



**SOUTH KINGSTOWN PLANNING DEPARTMENT
PROJECT REVIEW MEMO**

**Village at South County Commons – Bldgs. 26 & 28
Major Land Development, Comprehensive Permit
Pre-Application Concept Review**

October 22, 2024

Project Type:	Major Land Development, Comprehensive Permit		
Review Stage:	Pre-Application Concept Plan		
Address:	65 Village Square Drive		
Plat:	50	Lots:	15
Parcel Size:	~2.0 acres	Zoning District:	Rte. 1 SMD
Applicant:	Unknown	Owners:	SCC Investments II, LLC; SCC Investments III, LLC; Village Hotel Associates, LLC

Property Characteristics & Project Description

The application proposes the construction of 2 multi-unit residential buildings at South County Commons. Both buildings are proposed to be located near the southern end of Village Square Drive near the Hampton Inn Hotel.

- *Proposed Building #26* is an existing, approved building-pad located on Lot 15 and situated south of the existing Building #25 and north of the existing Hampton Inn Hotel. This location has previously been approved for use as office space and is presently a vacant lot maintained as lawn. Building #26 is proposed as a 3-story structure with architecture that appears generally compatible with the adjacent Building #25 and Hampton Inn Hotel, and the proposed Building #28.
- *Proposed Building #28* is a proposed new building site not previously proposed for construction located on Lots 14 and 21 south of (behind) the Hampton Inn Hotel. This area is presently developed as a parking lot for hotel guests. Building #28 is proposed as a 4-story structure.

Both buildings include 52 dwelling units (*104 units total*) composed of studio, one and two-bed units. Each building will include 25% affordable units (*13 units/bldg., 26 units total*) equally distributed across the different unit sizes. Per the provided renderings, both buildings are presented with similar architecture that appears to be generally consistent with the adjacent Hampton Inn Hotel and Building #25. Per the project narrative, a variety of onsite indoor and outdoor amenities and recreational resources are under consideration to support the proposed residential uses, however, both building locations also have pedestrian and bicycle access to St. Dominic Road via a bike path connector that provides off-road access to the South Kingstown Recreation Center & Field Complex, Dog Park, Senior Center, YMCA and Old Mountain Field.

Regulatory Considerations

Purpose of the Pre-Application Review

Per the Regulations, Pre-Application meetings shall:

- Aim to encourage information sharing and discussion of project concepts among the participants;
- Include a review of the physical character of the land, any environmental or physical constraints to development; and
- Include a discussion initiated by the Planning Board regarding what form of land development may be appropriate to meet the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan with regard to preserving the character of the land, the natural environment and the ability of the Town to provide essential services.

Pre-application discussions are intended for the guidance of the applicant and shall not be considered approval of a project or of any of its elements. No formal action need be taken by the Planning Board at the pre-application meeting.

The Pre-Application Conference process associated with a Comprehensive Permit application under the R.I. Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, RIGL 45-53-4(d)(1), includes simplified filing requirements that differ from the Town’s standard Pre-Application Plan submission requirements. Under these requirements

“[T]he applicant shall be required to submit only a short description of the project in writing including the number of units, type of housing, density analysis, preliminary list of adjustments needed, as well as a location map, and conceptual site plan. The purpose of the pre-application conference shall be to review a concept plan of the proposed development and to elicit feedback from the reviewing person or board.”

Subdivision and Land Development Regulations: Article IV, Section H - Multi Household Dwellings

This project presented for concept review qualifies as a Multi-Household Land Development Project (MHLDP) as outlined in Article IV, Section H, of the *Subdivision & Land Development Regulations*. MHLDPs are defined by the regulations as:

[P]rojects in which groups of two or more multi-household structures are located on the same lot, and which are planned, developed and managed as a unit, with required open spaces, recreation areas, off-street parking facilities and accessory uses, designed as a part of the entire project and primarily intended for the use of the occupants of the project. These are large-scale residential areas located only in RM Zoning Districts. The limitations on the number of dwelling units per multi-household structure set forth in subsection a) of this Section are not applicable in a Multi-Household Land Development Project. A single building which contains more than 12 dwelling units shall be considered to be a Multi-Household Land Development Project.

It is the intent of Article IV, Section H Section to:

[R]egulate the location, design and density of multi-household dwellings in the Town of South Kingstown, and to outline administrative procedure for the establishment and planning of such dwellings. It is intended to create multi-household residential communities of long-term desirability by utilizing the potential advantage of the site, including suitable placement of the buildings and facilities in relation to the site and surrounding areas. It is further intended to require adequate open space, livability space, recreation areas and car parking space, to avoid overcrowding and to encourage good design practices. The establishment of

multi-household dwellings appropriate to the character of the site and its location in the anticipated community pattern is encouraged herein, and it is further intended to avoid the overburdening of municipal services and facilities, and to ensure compatibility of multi-household dwellings with the natural environment.

