly in front of the housing structure. Excepting the end duplex units, Duplex 2 through Duplex 11 will have the ability to park two (2) cars in the shared driveways, with one car protected by a shared carport between the residential structures. The eastern- and western-most duplexes will have a side parking area, access by the main access drive (for the western-most duplex unit) and access by the site’s eastern emergency access drive for the eastern-most duplex unit).

The duplex structures will be 40 feet wide by 40 feet deep, and each duplex unit sized at 20 feet by 40 feet. The structures will have three (3) floors, with the total height of the buildings

being approximately 38+/- feet¹. Representative floor plans of Duplex “A” and Duplex “B” are provided within the updated set of architectural plans titled “Thorndike Place-Duplexes”, prepared by GreenStaxx and Bruce Hamilton Architects, dated July 26, 2021. The total habitable space for the duplex units is 1,981 square feet (Duplex “A” style) and 2,006 square feet (Duplex “B” style). As shown on the Thorndike Place Grading and Drainage Plan, Sheet C-105 of the BSC plan set, as revised through August 2, 2021, the first floor elevations of the duplex units will be at Elevation 12, well above the existing FEMA base flood elevation (6.8 NAVD 88) as well as the 500-year flood elevation (10.75 NAVD 88). The duplex units will include unfinished basements, for storage purposes only.

The four duplex structures closest to Littlejohn Street are not located within FEMA floodplain. Portions of the two easternmost duplex structures are located within the outer fringes of floodplain. As detailed in the BSC Group’s stormwater report, compensatory storage for any disturbed floodplain will be replicated to meet or exceed the 2:1 replication required under local regulation.

B. Independent Living Residential Building

Located behind the duplex units is the Thorndike Place age-restricted, independent living residential building. The structure includes garage parking on the lower level for 84 vehicles and four (4) stories of residential apartment units and community space for the senior residents, which is one floor below the allowable five-floors of residential use otherwise permitted in the PUD District. The first floor of the Independent Living building is at El. 16 with the garage level at approximately El. 6.

The main entrance to the residential structure is roughly at the midpoint of the building, and at the end of a cul-de-sac drive, to allow for easy pick up and drop off. The building is served by two sets of elevators: a) the main elevator which accesses the garage and all four floors residential floors located off the main entrance and b) a single floor elevator at the eastern end of the building, which provides access to the lower level common area room as well as into the parking garage. Delivery and trash pick up have a separate entrance point, located to the north of the main entry doors.

The building will include a total of 124 apartments, consisting of 43 studios, 58 one-bedroom and 23 two-bedroom units. In accordance with Chapter 40B, 25% of the independent living apartment units (31 units) will be made available to low- and moderate-income seniors. In addition to the individual apartment units, the interior of the building will include accessory uses to the senior living use such as reception/entry area, dining room, activities room, sitting areas and lounges, reading rooms, concierge desk, fitness room and areas for health checks with medical professionals, as well as a management office, commercial kitchen, trash room, laundry facilities, garage and covered bicycle parking.

¹ It is noted that the Property is located within the Planned Unit Development (“PUD”) zoning district; per the Zoning Bylaw, within the PUD District, buildings may be 85 feet in height and residential dwellings may be no higher than five (5) floors. The duplex units as well as the Independent Living building are well within the PUD permissible height limits.

The central portion of the four-story independent building will be set back 103' from the property's front lot line along Dorothy Road, which roughly translates to the length of a residential lot. The western tab of the building will be approximately 145' from the front lot line and the easternmost tab of the building will be approximately 171' from the front lot line.

The residents, who are anticipated to be mid-70s to 90s, will be provided with one evening meal. Additional services included with the independent living community are expected to include organized social and recreational events, fitness activities, coordination with area healthcare providers, concierge, handyman services, trash removal as well as optional laundry, housekeeping services and escort services². Likewise, the Independent Living residence will include a jitney services to make trips to public transportation, as well as in-town shopping, services and/or medical appointments. The jitney service likewise will be available to staff, to encourage use of public transportation.

PARKING

A. Duplex Parking

The duplex units will each have driveway and/or driveway/carport parking; each duplex unit will have parking space to accommodate two vehicles, with the exception of the eastern-most duplex which will have a single parking space.

B. Independent Living Parking (96 Parking Spaces)

The total of surface and garage parking spaces associated with the Independent Living residence is 96 spaces: 84 spaces are within the garage and 12 spaces are exterior parking spaces. While the four-story building is not an "assisted living" residence, it is noted that under the Zoning Bylaw, the number of parking spaces required for an assisted living residential use is calculated as .4 spaces per unit, or 50 spaces for a 124-unit residence. The ratio proposed at Thorndike Place is .77 spaces per unit, or 96 total spaces, which is consistent with the average parking under the ITE 5th Edition parking manual.

