

27.5 & 29 Clarks Road, Amesbury

Response to comments from Planning Board and Public from December 22 meeting

December 23, 2025

Submitted by Eagles Crossing LLC,

## **Comments**

### **Planning Board**

**1. Tom Salemi** *Geotech report should be required now or later?*

**Response:** As answered by City Planner Jain at the meeting, submission of required Geotechnical reports approved by peer reviewer or city staff can be a condition of approval.

**2. Tom Salemi** *provide designs with dimensions*

**Response:.** Applicant will provide.

**3. Keith Rattner** *regarding median and 2<sup>nd</sup> means of egress*

**Response:.** At the request of the city, the peer reviewer reviewed the median concept and the applicant also investigated the feasibility of the same. Adding a median to the entry:

- Widens the distance between the front houses, reducing their utility in providing streetscape and screening the larger building and associated parking behind.
- Median would not be wide enough to provide for planting bed for trees, partly due to area needed for bumper swing for fire equipment.
- Median would hinder fire access which would necessitate an even wider opening at Clarks Road.

The Applicant team has provided an alternate design which preserves the 24' drive opening, but moves the sidewalks back from the curb, providing a planting bed for trees, creating an elegant, tree-lined entry to the development.

**4. Keith Rattner** *adequacy of utilities and who is responsible*

**Response:** See answer below from the 12/17 Site/Civil Peer Review Response letter

The Applicant and MCG have met with DPW to discuss utilities and existing adequacy at the project location. Based on discussions, the City's infrastructure is adequate to support the project but may require localized improvements including the extension of the water main from Macy Street and potentially upgrading the sewer from Macy Street to the project site. The City has hired an Engineering Firm to assess the water distribution system and extents of water upgrades will not be known until the analysis is complete in a few months. The existing sewer capacity is also being analyzed by MCG and coordinated with DPW to see if upgrades are required. All utility connections are governed by the DPW and the Applicant requests that this condition be deferred to the DPW and resolved prior to issuance of an occupancy permit.

It should also be noted that DPW has stated in a letter dated January 24, 2022, prepared by Robert Desmarais, Director of Public Works, submitted to MA Department of Housing and Community Development, that the development within the EESGD will not overburden the City's infrastructure, but limited upgrades may be required. This letter was prepared prior to establishing the Smart Growth District.

**5. Keith Rattner** *aesthetic design of retaining walls*

**Response:** The final design and materials will be part of the building permit drawings.

**6. Joel Nice** *Can parking area light poles be lower?*

**Response:** Mounting heights are designed to comply with Amesbury requirements including meeting dark-sky requirements, as well as provide the necessary lighting for safety. That being said, Applicant will review placement and heights to see whether improvements can or should be made.

**7. David Frick** *Provide plan with the dimensions of buildings and building labels.*

**Response:** Applicant will provide.

**8. Pascal Rettig** *Front buildings must fit into neighborhood- coordination with DRC is important*

**Response:** Applicant agrees, planning to submit updated images and information to the DRC (and upload to the City portal) prior to meeting with them January 6. Applicant intends to reach agreement with the DRC on the overall design intent prior to a draft decision, so that subjective aesthetic considerations are settled and do not hold up construction.

## **Public**

1. *To summarize the public comment, it centered on the traffic problems faced by residents on Rocky Hill Road, Main Street, and Clarks Road, the impacts of this proposal as one of multiple projects in the area, as well as pedestrian safety.*

**Response:** Having been involved with the City and the neighborhood for nearly six years, through the East End Smart Growth District planning and the Merrimack River District planning, Applicant is aware of the traffic issues facing the greater neighborhood.

As the Traffic Assessment points out, while the project as proposed would generate more traffic than that coming from the current two single family homes, the peak traffic of 58 cars per hour will have limited impact on neighboring streets.

Applicant's extensive work on the EESGOD has provided a primary impetus for the City's successful MassWorks grant to re-work the Macy/Elm/Clarks intersection.

Applicant has committed to upgrading the existing sidewalk to city standards from the termination of the sidewalk upgrade incorporated as part of the Mass Works grant, past the proposed project to the farthest east Birchwood Pointe driveway.

While the project as proposed will not significantly degrade traffic and safety considerations in the neighborhood, neither will it solve the longstanding issues.

**9. Tracy Chalifour** *2004 document, drainage calculations done during drought, TRC 40B considerations, missing visuals, scale of buildings*

**Response:** Applicant is unaware of any document from 2004 provided in relation to this project. Drainage calculations were done in the time period available for the calculations. Applicant can't speak to another unrelated project undergoing permitting under MA Chapter 40B. As far as requesting additional rendered images from the perspective of private property, in this case the resident's home at Birchwood Pointe, see the following language from Applicant response to December 8 public comment: *Applicant has created detailed visuals from both 31 and 27 Clarks Road which give a good indication of the visual impact of the proposed development. Additional visuals from the perspective of private property have not been undertaken. It should be noted that the closest Birchwood Pointe building is approximately 171' from the multi-family building through a mostly wooded area. The rear portion of the building is approximately 313' away, again through a wooded area.* Applicant, as discussed at the meeting, is working with the Design Review Committee on the design and height of the front buildings. The buildings are designed to evoke the style of the homes on Main Street, while providing housing and also screening the parking and buildings behind. Going significantly smaller would reduce the quality and quantity of housing, reduce the screening of the project, and affect the project's profitability and therefore potentially its viability.