

## PROJECT DATA SUMMARY

### 1. Applicant

Weiss Farms Apartments LLC (the "Applicant") has been organized under the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is qualified to undertake the planning and development of the proposed apartment community in Stoneham, MA. The Applicant proposes to develop 264 garden style apartment units on a limited dividend basis as required under all laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The firm, John M. Corcoran and Company, whose principals are the primary members of the development team, has extensive experience on a number of mixed-income housing developments over the past 35 years. The Applicant respectfully requests that all notices from the Board in connection with this Application be sent to Peter Mahoney at John M. Corcoran and Company, 100 Grandview Road, Suite 207, Braintree MA. 02184 or electronically to pmahoney@corcoranmgmt.com as well as to Geoffrey Engler at SEB LLC, 165 Chestnut Hill Ave #2, Brighton, MA 02135 or electronically to gengler@s-e-b.com.

### 2. Description of the Development

The proposed project, The Commons at Weiss Farm ("The Commons"), is located at 170 Franklin Street in Stoneham. Access to The Commons is proposed through a double wide entry from Franklin Street, just west of the existing Weiss Farm entrance. The entrance area will be heavily landscaped and bordered by townhouse buildings on either side. The two and ½ story townhouse buildings will face Franklin Street complementing the scale of the adjacent neighborhood fabric. The main entrance invites residents and visitors down a gently sloped access drive into the community, which is approximately 4' below the elevation of Franklin Street. A series of three story townhouses create a well defined streetscape edge while also allowing for a densely planted buffer from Franklin Street. Moving further north into the site, three 5-story multifamily buildings are organized around a central open green space, which is also proposed to include the clubhouse building and exterior amenities including a pool area, meandering paths, bbq areas, patios and open lawn areas for active recreation. Native shade and ornamental trees will accentuate the architecture, provide year round interest, and define the open space as attractive and useable. The two larger apartment buildings located closest to Franklin Street have been oriented to minimize their visual impact to Franklin Street. The largest "u-shaped" multifamily residential building will sit at the rear of the site and will house ground level garage parking in addition to the residences within the building. The first level of the apartment buildings will be faced in stone to integrate with the overall site character.

The composition of the site and its development responds to its specific context, taking advantage of the site characteristics to create a visually interesting sequence of buildings and spaces while limiting visual impacts to surrounding areas. The site's predominant topography is lower than surrounding land, and some of the existing interior land will be further lowered. The taller structures are located towards the center of the site. To separate the new development from surrounding areas, the buildings will be bounded by landscaped parking areas and substantial natural buffers which form most of the perimeter of the site. The buildings have varied scale, massing, orientation and architectural expression to diminish potential visual impacts from public vantage points and nearby areas. Townhouses will flank the entrance drive and continue along the site edges nearest Franklin Street. Taller buildings will be relegated to sites behind the townhouse and a small clubhouse facility, with their narrowest facades facing towards the public way.

Vehicular and emergency access, along with parking, is provided around the perimeter of the site, with a looped circulation system. The majority of parking is provided through surface parking, with additional parking located within the townhouse buildings, in a detached garage located adjacent to Building A, and within the larger "u-shaped" apartment building at the northern end of the site. The project includes a network of pedestrian friendly

sidewalks and a nature trail connecting a series of larger open spaces within the site to promote an active lifestyle.

The composition is also intended to create an excellent living environment for the residents, visually connected to its natural setting and linked to the community. The buildings are clustered around a sequence of interior open spaces that will provide a green visual amenity, complementing views towards the natural band that surrounds most of the site. A sequence of sidewalks will lead from a landscaped entrance that forms a front yard for the townhouse units and into the heart of the development. A short trail will lead across a pedestrian bridge into open land that will remain undeveloped, adding to the range of spaces and places that the resident's can enjoy.

The apartments will be built on land significantly lower in elevation to the majority of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Therefore, many of the neighboring homes will sit at a higher elevation than the apartment buildings. There is also an existing wide, lush, vegetative buffer that will provide additional visual screening from these neighboring homes. These buffers range from 100' to 400' wide. Building setbacks from adjacent homes range from 300' to 700', except at the Weiss family properties where a dense buffer with a mix of native vegetation is proposed. On a whole, the density of the proposed development is consistent with surrounding multifamily developments, including four separate developments in the immediate vicinity which are denser than the proposed project.

The Clubhouse has been oriented and designed to be welcoming and accessible from both the main access drive and all residences within the community. The fitness area and lounge will be carefully sited for convenient use by residents, with the lounge overlooking a pool and recreation area. The architectural design is a close replica of the larger Weiss Farm barn, which combined with a complementary landscape design and state-of-the-art interior design will encourage the residents to gather in a central location reinforcing a sense of community while also reinforcing the pedestrian connections throughout the site.

The residential buildings are designed with the suburban feel of the Town of Stoneham in mind. The architecture of each residential building is articulated with changes in the exterior wall plane, a mix of materials, bays, and projecting and recessed balconies to reduce the mass and scale of the buildings. The exterior material palette includes stone at the first floor, and fiber-cement lap-siding and paneling at the upper floors in 3 colors to highlight the architectural textures and rhythms of the residential elevations, topped by a sloped, asphalt-shingled roof with multiple gables.

Within each of the larger buildings the typical floor plan provides access to homes off of a central double-loaded corridor with egress stairs at each end and an elevator lobby in the center. Typical studio, one, two, and three bedroom homes are designed with open kitchen/living areas and comfortable bedroom and bathrooms with large walk-in closets. Large windows provide abundant natural light at each home. Ground level patios with views to open spaces will be integrated into the architectural design where feasible. The townhouse buildings will each contain three 3-bedroom homes. They will have a one-car garage and master bedroom/bathroom on the ground level, a kitchen and living area on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and two additional bedrooms with bathrooms on the third floor.

The Commons will seek a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification from the United States Green Building Council. In addition to maintaining approximately 80% of the site as permeable, and incorporating high quality low VOC finishes and individual environmental control, each unit will contain modern energy efficient appliances, heating and cooling, in-unit laundry, and Energy Star lighting fixtures to add to an overall sense of luxury and quality at The Commons

3. Qualification as a 40B Development

The development qualifies as assisted “low or moderate income housing” within the meaning of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40B, section 20 and will provide 66 units (25%) which will serve households earning at or below 80% of area median income and thus will meet the definition of low and moderate income under the statute. The Applicant desires to develop this project pursuant to the guidelines of the New England Fund Program administered by Masshousing under which a site approval letter has been granted.

Preliminary architectural drawings and engineering plans are attached hereto in reduced form and under separate cover as full size drawings.

4. Local Need

According to figures compiled by the Massachusetts Department of Communities and Development (DHCD), in April 2013, Stoneham’s subsidized housing inventory represented 5.3 % of its total housing stock, which is below the threshold requirements established under Chapter 40B of M.G.L.

5. Exceptions and Approvals Requested

The subject property is zoned “Residence District A”. Certain elements of the proposed development do not comply with the current underlying zoning. Consequently, an exception of use is required to enable multi-family residential at the proposed density to be constructed. Other exceptions to the Town of Stoneham’s Zoning Bylaws and other local land use regulations are specifically detailed in this application. If any specific exceptions have not been listed in this application, the applicant, upon notification of such an oversight, shall promptly amend the list of exceptions included herein.

CONCLUSION

For all of the foregoing reasons, and for the additional reasons the Applicant will present at the scheduled public hearing on this Application, the Applicant respectfully requests the Board, after complying with the procedural requirements as provided by law, issue to the Applicant a Comprehensive Permit for the Development.