Within the garage, there are 84 parking spaces, of which eight (8) are handicapped spaces. Also, within the garage, there will be 10 electric vehicle charging stations, with the ability to expand as electric vehicles become more prevalent in the market. Garage parking will be secured by card, fob or similar entry methods. Parking will be a separate charge for residents, to discourage residents from bringing vehicles which will remain unused at the community. Garage parking will also be made available to staff and service providers.

² The operations of the Independent Living residence falls outside of the ZBA's jurisdiction, but is provided for informational purposes and context.

Surface parking is located in two areas. A western parking area, closest to the western gardens is designed to accommodate six (6) vehicles and another six (6) vehicle parking spaces are located along the southern entrance boulevard driveway which provides access to the main entrance to the Independent Living residence. Two (2) of those parking spaces will accommodate handicap parking.

C. Bicycle Parking – Independent Living

Along the northeast side of the Independent Living building is a covered, secured bike-parking storage area, sufficient to provide parking for 14 bicycles. The bicycle storage area will be accessed by a pathway extending from the eastern emergency access drive, to allow residents to readily park or pick-up their bikes without the need to enter into the building's garage. The number of bicycle parking spaces (14 spaces) exceeds the required number of bicycle spaces under the bicycle parking provisions of the applicable Zoning Bylaw, i.e., the bylaw in effect at the time of the 40B application submittal.

TRAFFIC DEMAND MITIGATION MEASURES

The Project includes the following measures to reduce single-occupancy trips and travel during peak traffic hours:

- a) Jitney service – as described above, the Independent Living will provide for a jitney service for residents, staff and service providers. The jitney can be set up on an “on demand” feature as well as scheduled pickups/returns to the Alewife T stop or area shopping destinations, as determined by onsite management to best address the needs of the residents, staff and providers.
- b) Scheduled deliveries/ trash & recycling haulers/staff and service provider hours/move-in Scheduled deliveries, such as perishable goods (milk, eggs, meat and seafood) are expected to be delivered 2-3 times per week and will be scheduled outside of peak traffic hours. Similarly, trash/recycling pickup will be scheduled outside of peak traffic hours. Contract and/or service providers can also be scheduled within defined hours as set by management, to avoid travel during peak hours.
- c) Staffing - kitchen staffing necessarily arrives well before peak Lake Avenue traffic to prepare and provide dinners and leaves well after peak Lake Avenue traffic with completion of dinner clean up.
- d) Parking charge for residents – to discourage residents from parking unused cars as well as to encourage residents to make use of jitney/shared ride/public transportation services, there will be an extra charge for residents seeking to bring a vehicle with them to Thorndike Place.

- e) Exterior bike racks – while residents will have access to enclosed bicycle parking, guests, visitors or staff will have available exterior bicycle parking with stations outside the building’s main entrance.
- f) ZipCar – depending on availability of an excess exterior parking space, Applicant agrees to approach ZipCar regarding the possibility of a car-share option onsite.

OUTDOOR AMENITIES

From the main access drive off Littlejohn Street, the driveway into Thorndike Place is a boulevard style drive, with trees lining either side of the access drive to provide a warm and welcoming approach to the building.

To the south and the west of the property, there will be outdoor passive recreational areas. Specifically, along the west side of the site west of the main access drive, the open areas will include garden areas, outdoor seating and possible games courts, such as bocce. A walkway extends along the edge between the garden areas and the access drive, which walkway extends to the south along the rear of the building and eventually to the eastern side of the building back to Dorothy Road.

Just past the access drive access point to the garage parking, the aforementioned walkway continues around the perimeter of the building, including passing by a vegetated courtyard on the backside of the residential building. The perimeter walk continues along the east side of the building, and out to Dorothy Road.

To the south of the perimeter walkway/emergency access road, the Applicant will retain a portion of the undeveloped area of the 17+ acre site to provide a woodland restoration area. The woodland area will provide for pleasing views from the rear of the Independent Living building and will also provide a private buffer for the residents

The balance of the undeveloped portion of the site, approximately 11.x acres and located to the south and to the east, will be conserved as open space to be held by a not-for-profit entity or the town. Under a separate Memorandum of Understanding, the applicant intends to work with the Town to establish a mutually agreeable framework for the open space parcel, to allow for the restoration of the wooded area and consideration of publicly accessible paths within the open space parcel.