



TOWN OF MILFORD, NH
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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STAFF MEMORANDUM

Date: June 16, 2023
To: Town of Milford Planning Board
FROM: Terrence Dolan, Community Development Director/Town Planner
RE: **Application for Major Site Plan Approval for “The Q at Milford” Rental Apartments (SP #2023-02), Tax Map 43, Lot 69-2 (“0” Ponemah Hill Road) Residential Community Project to consist of 216 multi-family (rental apartment) units, in a complex with six residential buildings and a clubhouse, built on approximately 43.357 acres.**

APPLICANT: TM Bolduc Holdings, LLC
OWNER OF RECORD: Salt Creek Properties, LLC
ENGINEERING FIRM: Keach-Nordstrom Associates, Inc.

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:

This Major Site Plan application is for a proposed 216-unit multi-family development to be located on a new parcel to be labeled as: Tax Map 43, Lot 69-2, if the Subdivision Request is ultimately approved by the Planning Board. This creation of Lot 69-2 is subject to a concurrent Subdivision Approval before the Planning Board (SD #2023-01).

Two zoning districts overlay new Lot 69-2: Limited Commercial-Business (LCB) and Commercial (C). Multi-family residential is an “Acceptable Use” by right in both Districts, at a density of five (5) dwelling units/acre if served by municipal water and sewerage systems. At 5 units per acre, 216 units may be permitted.

APPLICATION STATUS:

The applicant and representatives met with the Planning Board for a “Conceptual Design Review” on March 21, 2023. At that time, a detailed set of engineered plans were presented. **The Community Development Department feels this formal application is complete based upon the submitted detailed engineering and studies, and can be accepted to continue to move forward in the review & approval process, and a public hearing (or hearings) may be conducted.**

The Planning Board should make a determination of potential regional impact.

The plan set being presented to the Planning Board at this time is dated last revised April 24, 2023.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL REVIEWS (IDR's):

The Planning Board received an initial round of comments (February 24 and March 6-9, 2023) from Town staff and commissions at its meeting with the applicant for conceptual discussion on March 21, 2023.

Based on the April 24, 2023 Plan Set submission, notable additional Staff Comments were received June 14, 2023 (from Town Engineer Nicole Crawford), and on June 15, unless otherwise indicated:

- DPW (Original) Comments-March 6th from Director Leo Lessard,
- Water Utilities Director Jim Pouliot
- Fire Department Deputy Chief Riley J. Stanchina
- Ambulance Services Director Eric Schelberg; and
- Heritage Commission Chairman-David Palance, March 9th).

All Comments & Responses are included in the Major Site Plan Application Packets (herein attached).

(Note: Most Department Comments are focused on the concurrent Major Site Plan application).

***Included in this packet are the responses from Keach-Nordstrom, relative to these comments, dated June 9, 2023.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

At the March 21, 2023 Planning Board meeting, project representative Matt Peterson of Keach-Nordstrom Associates presented the proposed subdivision and major site plan for "The Q". A comprehensive discussion followed (see March 21, 2023 Planning Board minutes, attached) and several issues were initially discussed, and then left open for future discussion and consideration.

Prior to the March 21st conceptual discussion, the project had obtained two Special Exceptions ("SE") from the Zoning Board of Adjustment (1. SE for Height on August 18, 2022 and 2. SE for wetland and wetland buffer disturbance on December 15, 2022).

As can be seen in the plan set, this proposed development provides a significant increase in residential units, thus helping to alleviate New Hampshire's shortage of available housing. A residential project of this significant size and location raises several issues, as noted in March by both the Planning Board and by Staff.

Development Access:

1. The proposed development is *currently* designed with a single point of primary access off of Nathaniel Drive, which feeds directly onto South Street (Route 13).

2. A proposed second access roadway serving the development, **only** proposed for *emergency access* at this time, is located (directly) to add community traffic onto Ponemah Hill Road to the eastern side of the proposed community, situated immediately north of the NH 101 Overpass. The developer has noted that this access shall require additional transportation studies. These studies will need to be performed prior to its construction and opening for any other usage, over and beyond that as an “Emergency Access”.

Board Discussion should continue regarding Vehicular Access for the site:

- A. Should there be a full access on Ponemah Hill Road, to accommodate shorter travel to the Nashua Street Corridor’s east-end Commercial District and NH 101A, thus alleviating a portion of community traffic that would be otherwise forced to only use the sole Nathaniel Drive/South Street access option?
 - A recommendation would warrant additional traffic studies be done to determine the timing and viability of a second Full Access option for its residents, inclusive of looking at the impacts on Ponemah Hill Road Corridor, and the intersection of Ponemah Hill Road and Nashua Street.
- B. Also, should the proposed internal roadway from Stoneyard Drive to Ponemah Hill Road become a Town ROW (right-of-way) at some point in the future. If so, is it designed accordingly, pursuant to the Town’s Development Regulations?
 - Should the Applicant be required to account for and provide a fair share contribution towards the construction of any required turn-lanes at both Ponemah Hill Road, as well as for the intersection of South Street and Nathaniel Drive, as allowed in the Town’s Development Regulations?

Discussion should continue on pedestrian connectivity for the site:

The Planning Board undertook a significant look at pedestrian connectivity in town several years ago, which resulted in the 2014 Pedestrian, Bicycle, Trail & Recreation Plan.

The plan indicates as *priorities* a trail connection through this site, and sidewalks on both Ponemah Hill Road and South Street.

The current site plan does include sidewalks within portions of the development, but does not include connections to either Ponemah Hill Road and/or South Street.

- Recommendations include working with the developer on providing trail connections, and/or determining fair-share contributions toward construction of linkages, as allowed in the Town’s Development Regulations.

Additionally, this location has several trails that traverse the property. Opportunities may exist that preserve and incorporate these trails to provide on-site pedestrian connections.

The **historic nature** of the site relative to Milford being known as “**Granite Town**”. The Planning Board and Heritage Commission have both noted the value of incorporating the theme of the once quarried granite resources into the site’s proposed architecture, features

and amenities. The developer has indicated willingness to do this.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Based on the continued Staff level discussions with the Applicant, and the evolving technical details provided in the Interdepartmental Reviews, Staff recommends the Planning Board should continue the Site Plan application review to a date certain to allow further exploration with the applicant.

Additional time to work with the Applicant will yield a more comprehensive overview of all outstanding issues; including, but not limited to, a sound Utility Program for this large multi-family community, a fuller discussion and resolution for the timing of outstanding transportation issues and any subsequent improvements needed for both access and turn lane needs. More discussions are warranted for the site's historical resources and any potential future programs, as well as a more detailed discussion on pedestrian connectivity.

Resolution of these issues will further improve upon the determined need for any necessitated master plan revisions and requisite agreements between the Applicant and the Town.

2. The Planning Board should continue to discuss the comments noted above with the applicant, more specifically to: vehicular access, fair-share contributions, and pedestrian connectivity, as well as any other concerns. Agreements may then be drafted, reviewed by all parties, and included in the final Conditions of Approval.
3. Accordingly, Staff would recommend that the Planning Board continue consideration of this Major Subdivision Application at this time (to a date certain).