Considerations for Multi-Household Land Development Projects under Article IV, Section H, include:

1. *Relation to Utilities and Public Facilities*
2. *Relation to Transportation*
3. *Relation to Surrounding Property*
4. *Screening*
5. *Front Yard Setbacks for Multi-Household Land Development Projects*
6. *Density Requirements (Max. density for 1-2 bedroom units = 7.71 units per developable acre.)*
7. *Supplementary Standards*
 - Permitted Uses
 - Walkways
 - Parking Lots
 - Distance Between Buildings on Same Lot
 - Rubbish Disposal
 - Floor Area of Accessory Uses
 - Open Space
 - Exterior Lighting

Route 1 Special Management District – Zoning Ordinance § 605

The subject property is located within the Route 1 Special Management District (Rte. 1 SMD) and is subject to the requirements of § 605 of the Zoning Ordinance and the proposed project is subject to the procedure for approval, dimensional and use restrictions set forth therein, subject to any relief or waivers specifically requested under the statutory Comprehensive Permit process.

Village at South County Commons Master Plan

The subject property is part of the Village at South County Commons (VSCC) and thus is subject to the requirements and limitations of previous planning approvals for that development. Deviations from those previous approvals may require amendments to or relief from those previously approved plans.

Potential Waivers/Relief Required

Pursuant to RIGL 45-53-4(d)(1), the applicant is not required at Pre-Application to identify any waivers or other relief that it is requesting, nor has the applicant chosen to do so. However, a preliminary assessment of the application materials indicate that applicant *may* need to request waivers/relief for a variety of potential issues, *including but not limited to*:

- Maximum residential density of 5 units per developable acre (§605.D.4);
- Minimum building separation (*Bldgs. 25 and 26*) for buildings with more than 5 dwelling units (§605.D.4);

- Maximum building size of 30 dwelling units (*Bldgs. 26 and 28*) and 160 feet in length (*Bldg. 28*) (§605.D.4);
- Required rear yard parking and service lane (*Bldg. 28*) (§605.D.4);
- Maximum building height (§605.D.13);
- Parking standards (§605.D.14);
- Prior VSCC planning approvals that:
 - Do not include Building #28;
 - Prohibit residential uses in District 4 and direct land uses to commercial and light industrial uses.

The Planning Board may wish to inquire about these and other potential waivers or areas of relief during the Pre-Application Conference.

Required Findings

Per [RIGL § 45-53-4](#):

In approving a Comprehensive Permit application, the Board shall make positive findings, supported by legally competent evidence on the record which discloses the nature and character of the observations upon which the fact finders acted, on each of the following standard provisions:

- (A) The proposed development is consistent with local needs as identified in the local comprehensive community plan with particular emphasis on the community's affordable housing plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies;
- (B) The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the municipality's zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations, and/or where expressly varied or waived local concerns that have been affected by the relief granted do not outweigh the state and local need for low and moderate income housing;
- (C) All low and moderate income housing units proposed are integrated throughout the development, are compatible in scale and architectural style to the market rate units within the project, and will be built and occupied prior to, or simultaneous with, the construction and occupancy of any market rate units;
- (D) There will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposed development as shown on the final plan, with all required conditions for approval;
- (E) There will be no significant negative impacts on the health and safety of current or future residents of the community, in areas including but not limited to safe circulation or pedestrian and vehicular traffic, provision of emergency services, sewerage disposal, availability of potable water, adequate surface water run-off, and the preservation of natural, historical or cultural features that contribute to the attractiveness of the community;
- (F) All proposed land developments and all subdivision lots will have adequate and permanent physical access to a public street in accordance with the requirements of RIGL § 45-23-60(5); and
- (G) The proposed development will not result in the creation of individual lots with any physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable, unless created only as permanent open space or permanently reserved for a public purpose on the approved, recorded plans.

The Planning Board may deny the request for a Comprehensive Permit for any of the following reasons:

- (A) If the city or town has an approved affordable housing plan and is meeting housing needs, and the proposal is inconsistent with the affordable housing plan;
- (B) The proposal is not consistent with local needs, including, but not limited to, the needs identified in an approved comprehensive plan, and/or local zoning ordinances and procedures promulgated in conformance with the comprehensive plan;
- (C) The proposal is not in conformance with the comprehensive plan;
- (D) The community has met or has plans to meet the goal of ten percent (10%) of the year-round units or, in the case of an urban town or city, fifteen percent (15%) of the occupied rental housing units as defined in § 45-53-3(2)(i) being low and moderate income housing;
or
- (E) Concerns for the environment and the health and safety of current residents have not been adequately addressed.