



Amesbury Technical Review Committee

July 16, 2025

City Hall Auditorium

62 Friend St.

9:30 am

In Attendance: Chief Bailey, Chief Serino, Nipun Jain, Jim Wilson, Nick Cracknell, Howard Snyder, Amanda Armington, Joe Neipp, and Becky Frey

Absent: Joseph Buckley, Lisa DeMeo, Lauren Blatchford

Chief Bailey called the meeting to order at 9:36 am.

Nick Cracknell provided an overview of the TRC. This is an advisory committee of staff and is typically a 4-step review process especially for large projects. The TRC makes recommendations to the Planning Board. All relevant city departments attend. The first step is a pre-application work session. This results in an informal set of review comments from the TRC and Planning Board. Once the formal application is filed the second step would be to come back to TRC for more formal comments. After the project receives approval, they will come back with a complete Construction Mitigation Management Plan. The final step is an onsite preconstruction meeting to let the neighbors in the neighborhood know the project will start and who to call if there is a problem. It also offers the developer the opportunity to make sure all the subs on the project know what they need to do. The TRC reviews horizontal construction and the Design Review Committee reviews the design elements.

Work Session:

1. 27.5-29 Clarks Road – [Preapplication](#)

Alex Loth from Minco and Scott Cameron were present to speak to the application. Alex Loth commented that Minco has been building housing across MA for a long time. They have been working with the city for the last 5 years on this project. Minco brought the previously permitted 40B project at 29 Clarks Road with the intent of not building the 40B. They worked with the city on the East End Smart Growth District and the Merrimack River District Plan. All of that work has resulted in a compact development on the top 4 acres of the 10-acre site. This will create more housing for the city. The preapplication is a very basic submission that reflects a lot of work that has been done to figure out the layouts. The formal filing will have all the engineering. Scott Cameron can speak about the utility and site issues. The site plan is over 10 acres when 27.5 Clarks Road is included. They are staying up mainly on the level part of that site. The only impact to the wetlands area would be the proposed walking trails that would connect through this site to Point Shore and Main St. The walking trails will be more of a woods path not a 10-foot-wide path. The large back building has been angled to follow the contour lines of the slope. It will be a bigger excavation effort if they don't do that. The front two buildings will be residential scale and built along the street. The bigger building will be built in the



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back. This design aligns with the Merrimack River District to keep the residential feel on the road. They will bring up the similar architectural elements that are seen down by the river up to this site. In addition to the residential buildings there will be an amenity building between the two front buildings and the larger one. They have previously worked with DPW to look at the capacity for sewer and water as well.

Chief Bailey questioned if there were tentative plans for the amenities building. Alex Loth responded that the building would have a leasing office and representative unit to show people what the units look like. There will be a kitchen and recreation room for people to use. There will be a fitness room on the second floor and a patio space with a pergola and outdoor seating. They have not fully programmed the green space yet, but there is a large area that could be programmed too.

Chief Serino questioned what truck they used for the turn radius on the roundabout. Scott Cameron responded they used the largest truck Amesbury has.

Amanda Armington commented that they should consider wildlife crossings and movement when selecting materials to create walking trails and foot bridges. Amanda Armington commented that the 50-foot buffer line should be shown on the plan and questioned if the proposed building was in the 50-foot buffer at all. Alex Loth responded that the building will be placed outside of that buffer.

Chief Serino commented that they will need a more in-depth meeting about sprinkler locations. They will also need to keep in mind the new fire and new building code for the formal submission.

Howard Snyder commented that the applicant should evaluate the location of the 6 handicap parking spaces. Some of them should be moved so people don't have to go through travel lanes. Howard Snyder questioned what the hatched pattern south of the word bridge was. Alex Loth responded that it was an outdoor patio space.

Scott Cameron commented that they were showing the handicap spaces in the parking and circulation planning for massing. They have confirmed the locations yet. There are three spaces to the far-right side of the Cul de sac that may be a temporary drop-off/delivery space. They had done some investigations 4—5 years ago into the sewer and water. They did a CCTV inspection of the Clarks Road sewer and anticipate the sewer line may need some updates. It would be good to understand if any updates have been made to the sewer or water lines in that area in the past few years. They will reach out to the DPW for a sidebar meeting. The storm water management will comply with the



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local, state, and EPA regulations. They will be in the conservation buffer zone for the walking paths and footbridges. There may be a retaining wall impact.

Nipun Jain questioned if they had done the calculations to evaluate the need for sewer and water for this proposal. Scott Cameron confirmed they had, and they were not expecting issues with capacity. However, they know the sewer is an old pipe. During initial conversations with DPW a few years ago, they did not think there would be capacity issues. It will be good to regroup with them on that.

Nipun Jain commented that when they started discussing the project there were different staff in the DPW. The Director and Assistant Director are new and may need more time to figure out details. They should start that dialogue sooner than later and share what was discussed with prior staff.

Nick Cracknell commented that the traffic study for cars and pedestrians will be very important. They will need to get a traffic engineer to produce a report on that. Clarks Road is a connection between Route 110 and Main St. and people are aware of the road's constraints. It will be important to work with the traffic engineer to look at traffic calming measures to try to slow the traffic. The goal would be to make it equal or better than the existing conditions. It will also be important to evaluate extending the sidewalk to this property so pedestrians can walk to Starbucks safely.

