

Fisher Hill Special Overlay District Design Guidelines

It has been determined by the Newbury Zoning Committee (NZC) that additional guidance is needed to ensure that all future buildings constructed in the Newbury College East Parcel are designed in a manner that reflects the vision and guiding principles established by the Committee. Both the Planning Board and Design Advisory Team should utilize this document to inform their discussions and decisions surrounding their design review of all buildings.

The Newbury College East Parcel is a unique property within the single-family zoning district for its prominence in the Fisher Hill neighborhood. It fronts on Fisher Avenue and the parcel is within the Fisher Hill national register historic district. It serves as a central parcel to the neighborhood at the peak of Fisher Hill and a prominent counterpoint to Reservoir Park. New buildings should be designed and built in a manner that reinforces a neighborhood scale at the street and activates the street edge with street level openness and plantings. Building design should strengthen the relationship between the built environment and the Historic neighborhood. Sustainability and harmony between existing and newly planned buildings should be emphasized.

In the Guidelines that follow, the Study Committee seeks to shape the visual and functional qualities of the buildings, to influence their relationship to neighboring buildings, and to underscore their contribution to the Fisher Hill historic fabric. We chose not to be overly prescriptive, believing that the excellence which we seek for this development will result from a rigorous Design Advisory Team process.

1) Setting

The design problems the site presents are numerous, but the site design priorities of this project should include:

- Scale and setbacks relative to existing Adjacent single- and multi-family residences
- Compatibility to existing Buildings on the site
- Scale along the streets: Fisher Ave and Holland Road
- FAR for the site
- Building Height

2) Buildings- General

Height and mass are the most critical features the NZC sought to address, and the design guidelines therefore encourage the use of intermediate elements to break down the massing and volume of the buildings.

- Human-Scaled Design Elements
 - o Encourage the use of thoughtful articulation and intermediate design elements to achieve an overall coherent design.
 - o Architectural elements should be used to provide scale to large building facades. Layout may correspond to architectural or structural bay dimensions.

- Variation in building massing may include changes in wall plane or height and may relate to primary building entries, window openings, important corners, or other significant architectural features.
- Variation in building massing and detail should relate to scale of surrounding buildings.
- Pedestrian scale streetscape components are encouraged; this may include benches and site lighting.
- **Materials**
 - Consistent with and relatable to local neighborhood buildings.
 - Building materials should be selected with the objectives of quality and durability appropriate within its context, and sympathetic with materials used on local neighborhood buildings. Authentic materials are preferred: wood, stone, cast stone, brick, slate, and stucco. Where these materials are not possible, the alternative materials proposed should avoid the imitation of historic fabric (ex: if composite clapboards are used, they should not be stamped with wood grain).
 - Scale and texture of architectural detailing is important to relate to the existing historic fabric.
 - To encourage human-scale buildings and to ensure the consistent use of high quality materials appropriate to this environment, buildings on this site may incorporate the following materials and detailing as appropriate:
 - Masonry such as stone, cast stone, brick or architectural precast concrete
 - Cladding and architectural trim may include wood to the extent feasible. Composite/synthetic materials proposed are subject to review and approval.
 - Architectural metals including metal sheets with expressed seams. Limited use of standing metal seam roofing may be used where photovoltaics are required.
 - Roofing materials may include slate or shingles to the extent feasible. Composite/synthetic materials proposed are subject to review and approval. Roof material should have some surface relief.
 - Carefully detailed selection of materials should reinforce architectural scaling and appropriate proportions.
- **Roofs**
 - Articulated roof forms are encouraged through changes in height and shape (hip and gambrel profiles) and the use of dormers, decks, eyebrows, chimneys and gutters.
 - Limited use of flat roofs.
 - All Rooftop equipment should be screened from the street in a way that integrates the building architecture in form and material. Screen all rooftop equipment for decreased visibility from the street.
 - The roof should complement the scale of the building and enhance the design qualities of base middle and top.
 - Roof decks to have detailing consistent with residential scale and style and high quality materiality.

- Fenestration
 - Residential scale, larger openings on more public ground floor spaces, smaller windows at upper floors.
 - Vary scale of fenestration between living areas, bedrooms, etc.
 - Transparent glazing (non-tinted, non-colored) is encouraged as appropriate and to the extent feasible.
 - Location and patterns of glazing should enhance building function and scale.
 - Recessed glazing, glass framing, and mullion patterns should be used to provide depth and substance to building façade and should consider play of sunlight across façade where appropriate.
 - Glazing systems should utilize framing and mullion systems that provide scale and surface relief.
 - Building Entries
 - Use of porches, large openings, and canopies.
 - Primary building entries should be emphasized through changes in wall plane or building massing, a greater level of detail, quality of materials, and more articulated lighting.
- 3) Sustainable Design Elements
- a. LEED standards will be used as a guideline. Goal of LEED Gold Certifiable; includes but is not limited to elements listed below.
 - b. Include elements of Passive House and WELL strategies
 - c. Will comply with the intent of the Town’s No Fossil Fuels Bylaw with the exception of the indoor pool.
 - d. Implement Sustainable Site Measures which will include the following. See also Section 8: Landscaping.
 - a) Stormwater control measures will optimize on-site filtration using rain gardens and bioswales.
 - b) Bicycle parking will be provided on site to accommodate residents, staff, and visitors. Shower and dressing room access will be provided.
 - c) Consider use of permeable pavements such as permeable asphalt for driveways and parking areas, and permeable concrete pavers for the vehicular entry plaza, Holland Rd. overlook, and other site features.
 - d) Install native and drought tolerant plants. Incorporate bird friendly and pollinator plants.
 - e) Visual and physical access to vegetation.
 - f) Spaces designed to support social connection.
 - g) Full cut-off exterior light fixtures with LED lighting. Use of pole mounted fixtures limited to surface parking areas. Site lighting is encouraged to be installed at low elevation to adequately light the path of travel per code. All exterior lights will meet the required Backlight-Uplight-Glare rating. There will be no uplighting of landscaping or buildings.
 - h) Electric vehicles for on-site fleet of passenger vehicles. Electric vehicle charging stations will be provided in excess of Town requirements.
 - e. Optimize Energy Efficiency of Building Systems

