

27.5 & 29 Clarks Road, Amesbury

Response to comments from Design Review Committee at December 16 meeting

December 31, 2025

Submitted by Eagles Crossing LLC,

The applicant team has taken the comments from the Office of Community and Economic Development, the Planning Board, and the Design Review Committee and incorporated them into new architectural plans dated December 31, 2025 and uploaded concurrently with this document to the Amesbury portal. Following the response to Design Review Committee and Office of Community and Economic Development comments, the Applicant offers a narrative response to section 10.5.e of the East End Smart Growth District.

Design Review Committee /Office of Community and Economic Development comments

DRC/OCED comment: At minimum, the windows in the gables must be symmetrical, ideally the whole window gable section at all levels will be symmetrical

Applicant Response: Windows in the gables are now symmetrical; remainder of façade symmetrical not possible due to unit layout.

DRC/OCED comment: Unify the base with a strong building material or colonnade

Applicant Response: The brick has been modified to a more reddish color. The design intent is to create visual separation between the units along the first floor rather than a unifying colonnade, similar to how traditional row houses are expressed.

DRC/OCED comment: Terminate all bays, one level below the roof (like south elevation)

Applicant Response: This would reduce the square footage of the units and the current design is more in keeping with the language of the design guidelines that encourage projecting bays at all floor levels. See below.

- e. Facades shall be articulated by projecting or recessed bays, balconies, or setbacks and should be broken into a series of smaller varied elements by incorporating projections or recesses, canopies, trellises or awnings, balconies, doorways or windows, roof shapes and heights, to vary the facade and emphasize architectural features. Projecting bays, recesses, and cornices are encouraged at all floor levels.
- f. A change in plane shall be accompanied by a change in material, texture, roof line/height, and/or expressed joints and details. Recesses and projections of the building facades shall be a minimum of 18" deep. Windows, wall panels, pilasters, and building bays should be carried across building walls to relieve blank surfaces. False commercial storefronts are not permitted.

DRC/OCED comment: Add fascia board at fourth floor across entire elevation.

Applicant Response: This is not feasible at all areas due to roof returns but will replace projecting roof portions with fascia board where possible.

DRC/OCED comment: Raise the roof of the bay section a minimum of 18 inches or more if possible.

Applicant Response: Roof has been raised 18” along the bay section.

DRC/OCED comment: Make the support for the bay windows and the smaller roofs at the first floor one continuous element, either support on brackets, or the colonnade or other unifying detail

Applicant Response: Alternatives were studied, but the design intent is to create visual separation between the units along the first floor rather than a unifying colonnade, similar to how traditional row houses are expressed.

DRC/OCED comment: Remove storefront entries and make more traditional.

Applicant Response: The larger residential building and clubhouse building are not intended to be an exercise in traditional architecture like the front buildings. This also isn't a commercial storefront. The current storefront design is intended to reflect a window pattern more closely related to residential windows with divided lites and to create a sense of scale that is more in keeping with residential architecture.

DRC/OCED comment: Provide window details, the frames look very thick, is this accurate? Make frames white

Applicant Response: Window frame and trim to be similar color to lessen any impact of window frame width. Windows based on Intus in clay color that is more in keeping with the color palette and provides a subtle contrast is preferred. The design intent is to have a color palette that embeds itself into the site and reflects the natural colors of the site. A white window would be too bright in this setting and wouldn't relate to the context.

DRC/OCED comment: Consider other color palettes

Applicant Response: The color palette was strategically chosen to fit in with the natural characteristics of this site while also considering how the building will age in place over time. The neutral color palette of earth tones and green facades will complement the site and embed itself naturally in the site as the landscaping matures over time. The brick color has been adjusted to bring in more warm red tones.

DRC/OCED comment: Detail bay paneling

Applicant Response: Paneling at 4-story building bays will be recessed panels.

DRC/OCED comment: Confirm less than or equal to 5 inch reveal on clapboards

Applicant Response: As discussed and agreed at the meeting, a 4” reveal at the front building and 6” reveal at the larger building is appropriate for the scale of the buildings.

DRC/OCED comment: Clarify soffit details

Applicant Response: Precedent imagery provided with updated architectural drawings dated 12/31/2025.

Narrative Response to East End Smart Growth Overlay District Section 10.5 Development and Performance Standards section e. Building Design

“The following design elements listed in this subsection are to be interpreted as building design standards to be applied by the PAA as appropriate to the criteria under review, including factors such as foundation and soil characteristics, scenic views, and other extraordinary site constraints.”

1. Building Size, Height & Scale

There are no historic buildings within 200’ from the proposed structures; however, the two proposed buildings facing Clarks Road are residential-scale buildings inspired by the classic older homes in the neighborhood along Main Street.

- c. Any portions of new buildings within 200 feet of existing residential buildings three (3) stories or less, shall not exceed three (3) stories. The PAA may waive the two hundred (200) feet to no less than **one hundred and fifty (150)** feet provided a landscape buffer is provided along the closest property line(s) consisting of a combination of solid wooden fencing at least 6 feet high and a 20 feet wide vegetative buffer consisting of evergreen trees no less than 4” in caliper and other evergreen flowering shrubs as approved by the PAA. See Style Guide.

As noted in the Waivers and Conditions document submitted to the Planning Board, the signed ordinance failed to capture the change approved by the planning board from 150’ to 75’.
(scrivener’s error- The highlighted language should read seventy five (75) feet.)

2. Building Placement

The development leaves as wooded approximately 7 acres of the 11 acre total, preserving natural views.

Disturbance of slopes over 25% has been minimized by aligning the building with the grades, but some impact on slopes is necessary to contain the site primarily to the previously disturbed area and out of the wetlands.

With added sidewalks and an extensive walking trail, the development helps preserve the walkability and adds to the character of the neighborhood and City.

3. Building Massing

The proposed design breaks the larger forms into smaller, varied masses with breaks in façade and human-scale features such as patios, walkways, entryways, and overhanging roofs, as well as roof variations. The details continue on all sides of the buildings. Horizontal and vertical elements are included to provide depth and visual interest. The front buildings' footprints align with Clarks Road. The historic-style front buildings help the design transition from Clarks Road.

4. Sense of Entry

The more prominent overhangs in contrasting color and materials provide a sense of entry, with a hierarchy between main and secondary entrances.

5. Fenestration

Our window openings are historically appropriate while allowing for maximum daylight into living spaces. Muntin patterns are traditional. Window trim is included. There is a rhythm to the window/door spacing and width to height ratios while respecting interior layout needs

6. Dormers

Where included in the larger building, dormers are subsidiary to the main structure with windows filling the majority of the dormer.

7. Building Outdoor Lighting

Lighting is dark sky compliant; the styles will complement the buildings.

8. Garages and Driveways

Not applicable

9. Roofline articulation

The design includes a variety of building heights and articulations without the roof massing rivaling the walls. The mechanical units on the roof will not be visible from the ground. No pork chop returns are proposed.

10. Building Materials

Building materials will be selected to complement the residential character of the neighborhood while providing for long-term quality and maintenance.

11. Energy Efficiency

The project will be highly energy efficient, complying with Amesbury's adoption of the Stretch Energy Code.