



July 26, 2024

City of Grand Rapids
Department of Planning and Development
1120 Monroe Ave. NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

RE: Beacon Hill at Eastgate
Planned Redevelopment District Amendment Narrative

To Whom it may concern,

A Planned Redevelopment District (PRD) amendment application is being submitted by Beacon Hill at Eastgate (BHE) senior living community for the construction of a new assisted living (AL) building and construction of new independent living (IL) buildings along with associated commons and support spaces on the campus of BHE at 1845 Boston Street SE. The new buildings in the current proposed phase will include 48 AL units and support spaces, as well as 103 IL units resident dining and amenity spaces and underground parking. A bakery & coffee shop amenity for residents at the corner of Plymouth and Boston that would be accessible to the neighbors is also being proposed within one of the IL buildings. The application also proposes to add 1813 Boston Street SE, 1460 Plymouth Avenue SE, and 1550 Plymouth Avenue SE to the PRD. In addition, the application looks to add pickleball courts, a hoop house, a public playground, and a designated public space for gatherings and events on 1919 Boston Street SE.

The project will include demolition of the two houses at 1813 Boston Street SE and 1550 Plymouth Avenue SE as well as the two Plymouth Apartment buildings. All buildings are currently owned by BHE. The existing Skilled Nursing building will remain. A portion of the existing AL building (containing 35 AL units) will be demolished for to allow for construction of the new AL building. The remainder of the existing AL building (also containing 35 AL units) will be demolished once the new AL building is operational and the existing AL residents have been relocated. BHE plans to use the site area of the existing AL building in the future as an additional phase of IL expansion of up to 51 units. The current campus at 1919 Boston Street SE includes 196 IL units; the full master plan envisions 350 IL units (15 units/acre). The site plans, building floor plans and elevations are included for review and reference. Also included is preliminary landscape information for review. Final review of these drawings will take place through the LUDS permitting and Private Development review process following the PRD amendment review by the Planning Commission.

The site setbacks and architecture were studied in depth to minimize the massing impact along Boston Street and Plymouth Avenue. The design of the proposed IL buildings maintains a 2-story façade along those streets with stepped architecture that takes advantage of the internal slope of the site to accommodate additional building levels toward the center of the site. The setbacks were also studied and the buildings provide an undulating footprint to be conscious of existing setbacks. The footprint also offers variety along the frontage presentation. Landscaping will respond to the undulating frontage with areas of landscaping which will provide a "softening"

of the residentially scaled housing units. All edges of the new development will be landscaped to provide a green transition from the surrounding single-family homes to the new IL and AL residential buildings.

The proposed site will have approximately 44% green space, far exceeding the 15% requirement. The tree canopy will be designed to meet the 12% requirement and will likely exceed this value. The current site has 56% green space but the proposed site will increase the usability of green space through strategic grading and placement of green space amenities. Additional landscape screening is planned along the north property line of 1845 Boston Street SE and the northwest corner of 1919 Boston Street SE.

The total onsite parking on 1845 Boston Street SE, 1813 Boston Street SE, 1460 Plymouth Avenue SE, and 1550 Plymouth Avenue SE is 135 spaces including surface spaces and garage spaces. The proposed plan shows approximately 205 parking spaces, with only 66 being above grade. All residents and some staff will be provided underground parking spaces to increase the amount of green space and minimize the negative impact of surface parking.

Stormwater will be addressed using a decentralized system that will rely on infiltration practices as soil conditions allow. Previous work on this site indicates there will be soil conducive to infiltration. The decentralized system will also leverage underdrain pipe and mesh the system with landscape concepts to encourage infiltration. The goal of decentralizing the system is to increase the area water can infiltrate and work with the natural grades of the site. The stormwater storage is to be provided through underground detention. The stormwater management design will provide an environmental benefit and improve the current system.

A reconstruction and extension of public sanitary sewer on 1919 Boston Street SE is planned. The existing water services and laterals will be abandoned and new services and fire protection lines will be provided.