- a) Reduce energy demand - implement Passive House strategies to reduce energy use. Strategies include increased insulation at walls and roofs, tight building envelope, and high-performance windows.
 - b) Harvest Site Energy: Optimize the building for solar renewable energy measures, consider including photovoltaic and solar thermal.
 - c) Provide water-efficient plumbing fixtures
 - d) Perform Building Commissioning for MEP systems and building envelope
 - e) Provide training for Operations and Maintenance
 - f. Indoor Environmental Quality
 - a) Optimize daylighting and views
 - b) Specify healthy building materials
 - c) Promote occupants' comfort and well-being by providing interior cross-contamination prevention measures and CO2 monitoring.
 - g. Implement WELL strategies to provide users with a healthy building:
 - a) Aesthetic Circulation Network
 - b) Drinking Water Access
 - c) Restorative Room
 - d) Control Glare
- 4) New Buildings

The new building (s) may incorporate the following measures to minimize its scale, establish compatible massing relationships with adjacent structures, and engage the streetscape:

- Generous first floor height
- Public and common space on first floor
- Diminishing verticality
- Reduce footprint of building at top floor to create a diminished sense of scale – intermittent roofdecks at top floor is encouraged.
- Building massing that is perpendicular to streets should be scaled down by reducing the building width at setbacks and creating smaller elements at the ends of massing, as demonstrated by the massing that was presented to the zoning committee on January 8th, 2020.

5) Historic Buildings

- The applicant acknowledges that proposed changes to historic buildings are to be reviewed and approved by the Town's Preservation Planners and Commission if a lift of Demolition Stay is sought.
- Propose the committees (Design Advisory Team and subcommittee of the Preservation Commission) hold joint meetings to streamline this process. Two of the Preservation subcommittee members will be nominated to represent the Commission on the Design Advisory Team.
- Where existing historic buildings on site are to be retained, their renovation will be consistent with Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. This applies to exterior elements of the buildings.
- Any new intervention for accessibility to existing buildings will be consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation Connections to new buildings, etc. will be done in a historically sensitive manner to ensure consistency with existing historic elements.

- The architects are encouraged to provide a site visit to Preservation Planners and Preservation Commission members to tour buildings proposed for demolition.
 - Architectural features that may be salvaged will be identified and removed prior to demolition for reuse or repurpose by the applicant, made available to members of the Brookline community, or donated to a building materials reuse organization.
- 6) Public Space and Streetscape
- Holland Road and Fisher Ave Public Space and Streetscape
 - o Preservation of existing Street Trees
 - o Protection of existing trees on site per Arborist Report
 - o Review of streetscape to determine whether there are opportune areas for public benches along the perimeter of the site. If provided, bench location and design to be integrated into the landscape design.
- 7) Vehicular Circulation, Access, and Parking
- Surface parking will be limited to the south end of the site. 20' setback will be maintained from property line to edge of surface parking areas for all adjacent properties to the south. 5' min. planted buffer to adjacent property line and fence will be provided at any vehicle turn-around areas.
 - Eliminate Holland Road driveway and create an overlook
 - Service and delivery activities should be separated whenever possible from the primary public access and screened from public view by means such as locating underground or locating internal to structures.
 - Parking structures should utilize materials and architectural detailing found in the primary development being served.
- 8) Landscape
- Provide a combination of fencing, berming, and/or landscape screening to buffer the south parking area from the adjacent Olmsted Hill development.
 - Landscaped areas adjacent to the public streets will be designed to maintain soil and prevent runoff.
 - Rain Gardens: Rain gardens shall be installed to collect drainage at the perimeter and interior of the project. Bioswales and other Low Impact techniques will be designed and maintained in a clean manner to enhance the view from the street.
 - Native and drought tolerant plantings will be used where possible.
 - Site lighting design is to be integrated into the wayfinding and building identification.
 - Irrigation design and maintenance consistent with LEED standards. Minimize outdoor demand for water through outdoor water-efficient irrigation.
 - Improve permeability of on-site driveways and walkways with pavers and other pervious materials to the extent feasible.
- 9) Signage
- Signage design will conform to guidelines described in "A Guide to Sign and Façade Design".