

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

55 WEST UNION STREET, ASHLAND, MASSACHUSETTS

Site Control:

The Applicant is 55 West Union LLC, a Massachusetts corporation (the “Applicant”). The development will be located at 55 West Union Street, Ashland, MA which is currently owned by the Applicant by a deed recorded with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds in Book 82146, Page 335. The development site is 4.90 acres (the “Subject Property”). The Subject Property is located on Assessors Map 19, Parcel 62.

The Subject Property is currently zoned Commercial Highway (CH), which allows single-family detached homes, assisted living/ nursing facilities, religious, educational, agriculture, and various commercial uses including retail, offices, and restaurants. The development site is currently vacant and treed land. The site will be cleared before construction while maintaining as much tree screening as possible.

The site is located at the intersection of West Union Street (Route 135) and Memorial Drive. Access to the site will be via Memorial Drive. The site runs adjacent to the very popular local multi-modal the Upper Charles Rail Trail. There is a bus stop 0.3 miles from the Subject Property at Ashland Middle School. The MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) operates Route 5 connecting Ashland to Holliston and Framingham. The Subject is located approximately 0.6 miles from the Ashland MBTA Commuter Rail Station and is accessible by bus.

Development Overview:

The Applicant proposes to build one four-story elevator building offering a total of 116 rental units, including 87 units priced at market and 29 units income restricted in perpetuity to households earning at or below 80% of area median income.

All units will be apartment flats accessed via elevator and therefore will be visitable Massachusetts Group One units. Five percent of the units will be Massachusetts Group Two accessible units and two percent will be Hearing Impaired units. The development will offer 72 one-bedroom units (62%), 32 two-bedroom units (28%), and 12 three-bedroom units (10%). All the units will be eligible to be counted on the Town’s Subsidized Housing Inventory, and to the extent approved by MassHousing, 70% of the income restricted units will carry a local preference.

The unit mix and sizes are as follows, along with the proposed affordable rents which are based on 2024 HUD income and rent:

Table 1: Proposed Unit Sizes and Rents

Ashland 40B Proposed Rents (55 West Union Street)								
Income Limit	Bedrooms	Baths	# Units	Sq. Ft.	Gross Rent	UA	Net Rent	Rent/Sq. Ft.
80% AMI	One	1	18	800	\$2,443	\$217	\$2,226	\$2.78
80% AMI	Two	2	8	1050	\$2,931	\$328	\$2,603	\$2.48
80% AMI	Three	2	3	1380	\$3,387	\$441	\$2,946	\$2.27
Market	One	1	54	800	\$2,300		\$2,300	\$2.88
Market	Two	2	24	1050	\$2,800		\$2,800	\$2.67
Market	Three	2	9	1380	\$3,300		\$3,300	\$2.54
Total			116					

The Landlord will provide trash removal services. Tenants will be responsible for paying for electric heat and hot water, electricity for cooking and lights, and domestic water and sewer.

Units will be finished with Class A apartment finishes, open concept floor plans, breakfast bars and in-unit washers and dryers. Some units will have balconies and/or patios. Amenities will include a fitness room, business center, and bicycle storage. The site will offer 184 surface parking spaces for residents (1.58 per unit), including 6 handicap spaces and electric vehicle charging spaces as required by the state building code.

Two new dedicated entry drives to the site will be created on Memorial Drive. The entry drive at the top of the site will lead residents and visitors to a paved roadway that will provide access to parking on three sides of the buildings. The second entry drive is located at the eastern end of the property and will provide access to a loading area for trash management and moving trucks as well as a covered entry that can be used for drop-off and pick-up also located off of Memorial Drive.

Exterior amenities will include a resident outdoor patio area that is still being programmed. Sidewalks from the development will connect with Trolley Brook Trail steps to the west of the property providing outdoor walking trails. In addition, there are athletic fields and a track behind the middle school that abuts the property to the west. In addition, a brand new YMCA and public dog park are planned for across the street from the Subject Property. Last, the Subject Property is close to numerous retail amenities along State Route 135/ West Union Street.

The Applicant will meet with the School Department Transportation Office to determine the best location for a drop-off/pick-up location for children residing at the project attending public schools in Ashland.

