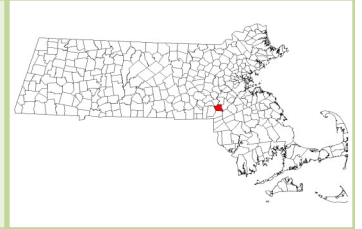


Site Details: 35 acres, 44 townhouse condominiums, 11 affordable units
Zoning: 40B, B-1 Downtown District zoning
Funding: Private developer

Date(s): 2006-2009
Goals: downtown revitalization, expand housing options in the district



Background

Downtown Norfolk markets itself as the traditional New England Town with a quaint town center, lively and pedestrian-oriented street life, and amenities that exemplify dense and compact living. The town has taken on many projects in attempts to manage and promote growth without risking the unique character of the community. One project that is well-known in downtown was the attempt to redevelop the 30 acres of vacant land adjacent to the Town Hall. This site has over time grown into what many call the “moonscape” a vast and large area of cleared land that has been left alone since 1987. This barren area was cleared by previous developers in plans for a commercial development; however plans never followed through and the site was left to deteriorate into an eyesore.

Site Development

In 2001, Norfolk Town Center LLC stepped forward and to submit a subdivision plan and to apply for special permits for mainly commercial and office developments on site. Town officials approved this plan; however the developers adjusted their plans later and instead went forth with a 40B residential development. They felt that there was not a strong market for commercial development and that residential would be more successful. The initial scale and design of the residential proposals, three 12 unit townhouses, were opposed by the town residents. However, developers adjusted the size and the scale of the townhouse development to single units to suit their requests.



Aerial view of the Norfolk Commons site, before and after, 2011.



Norfolk Town Commons residential units upon the hill, 2011.

In accordance with the 40B designation 25%, (11 of the 44) of the single unit townhouses were affordable to those who made below 80% of the area median income. In addition to this residential component, ten acres of the site were sold to Eastern Development who has plans for a Stop and Shop supermarket at the bottom of the hill, as well as office and day care center. However it did not follow through because the businesses that they wanted did not lease and instead a Walgreens was built in its place and one vacant building is still waiting to be leased.

Development Process

In the 1990s, Town planners completely re-zoned



Norfolk Town Commons townhouses, 2011.

of life for residents within the town center for years before the development. Town officials involved the community to a great extent in development process, and the developers worked with community to accommodate their wishes

the downtown to a B-1 district in order to promote smart growth and mixed use development. Under this zoning, residential development was only allowed on the second floor above commercial developments in order to promote dense multi-use.

Developers saw this as a hindrance to their residential development plans and felt that the commercial aspect would not succeed, so they went forth with a 40B application to curb these zoning regulations. They would promote mix use by allowing other types of developments to be built on the site such as the Walgreens, office space, etc. Norfolk town planners and officials had been progressive in attempts to boost the quality

Norfolk Town Commons and MetroFuture Goals

Community Vitality

Since the late 1990s, Norfolk's town center has gone through dramatic changes in promoting smart growth patterns, including a new zoning of in their downtown district. This development helps to support and bolster the downtown district which continues to go through physical changes.

Housing Choices

This development provides housing for people who have below 80% of the area median income and provides much needed housing for the Town of Norfolk that relies heavily on residential real estate taxes.

Contact Information

For more information about the Norfolk Town Commons contact Norfolk Town Planning Consultant, Gino Carlucci at gino4634@gmail.com.

“The Town of Norfolk has been ahead of the curb in promoting smart growth and mixed use development in the downtown district. This development serves as an example of a town working cooperatively with the developers to procure a n attractive product that enhances the town center while providing critically needed housing.” -Gino Carlucci, Town Planning Consultant,



Commercial and office space located at the bottom of the hill, 2011.



Vacant commercial space waiting to be leased, 2011.