

From conclusion of 8.6.20 hearing:

Any other questions on Supportive Services Plan from ZBA?

AMHERST STUDIO APARTMENTS

SINGLE PERSON STUDIOS WITH SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Responses to Amherst ZBA Questions for August 25th Continued Hearing

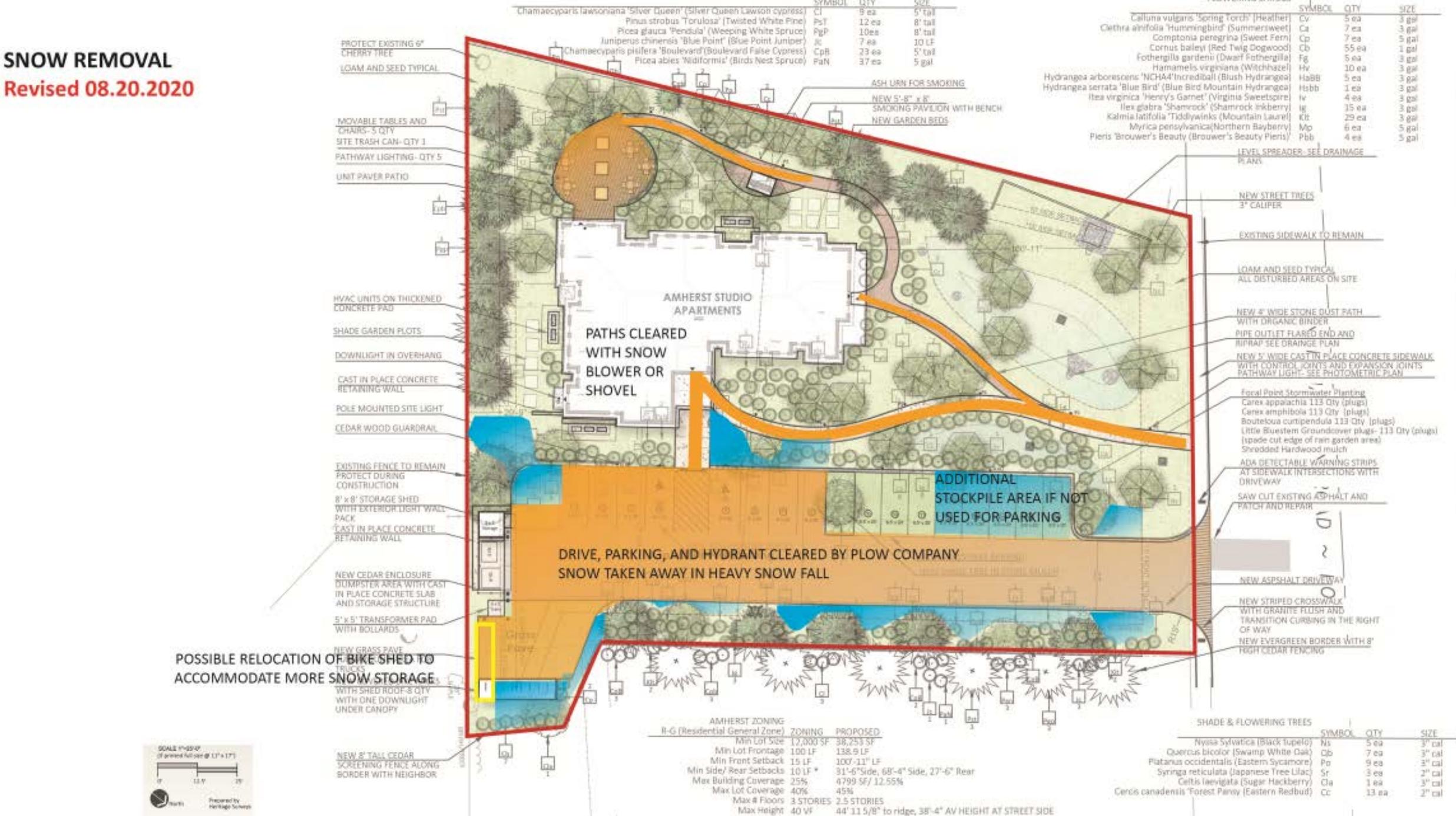


Snow Removal

- Request #1: Show on the site plan where the snow area(s) are provided on the property.