Nick Cracknell agreed with Nipun Jain that it is important to have a sidebar conversation with DPW about the sewer, water, and traffic. They submitted a one stop application last year to upgrade the water line. Showing the limit of work will be important. It will be important to see a grading plan that shows how far out they need to chase the slope to stabilize the building. It would be good to have staff out for a site walk to look at the wetland resource to figure out where the crossings should occur. Those trails will be important to connect people to the trail system. They should consider designating a few parking spaces to the public, so they can park and access the trails. The building design feedback will primarily come through the DRC. However, it would be good to reinforce some of the feedback they provided last night. They are going in a good direction with the lower density to higher density development design. There is a good transition with the amenities building. All of the lighting should be dark sky compliant and perimeter landscaping will be important. Snow storage locations should be shown on the plan. The landscaping should be more robust landscaping to support tree growth. It will be important to talk about the recreation trail component, and they are still working under the assumption all open space will be under protection.



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Alex Loth questioned if the City had a preference on the type of conservation or deed restriction for that. Nick Cracknell responded that it should be a conservation restriction under chapter 184 so it's in perpetuity. It should be under the care and custody of the Conservation Commission.

Nipun Jain questioned if the fire department had any questions on the parking layout, building egresses, or building openings. Chief Serino responded that it all falls under the new building code. There are some changes to the building height openings. The fire department will need access to that building with the ladder truck, and they should keep that in consideration with the planned parking and landscaping. They can work with it, but they should consult with the fire department on it.

Nipun Jain commented that he would quickly summarize the DRC items. The dumpster location and trash collection area should be screened. They discussed large landscape islands with trees, fencing, and landscape buffers. The buffers should be more so on the Birchwood Meadow side. They also talked about landscaping on the edges of Clarks Road and the entryway to the development. Broader sidewalks will make it more appealing for pedestrians. They should work to make the Cul de sac more inviting with a different surface material. They could consider adding a tot lot on the site near the amenities building.

Jim Wilson commented that they will need to consider the EV charging parking requirements with the new building code. Alex Loth confirmed they have been proactive with the EV stations. They usually put in what is required and install the infrastructure to add more if needed.

Chief Bailey commented that they have already fielded concerns from residents about the traffic on Clarks Road. The intersection of Clarks Road to Main St. is narrow. There has been resident advocacy for a right turn only sign as cars are exiting this development, which is not something the Police Department is advocating. However, the applicant should consult with their traffic engineers to discuss what can be done to deter people from going toward Main St. Alex Loth responded that they heard traffic concerns during the Merrimack River District planning process. The traffic engineering survey assessed the vast majority of cars would turn right. Concerns about traffic are never as severe in reality but they do understand the concern.



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2. 5 and 9 School Street

Mark Wojcicki and Brad Kucher were present to speak to the application. Brad Kucher commented that they were the two developers who were awarded the RFP for 5 and 9 School St. They are putting some time and thought into the development process with their engineer and architect. It would be good to know what hours they can work and where cars can park in the area when the time comes for construction.

Chief Bailey commented that they cannot work on Sundays, but they can work with them on most other days and times. When it gets closer, they can send an email to work it out. They will need to coordinate parking and include other stakeholders like the library in that conversation.

Nick Cracknell noted those questions would be sorted out post approval. This is on the agenda today for an informal discussion. Nick Cracknell showed the rendering and site plan that was presented six months ago during the RFP process. The only adjustment was moving the pedestrian walking path to the other side of the Ordway building. It would be helpful to the TRC here to give an overview of the land use, parking, and walkway. It would also be beneficial to talk about the contents inside and behind the building. There is a lot of stuff in the building the City may or may not want. There is a generator and power out back. They should have a clear idea of what material can be removed and disposed of and what would be reused.

Brad Kucher commented that they are planning to put 6 residential units in the Ordway building. One unit will be affordable.

Nick Cracknell clarified they planned to remove the 1980 addition, so that it would look like the rendering on the screen. Brad Kucher confirmed that was correct and noted they would plan to put 2 units on each floor. The windows will be preserved or replicated in kind. They will remove the paint and bring the brick back. They will plan to remove the handicap ramp and put in floor size legal windows.

Nick Cracknell commented that their preference for the School St. single family home was for them to restore it. Brad Kucher agreed the goal was to restore it. They have not had a structural engineer go through there. If it cannot be restored, then they can rebuild the house to look exactly like it was. It currently has a wet damp basement. It would be close to a full reconstruction anyway. If they rebuild it, then it would end up with a better



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product. Mark Wojcicki agreed. The ceiling height in the basement is 5 feet and it's a sandy damp basement. The wall that abuts the Ordway has collapsed. There are not any significant architectural qualities on the inside.

