

Essex Pastures

Project: **194 unit Rental Apartment Development**
Project Location: **28-44 Essex Road, Ipswich, MA**

Builder/Developer:

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Architectural Narrative:

The property at 28-44 Essex Road is presently open land with 3 single family homes and detached garage. Much of the proposed site is zoned HB (Highway Business) and allows by local zoning a much more intensive development scenario than currently exist in the immediate area. There is currently new commercial development activity in the area that exemplifies this trend. (Aubuchon Hardware/ Northpoint Brewery/Office building at 114 County Road). This development along with the Powerhouse Village residential/commercial complex and the YMCA facility are within 600 yards of the proposed site. They all fall within the HB zoning district as well.

Essex Road is a State highway, (Route 133), with a mix of single family residences, multifamily residences and commercial development that connects Cape Ann with the Interstate 95. The proposed residences will be developed on a 11.05 acre subdivision of the existing property. The

remainder of the property will remain primarily commercial use subject to re-development of existing commercial structures to support the proposed residential community.

The proposed design includes two three-story apartment buildings, three four story apartment buildings housing 174 apartment units. The plan also features four townhouse structures providing a total of 20 attached single family residences. The density works out to approximately 17.6 units per acre. The proposed density is consistent with recommendations guiding Chapter 40R “smart growth” developments.

The rooflines of the 4 story apartment buildings are kept low by using a flat roof design, (48'- 7" to the highest parapet/40'-6" to flat roof *building height*). The rooflines of the 3 story apartment buildings are similar in design, (40'-1" to the highest parapet and 32' to flat roof *building height*) The townhouses are 3 ½ stories, (34'-8" to the mean of the roof and 40'-8" to the top of the ridge)

Architectural elements are inspired by single family homes. Gables and dormers reduce the visual mass of the structures and break up the vertical line from ground level. The floor plans create single family sized elements that break up the massing of the apartment buildings, giving them a more human scale. Window sizes/styles and placement are consistent with traditional house design. Finish materials have been selected from a single-family palate. They include a mix of vinyl clapboards and shingles with low maintenance trim products and double hung windows. These synthetic materials are remarkably close in appearance and detail to the natural materials they replace.

The site plan gives a generous setback from neighboring homes. The closest neighbor is more than 100 feet away from any of the proposed structures. Grade adjustments will be made to the rear perimeter to the east allowing for 4-6 foot retaining wall/planter that will accommodate a 20-foot vegetative buffer from the RRA district abutters (conforms to Ipswich zoning bylaw). This will soften the impact of the buildings by over 20 feet. There is also a substantial existing line of shade trees along this boundary. Other boundaries will be buffered by fencing/vegetative buffers. The proposed plan strives to maintain the resource area buffers enacted by the Town of Ipswich to protect the environmental elements of the site as much as possible. Storm water will be addressed on site and will comply with DEP regulations.

Parking is planned to be more than adequate for this use at 309 spaces. The ratio of 1.59 spaces per unit (1.50 under local zoning) includes single car garages on the townhouse units and 17 freestanding garages for rental (additional fee) by the apartment residents.

The driveway and surface parking spaces will be intensely landscaped with shade trees and shrubbery for aesthetic reasons as well as to serve to soften the massing of the buildings further. The placement of the proposed buildings provides definite front yards and back yards for all the residential structures. A generous green space is provided in the heart of the property, providing recreational/walking areas for residents. Parking is generally tucked into the back and side areas of the buildings. Full emergency access is provided to all sides of all the major buildings. Lighting will be on a human scale, utilizing LED focused lighting with no more than 20' pole height.

The generous sized floor plans include washer/dryers in each unit, walk in closets, two bathrooms in the two-bedroom units, two and one-half baths in three bedrooms and solid surface counters in the kitchen area. All appliances and plumbing/heating/air conditioning equipment will be Energy Star rated. Flooring will be low maintenance vinyl plank resembling hardwood. Ceilings will be at 8'6" in height. All residents will have access to on site professional management and maintenance as well as 24-hour access to package/mail delivery in a state of the art retrieval system designed for online retail deliveries. Units will be fit out with the choice of two internet providers in the area (Verizon/Comcast) Pets will be allowed (additional fees and breed restrictions apply)

Elevator access will be provided to all levels of the apartment buildings. All apartments are designed to accommodate residents with disabilities. 5% of each bedroom count will be designed as Type 1 HP units. Apartments are a mix of 1 bedroom and 2-bedroom layouts. All 3-bedroom units are designed as townhouses (attached single family residences). Approximately 20% of the units are 1 bedroom and 10% are 3 bedrooms. 70% have 2 bedrooms.

Amenities include the nearby full-service YMCA (1,000 feet) (walking path to be negotiated) featuring an Olympic pool and outdoor water park for children along with programs and activities for all ages. Commuter rail service to Boston is 1.1 miles from the site. Retail /service businesses and a medical office (Lahey urgent care available 5 days per week) building are presently operating on the commercial portion of the site. The well-respected Crane's Beach is 4 miles from the site. Enclosed bicycle storage will be available to residents at two locations on the site.

This development will create a high quality residential development in a location of scenic beauty and lifestyle amenities.

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