A traffic trip generation analysis was required as part of the PRD amendment application to document the anticipated trip generation of the proposed use. The trips generated from this site are minimal and are outlined in the enclosed analysis provided by Christopher Zull, P.E. of Progressive A&E. The analysis shows a decrease in peak hour traffic with the proposed development, excluding the coffee shop. With the coffee shop, the trip generation increases by 72 and 74 trips in the AM and PM peak hours, respectively. The assumptions used for the coffee shop were conservative and trips are not expected to reach these numbers as the coffee shop would be an amenity primarily for BHE residents and neighborhood and is not intended to be a commercial attraction.

The project proposes to eliminate two driveway curb cuts on Plymouth Avenue and one on Boston Street. In addition, the current curb cut for the existing AL building on Boston Street will be relocated to align with Lotus Avenue SE. In doing this, the number of conflict points is reduced with the goal of increasing safety for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Adjacent land uses and zoning are shown on the site plan. All setback, green space, and other applicable site requirements are met with the proposed layout.

The existing house at 1460 Plymouth Avenue SE is intended to be preserved. During construction, the house may be used by Rockford Construction as an office space and the lot may be used for minor construction staging and/or a location for a contractor job trailer(s). The use of the house during construction will be vetted through the Building Department for appropriate code compliance. Following construction, the house is envisioned to be returned to a residential property. This may be owned and maintained by Beacon Hill or put on the market for sale.

The pickleball courts are planned to be used from dawn to dusk and will not have court lighting that would extend the hours outside of the ability to play during daylight. Sound attenuation blanket and fencing, up to 10' tall, is planned to mitigate sound concerns.

The hoop house will create a garden space for more consistent year-round use by Beacon Hill's food preparation staff as a means to provide fresh produce throughout much of the year. This produce will be used throughout Beacon Hill's restaurants/café's, many of which are also open to the public. The material of the hoop house will be of high-quality and comply with the City of Grand Rapids Zoning Ordinance and a Planning Department review.

The public playground included in the master plan will create a multi-generational space for residents and visitors/grandkids to spend time together as well as a neighborhood amenity. Beacon Hill continues to seek avenues to build community in the Eastgate neighborhood and this amenity is another way to increase opportunity for community engagement with those from the surrounding community.

The public space for gathering and events is a space included in the master plan that is intended to be used by Beacon Hill to host community events. This area could include construction of a small concrete platform at one end of the lawn, which would support music and other performers. Beacon Hill at Eastgate's Charitable Foundation sponsors an annual summer concert series, along with other community events which draw over 1,500 people in total. Most attendees come from the Eastgate Neighborhood. Beacon Hill's residents are often also in attendance, resulting in exceptional multi-generational and multi-cultural community events. In addition to the platform, Beacon Hill seeks to improve the safety and stability of the lawn seating area while also improving safe access points to the spaces. Event and performance hours will continue to be observed in a manner which is considerate of our neighbors and will end by 9pm on every event evening.

A neighborhood engagement meeting through the City's Development with Us program took place on June 25, 2024. Follow-up meetings with adjacent neighbors are planned for the week of July 15th to review questions and concerns and provide updated design aspects that address concerns voiced during the June 25th meeting. Following that meeting, Jeff Huegli of Beacon Hill met with a couple neighbors and a larger discussion with Evergreen neighbors and members of the design team took place on July 18, 2024. As a result of these various neighbor meetings, a number of changes were made and are described below.

- The northerly drive connecting 1845 Boston Street and 1919 Boston Street was reduced in width from 24' to 20' along the north side of the Assisted Living building. This allows for more landscape screening and will help to deter or slow traffic in this area.

- A gate is now proposed just east of the proposed building's service area. This will hinder traffic flow across the site and discourage "cut-through" traffic. Some Beacon Hill staff members and vendors will have the ability to open the gate. Emergency vehicles will also be able to utilize the gate. Residents, guests, and the general public will not be able to operate the gate.
- The dumpster location was moved from the northerly connector drive closer to the building in order to move it further from the neighboring properties.
- A larger step in the architecture of the Assisted Living building was added to pull the third story further from the northern property line.
- Additional landscape screening has been shown along the northern property line. Final screening will be reviewed through the LUDS process.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Jeff Van Laar, P.E.

cc: Jeff Huegli, Beacon Hill at Eastgate
Gene Hooton, Greenbrier Development
Christian Herr, PRDG Architects
Tim Britain, Viridis Design Group