Design Narrative:

The proposed lot is currently undeveloped with rising topography from front to back. It sits on the corner of West Union Street and Memorial Drive adjacent to a few residences, Ashland

Middle School, and Dunkin' Donuts. The project proposes to develop a new residential building that is set back from West Union St and steps up the hill. The four and a half story building is designed utilizing wood construction on the upper four stories with concrete and steel at the lowest half story. The overall structure reaches a height of 52'-0" measured from the average grade plane. The Ground Level will accommodate an entry lobby with mail and package area, fitness space, bike storage room, a community room with kitchenette, a work from home area, and building support spaces. Surface parking wraps the building footprint and is currently designed to support a 1.6 ratio.

The typical residential building level (Levels 1-4) will consist of 29 units per floor for a total of 116 units. The typical floor will contain (3) 3-bedroom units, (8) 2-bedroom units, and (18) 1-bedroom units. The 1-bedroom units will be equipped with a full kitchen and (1) full bathroom. Each 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom unit will be equipped with a full kitchen and (2) full bathrooms. Each dwelling unit will be equipped with an in-unit energy efficient air handling unit and hot water heater. Each unit will be provided with an in-unit stacked laundry and new energy efficient electric appliances.

The exterior building materials are drawn from a residential palette and include brick, composite lap siding, a metal standing seam roof, and large windows. The exterior colors evoke a classic New England residential feel with an earth-toned brick that clads the base level, coffee colored siding at Levels 1-3, and a dark grey standing-seam mansard roof that encloses Level 4. The building massing is broken by inset composite panel areas to give the illusion of a series of buildings being interconnected and the balconies placed at every unit stack help to create a rhythm along the façade, reinforcing the residential use.

Light fixtures will be provided to illuminate the parking areas and pedestrian walkways that will be dark sky compliant. Landscape enhancements for the Subject Property include multiple deciduous street tree plantings, evergreen screening at the perimeter, and a variety of shrubs, grasses and groundcovers to provide year-round seasonal interest.

Energy Conservation:

The building will meet and/or exceed current energy code requirements in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

- Each dwelling unit will be equipped with energy star or equivalent appliances, include low flow toilets, sinks, showers and tubs.
- All interior and exterior lighting to be LED; all interior light fixtures will be Energy Star.
- All dwelling unit appliances to be Energy Star or equivalent.
- High efficiency electric hot water heaters for domestic water and hydronic heat in each unit will be provided in-unit.

- Energy Star rated HVAC systems will be in-unit along with A/C condensers for each unit located on the roof.
- Dwelling units will be provided with individually metered utilities either by the town or done by management internally.
- No VOC interior paint / low VOC and sustainable interior finishes will be installed throughout the property

Fire Protection & Public Safety

Fire sprinkler systems will be provided in the building. A fire pressure test will be performed in the spring.

Environmental Due Diligence

The wetlands have been delineated and the ORAD has been received. A Wetlands Order of Conditions will need to be obtained from the Ashland Conservation Commission prior to building permit.

Stormwater Management

The project has been designed to meet the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP's) Stormwater Management Standards as outlined in DEP's Stormwater Handbook. When a project complies with these standards, the presumption is that the project is protecting public and private water supplies and groundwater supplies, providing for appropriate flood control and storm damage prevention, preventing pollution, protecting fisheries, and protecting wildlife habitat.

Infrastructure

The development will utilize the existing water, sewer, and electrical infrastructure within Memorial Drive. The sewer line will be relocated to align with the street. To the extent practical, all on site utilities will be placed underground.

Consistence with Town of Ashland Production Plan

Reference is made to the Ashland for All: Phase I Housing Production Plan Update date May 2021 by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. The plan notes a demand in Ashland for affordable rental housing and a variety of unit types. Goal 1 of the plan is to "Provide and preserve housing for all income and ages" and states: "*The Town should work to provide more housing that is affordable in the marketplace and create deed-restricted Affordable Housing options to make Ashland more accessible to a wider range of households.*" The Applicant believes that the Subject Property, when built will meet the needs of residents of Ashland and fulfill the goals outlined in the Plan.

Litigation (Section 6 of Application)

The Applicant is not aware of any lawsuits pertaining to the Subject Property. However, one of the Applicants main business is selling and installing stone for residential and commercial use. They have several thousand transactions a year. In the event of non-payment for their services, they will pursue collections.

Meetings with the Town of Ashland

The Applicant met with the Town Manager and Chair of the SelectBoard on March 31, 2026 and the meeting was positive.