SNOW REMOVAL

Revised 08.20.2020

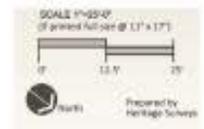


SYMBOL	QTY	SIZE
CI	9 ea	5' tall
PsT	12 ea	8' tall
PgP	10ea	8' tall
Jc	7 ea	10 LF
CpB	23 ea	5' tall
FaN	37 ea	5 gal

SYMBOL	QTY	SIZE
Cv	5 ea	3 gal
Ca	7 ea	3 gal
Cp	7 ea	3 gal
Cb	55 ea	1 gal
Fg	5 ea	3 gal
Hv	10 ea	3 gal
Habb	5 ea	3 gal
Hsbb	1 ea	3 gal
Iv	4 ea	3 gal
Ig	15 ea	3 gal
Kt	29 ea	3 gal
Mp	6 ea	5 gal
Pbb	4 ea	5 gal

AMHERST ZONING	ZONING	PROPOSED
R-G (Residential General Zone)		
Min Lot Size	12,000 SF	38,253 SF
Min Lot Frontage	100 LF	138.9 LF
Min Front Setback	15 LF	100'-11" LF
Min Side/ Rear Setbacks	10 LF *	31'-6" Side, 68'-4" Side, 27'-6" Rear
Max Building Coverage	25%	67.99 SF/ 12.55%
Max Lot Coverage	40%	45%
Max # Floors	3 STORIES	2.5 STORIES
Max Height	40 VF	44' 11 5/8" to ridge, 38'-4" AV HEIGHT AT STREET SIDE

* Setbacks to increase 2' each story for side and rear. Therefore Min Side and Rear for this project will be 15 LF



POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF BIKE SHED TO ACCOMMODATE MORE SNOW STORAGE

DRIVE, PARKING, AND HYDRANT CLEARED BY PLOW COMPANY SNOW TAKEN AWAY IN HEAVY SNOW FALL

ADDITIONAL STOCKPILE AREA IF NOT USED FOR PARKING

PATHS CLEARED WITH SNOW BLOWER OR SHOVEL

AMHERST STUDIO APARTMENTS

SNOW REMOVAL
Revised 08.20.2020

Snow Removal

Request #2: Explain the snow removal plan in context of the on-site parking areas

Response:

- Using any parking areas for snow storage is secondary to the other snow storage areas identified on plan.
- On-site parking areas will *only* be used for snow storage if there is a consistent pattern of under-usage of spaces.
- For example, if there are ***consistently*** 6 open spaces, then a portion of these can serve as back-up snow storage.
- If most parking spaces are full most of the time, then *no* parking areas will be used for snow storage.
- If designated areas are inadequate for a heavy snowfall, excess snow will be removed from the site.

Parking

Request: Provide a comparison of the tenant to parking need ratio for other single room occupancy (SRO) residences, operated by Valley Community Development

Response:

See chart on following slide, which is an excerpt from the Parking Study that was included in Valley's Comprehensive Permit Application.

Location	Number of Units	Property Type	Number of Occupying Adults	Parking Provided	Average Daily Parking Utilized	Utilization Ratio per Occupying Adult
96-98 King Street Northampton	10	Affordable Single Person Studio Apts.	10	0	0	0
82 Bridge Street Northampton	15	Affordable Lodging House	15	8	4	.5
16 N Maple Street Florence	11	Affordable Single Person Studio Apts.	11	0	0	0
1-3 N Main Street Florence	17	Affordable Lodging House	17	0	0	0
Sergeant House Expansion Northampton	31	Affordable Single Person Studio Apts.	31	14	Permitted Not Yet Occupied	N/A
Earle Street Northampton	14	Affordable Single Person Studio Apts.	14	16	8	.57
The Lorraine, 96 Pleasant Street, Northampton	28	Affordable Single Person Studio Apts.	28	0	0	0
Live 155, 155 Pleasant Street, Northampton	70	Mixed income studios and 1-bedroom Apts.	70+	0	0	0
The Lumber Yard	55	Affordable Family Housing (1,2,3 bedroom Apts.)	64	41	37	.58
Chestnut Crossings, 275 Chestnut Street, Springfield	101	Affordable Single Person Studio Apts.	101	100	34	.34
Average Utilization for All Properties						.22
Average Utilization for Properties that Provide Parking						.49

