

Redevelopment Proposal for 5 & 9 School Street, Amesbury, MA



Historic Preservation Special Permit and Site Plan Review

Elite Builder Realty Trust
138 Elm Street
Salisbury, MA 01952

Project Narrative:

The development of properties 5 and 9 School Street, Amesbury (tax maps 52-199 and 52-202) were awarded to Applicant Elite Builder Realty Trust through the City's RFP process. These adjacent properties are registered with the State's Historic Commission but not with the National Register of Historic Places. Both properties are located in the

City's Central Business District (CBD) zone which allows for commercial, mixed or residential uses.

Property 9 School Street was built circa 1863 for the City and is known as the Ordway School. It served as a grade school and high school until the 1960's when the building was repurposed as City offices. In the early 1980's, the Ordway School was renovated and an addition was added to accommodate a new entrance stairwell. The building continued to be used for City purposes to include a senior center and fire station. In more recent years, the Ordway School building fell into disrepair and is currently vacant.

Property 5 School Street was built circa 1850 and is registered as the Orlando S. Baley House. The City acquired this single-family property in 2001, and later deemed it inhabitable where an interior floor had collapsed and a recent exterior walk of the property found the foundation had failed.

The Applicant is seeking a Historic Preservation Special Permit to restore and rehabilitate 9 School Street and reconstruct in-kind 5 School Street. These changes will be sensitive to the historic architectural details of each. Presently, the Ordway School (9 School Street) is a wood framed two-story Italianate building with vinyl siding and vinyl replacement windows. It has a fully finished partially sub-ground basement and a failing asphalt flat roof. The Baley House (5 School Street) is a wood framed two-story Greek revival with vinyl siding. The gable roof is asphalt shingles.

Site Improvements:

The proposed architectural plans of the rehabilitated Ordway School and reconstructed Baley House incorporate historic records and traditional architectural details. These plans also adhere to zoning requirements outlined in Section XI.J2 and Section XI.C.8 of the Amesbury Zoning Ordinance.

The Baley House will remain a single-family residence and the Ordway School has been designed as a six-unit residential building consisting of two units in the lower-level, first and second floors.

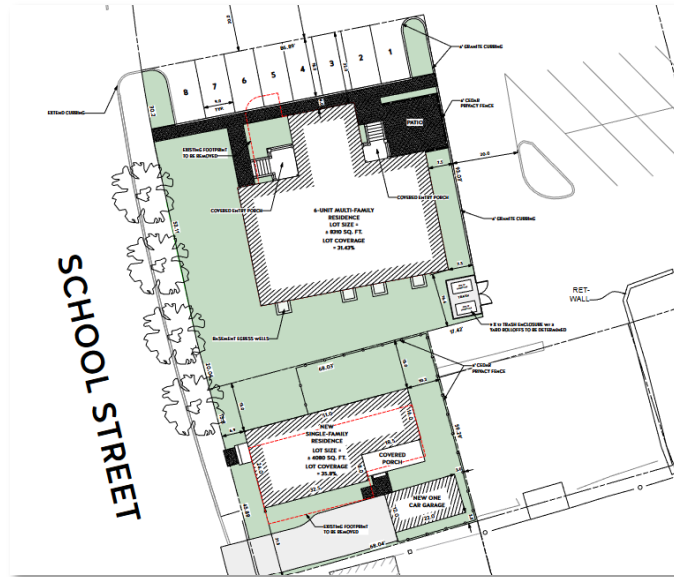
Exterior comparison of the existing and proposed plans finds little impact on the height, scale, massing, and volume of the proposed buildings. The roof lines will remain the same and the proposed window patterns, exterior elements, and materials are sensitive to these properties' historic period.

Particular attention was given to ensuring the Ordway School would retain the historically significant second floor center double-arched windows, the lintels on the first-floor windows, and the roof line's projected bracketed eaves. In addition, removal of the mismatched North-side addition from the 1980's, the fire escape on the South-side of the building, the concrete ramp on the front of the building, the basement access doghouse on the North-side of the property, and the chimney and rooftop appendages will enhance the building's original character. Both entrances will have new entry porticos reflecting the original Italianate style. Reconstruction efforts also retain most of the original window openings. Some new window openings are proposed, particularly at the basement level which are essential for the two units in the sub-ground level.



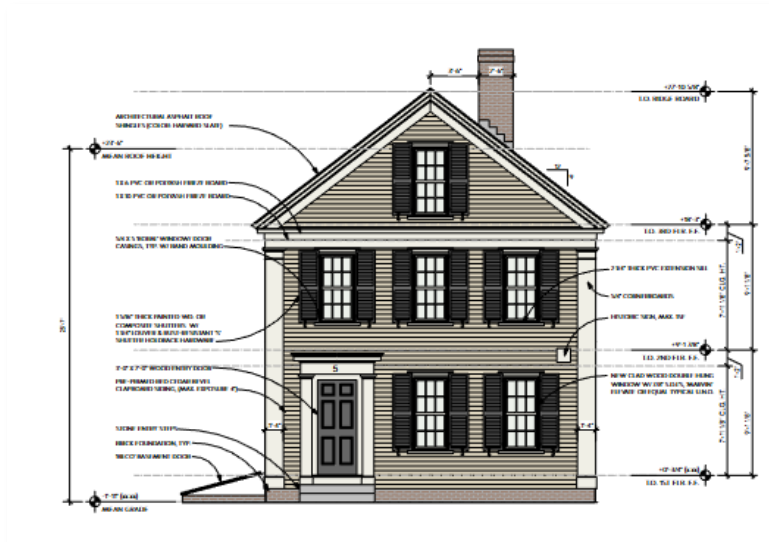
Proposed Ordway School South-West Elevation

Parking for the Ordway School is located in the same location as the existing parking, allowing for eight parking spaces. Landscape enhancements will include a new brick sidewalk for pedestrian access from School Street to the library parking lot. An enclosed outdoor patio for residents' use is also proposed at the North East corner of the property with a cedar privacy fence.



Proposed Site Plan for 5 & 9 School Street

The design of the reconstructed Baley House will retain its Greek Revival style with a nearly identical footprint, although moved five feet to the North to accommodate a new single car garage. The front door and three-window bay façade facing School Street is in-keeping with the original house style. In addition, broad corner pilasters with capitals atop are similar to the original design. Last, a faux chimney clad in brick will replicate the original look.



Proposed Front Elevation (South-West) of Baley House

Last, the 5 and 9 School Street project will provide value and interest to the neighborhood where the Ordway School and Baley House would regain their historic character, curb appeal and use. Therefore, this project will not negatively impact the character of the surrounding area, but instead will restore and enhance that character.