

North Square at The Mill District

SITE:

This site has been chosen by The Town of Amherst as an ideal location for a "Village Center", a smartly designed community hub that offers missing services to the surrounding neighborhood.

As a response to the rezoning efforts of the Amherst Planning Department, our proposal embraces many of the concepts recommended by the town through the development of a coherent Village Center with a central "Green" surrounded by restaurants and retail spaces on the ground floor, with residential units above.

The Project's streetscape and the new public realm will enable our residents to come together as a community to shop, eat, and enjoy the public green. New sidewalks with street trees and specialty paving will allow new merchants to spill outdoors in the summer months.

The overall site organization builds around the existing Atkins Market on the site, expanding the pedestrian-oriented streetscape and parking approach by introducing a new village street and public Green to the composition.

Both the new street and parking in front of the existing market will be on curbless streets with bollards and street trees, enabling them to be utilized for farmer's markets and community activities, while also providing traffic-calming measures in the pedestrian-oriented environment.

The new 3 and 4 story residential buildings are located in the heart of the property and are screened from neighborhood streets by existing residential buildings.

BUILDINGS:

The North Square buildings are a diverse collection of three- and four-story buildings utilizing gabled roofs and vernacular New England residential architecture to capture the spirit of the surrounding neighborhood context.

Building A

Building A along Cows Road is a contextual response to the recently constructed "Trolley Barn," with its ground floor café/restaurant and two-level residential above.

Utilizing gable roofs and articulation of the exterior wall to showcase the ground level restaurant, Building A creates an active streetscape along Cows Road. The ground level restaurant is oriented to activate the new "Green" we are introducing to the site.

Utilizing clapboards, shingles, and double-hinged windows, Building A responds to the 2 and 2 ½ story residential properties along Cows Road.

Building B

The program includes ground level retail oriented to the new 12' sidewalk along our new village street. The three levels of residential are housed in a gable roof structure which utilizes clapboard siding, double-hung windows, and an extended first-floor retail expression that creates a comfortable pedestrian scale and serves to define the village square.

The rear yard of the building is available as a private amenity space for the residences above.

Building C

This three story structure completes the "square" with its 5,800 sf of retail oriented to the new sidewalks and public space. Taking advantage of its positioning the building also serves as a buffer between the public activity (RETAIL) and private (RESIDENTIAL) programs of the site. The residential program includes a fitness center overlooking an interior courtyard with a club room, and play space solely dedicated to the residents of North Square. Located between 120 and 200 feet from Montague Road, Building C is screened by a series of traditional houses and new trees and landscaping provided by this project.

All great neighborhoods include a range of spaces from public to semi-public to private. We believe this plan provides those opportunities. The architectural finishes which include clapboard, shingles, solid panels and residential scale windows that relate to the adjacent New England building vernacular.