Nick Cracknell commented that the question will need to be discussed and determined with the Historical Commission and Planning Board. The basement height would not be able to be adjusted without changing the roofline. Brad Kucher responded that they could change the ceiling heights without changing the roof line. Nick Cracknell clarified that the ridge would be essentially the same. Brad Kucher confirmed that was correct. Nick Cracknell questioned if they would keep it a single-family home. Brad Kucher responded that they planned to keep it a single-family home.

Nick Cracknell commented that they would have to subdivide the properties because both properties will have to be changed. Nipun Jain added that design will matter in terms of dimensions.

Mark Wojcicki commented that they talked about relocating the easement for the walkway on the side of the Ordway Building. They have concerns about removing the generator and telephone pole attached to the building. Nick Cracknell responded that it was his understanding the city didn't want any of it, but the fire and inspections' department can confirm that. Chief Serino requested they reach out to him via email to coordinate on that point. They will evaluate to see what's there and sort out what will need to be preserved and disposed of.

Mark Wojcicki commented that there was a substantial number of supplies in the building and that should be looked through as well.

Nipun Jain commented that the water and sewer connections will need to be discussed with the DPW. Brad Kucher noted that they need to look at the power too. The Ordway fed from across the street. Nipun Jain commented that the bottom right corner of the School St. building has a pole over that way. It may be a viable location.

Brad Kucher commented that city staff should look at the shed on the Ordway property as well.

Nipun Jain commented that it would be helpful to understand what the timeline for the project is going to be. They should start mapping out key milestones to make sure they can coordinate with OCED.



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Brad Kucher commented that the water should be fine for DPW and the Fire Department. There is more than enough to feed 6 units. Nipun Jain commented that it would be good to have all the infrastructure work happen this year if possible. It is important to verify the existing as well as the proposed now so they can eliminate any surprises. They should reach out to DPW on that as soon as possible as well as fire for fire suppression.

Nick Cracknell commented that it was important to engage your civil engineer soon so they can lay the lot lines and then engage both chiefs and the library to discuss circulation and parking. Then they can make sure everyone is on the same page. Hancock Associates has an existing survey plan.

Nick Cracknell commented that Howard Snyder was the point of contact for this project. They should get in front of the Historical Commission soon for an initial conversation.

Jim Wilson commented that he would coordinate with the Health Department to see if they wanted any of the supplies inside the Ordway. Nick Cracknell commented that a lot of the supplies had expired.

Howard Snyder commented that they should coordinate with him on the streetscaping.

Construction Mitigation Management Plan (CMMP):

3. 201 Elm Street

Ethan Petersohn was present for the discussion.

Nipun Jain commented that the key things they are talking about today is the CMMP plan and getting the project ready to move forward. They should be able to pick up the certified copy of the decision from the Clerk's Office to record at the Registry of Deeds. There are prerequisites to starting construction. The approved site plans need to be signed and endorsed by the Planning Board and put on record. The ANR plan needs to go on record. There are a few legal documents that need to be prepared for the covenant and bond form to also go on record. The developer started to install erosion controls on the 201 Elm St. site. They may need to put hay bales along Monroe St. There are two important things they will need when applying for building permits. One is the existing structure architectural plans need to identify separately a demo plan and the addition plan. They will confirm it complies with the designs that were approved. The complete package should include plans for the individual structures as well. There is a retaining wall more than 4 feet in height and that will need an engineered and stamped



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drawing submitted. Jim Wilson added the wall would be a separate building permit. They have a demo permit now. Jim Wilson questioned if it would be a Shea block wall. Ethan Petersohn confirmed it would probably be a shea block.

Chief Serino commented that they would have to comply with 527 CMR1 and the new fire code pertains to the new building code. The new code requires a fire and site safety plan be submitted to the Fire Department. Signing the CMMP means that the developer agrees to comply with that code and includes anything pertaining to an NFPA 241. It is required for any significant construction or renovation. This point will be clarified better in the CMMP. Most of it is safeguarding construction site access.

Nipun Jain commented that they will supply a checklist of what they need to provide. They will discuss the contents of the CMMP and establish an onsite visit. The onsite meeting will evaluate staging areas, accessibility, and coordination with police and fire.

Nick Cracknell commented that the submitted CMMP will need a couple amendments because there are no SWWP or wetland requirements. The preconstruction meeting will need to be scheduled before they start work to ensure all conditions are acknowledged and understood. There will be no parking on city streets. If they are planning to park off site on city property, then they need to clear that with police. If they plan to park in the cemetery, then they will need to get permission. They need to make sure they communicate with the city. DPW should be engaged during the storm water and infrastructure improvements. They need to make sure to keep the street clean. There are also boiler plate conditions like the site needs to be cordoned off with a chainlike fence. If they are not planning to do that, then they need to state it.

Ethan Petersohn responded that he did not think they would be doing a chain link fence. Chief Serino noted that he did not think they needed one. If they do one, then it will need to be secured. Nick Cracknell commented that the developer is taking the liability if someone is hurt on site. Ethan Petersohn responded that they were talking about fencing off the materials. Nick Cracknell noted that Jim Wilson was the point of contact for this project.

Administrative:

1. Minutes 6-4-25



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Minutes approval was deferred to the next meeting.

Nick Cracknell motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 am, seconded by Nipun Jain.
The motion passed unanimously.