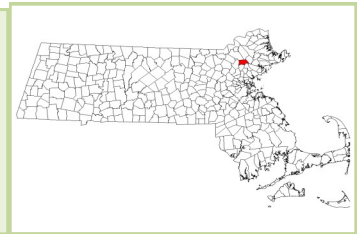


North Reading— Edgewood Apartments



Site Details: 44.6 acres, 406 apartment units, 101 affordable units
Zoning: single family 20,000 to 120,000 sq ft. lots, special permits for multifamily
Funding: Private developer

Date(s): 2007-2009
Goals: State hospital reuse, 40R application, affordable housing



Background

Located in North Reading, Edgewood Luxury Apartments was formerly home to the J.T. Berry Rehabilitation Center, a sanatorium hospital for tuberculosis patients that operated in the 1800s. The state-owned site has since been abandoned, kept under strict surveillance, and closed off from public use. The 44.6 acre site is unique not only because of its previous use but also because it is situated next to preserved wetlands and a recently discovered Native American archaeological site. In the redevelopment of the site, these unique features provided an environmental challenge. For almost 15 years, state and local officials had been working to find the best reuse for the building. Following the 1998 state legislation that encouraged former state hospital sale and reuse, the State created a re-use committee for Berry Center with town and citizen representatives, to seek various options for redevelopment.



Source: My Edgewood Apartments Edgewood and preserved surrounding landscape , 2011.

Site Development

After purchasing the property from the state, Burlington based developer, Gutierrez and Co., played with different concepts for development, including mainly on office and commercial space. However, when Town officials got word of the Massachusetts Chapter 40R Smart Growth Zoning act in 2005, North Reading seized the opportunity to gain financial incentives from the state in order to implement their first 40R development at the hospital site. In opting for a residential development, the Town of North Reading would be able to promote their first 40R residential development, and occur over \$1.3 million in property taxes, and achieve a density bonus through the state. Furthermore the affordable housing units included within this development and as a part of this district designation would help to increase the overall affordable housing stock in North Reading to 11.1%. The end product was a large scale apartment complex with 406 units of single family housing, with about 25% of the units affordable to those who are at or



Source: My Edgewood Apartments
The Edgewood Apartment housing units, 2011.

below 80% of the area median income. In addition there are plans to build an office building with commercial space in the future.

Development Process

Developers worked very closely with Town officials and community members in envisioning this process and it was this public participation that helped Edge-



Before and after aerial view of Edgewood site, 2011.

wood become the fastest development to be approved in the town. Before the application for the 40R district, the state had rezoned the area light industrial park to promote commercial development. However developers worked strategically with the town in their desire for a mix of both residential and commercial development through the Chapter 40R application. Because the town planning board only had a couple of months left to file for this 40R designation through the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, the permitting process needed to be done as quickly and cohesively as possible. Developers were extremely upfront and worked very quickly with town planners in drafting the development, and the whole process took less than 6 months before being sent for approval. The project was non-controversial not only because of the openness of the discussion and development processes, but mainly because the location of the development was at the edge of town, away from residential abutters. Consequently, the town of North Reading became the second in the Commonwealth to apply for Chapter 40R, right after the first, town of Plymouth.

Edgewood and MetroFuture Goals

Sustainable Growth Patterns

Unlike the rest of North Reading, this development boasts compact and dense housing units which distinguishes it from the surrounding sprawling suburban housing. In conjunction with this development, the Edgewood Office Park, to be built and managed by Burlington-based Gutierrez Co., would occupy the remaining land of the former hospital property. In addition to commercial offices, Gutierrez wants to build a 5,000-square-foot restaurant at the site. All of this is part of a large plan for the area, to promote both sustainable growth as well as the economic vitality of the town.

Housing Choices

As a part of the 40R designation, a portion of the housing units need to be affordable to expand housing options and support a diverse range of income levels. In the development, there are 420 apartments, 102 of which are affordable housing units however; none of these units are subsidized. These units are sold to those with incomes below 80% of area median and the affordability term lasts for 30 years.

Contact Information

For more information about Edgewood please contact Town Planner, Heidi Griffin at HGriffin@northreadingma.gov.



Edgewood is surrounded by natural wetlands that have preserved as part of this development, 2011.

“As one of the first applicants for the Chapter 40R Smart Growth District, Town of North Reading is extremely proud of this unique and beautiful development. We were able to work alongside the community and the developers to create compact, and affordable housing units for residents, while preserving precious surrounding wetlands.”

-Heidi, Town Planner, North Reading