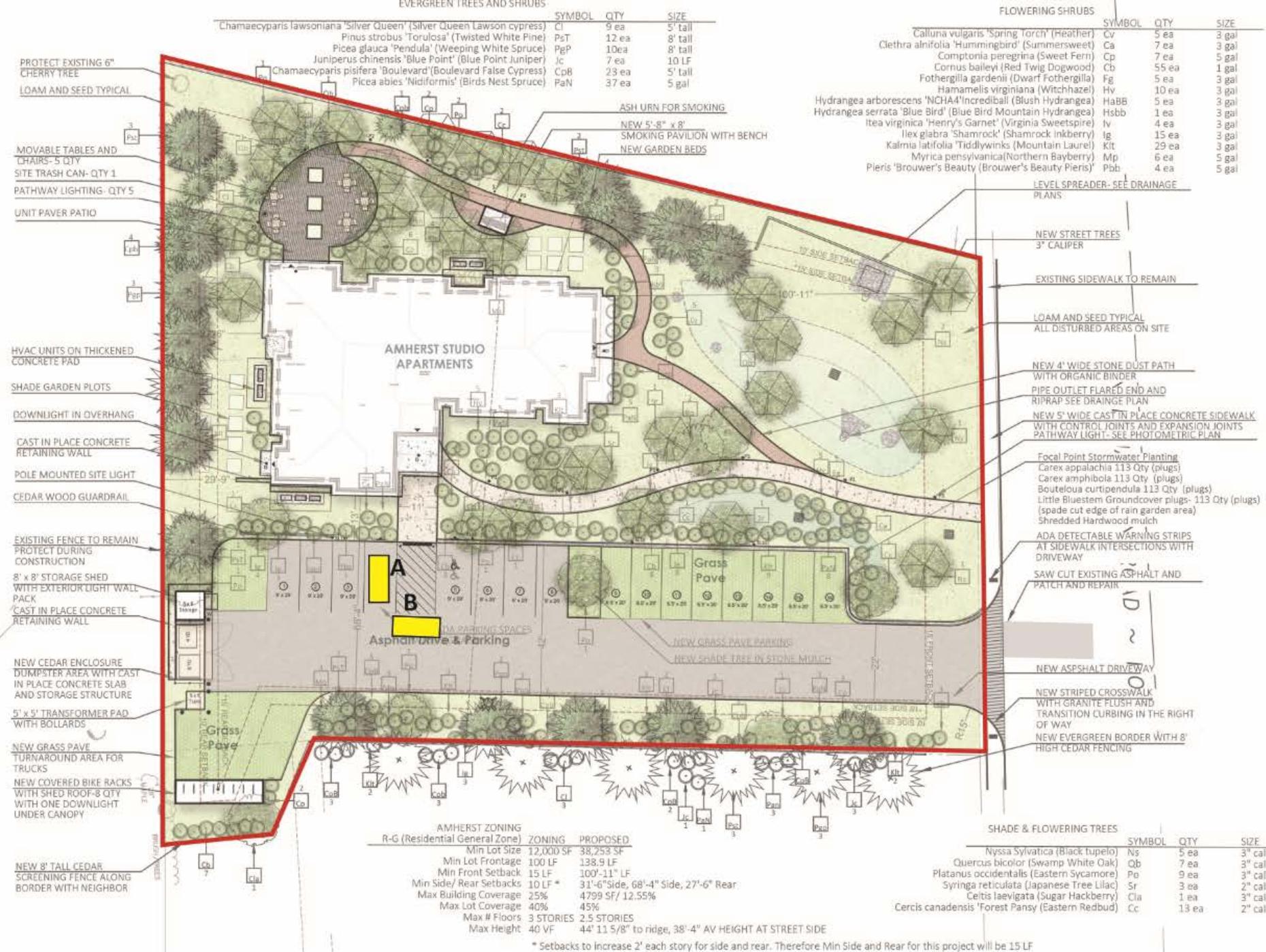
Loading Area

Request: Show on the site plan the loading area for accessible van to use

Response:

Please see two options for van loading areas on the following slide.

ADA VAN DROP OFF

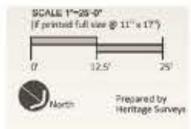


EVERGREEN TREES AND SHRUBS		
SYMBOL	QTY	SIZE
Chamaecyparis lawsoniana 'Silver Queen' (Silver Queen Lawson cypress)	9 ea	5' tall
Pinus strobus 'Torulosa' (Twisted White Pine)	12 ea	8' tall
Picea glauca 'Pendula' (Weeping White Spruce)	10ea	8' tall
Juniperus chinensis 'Blue Point' (Blue Point Juniper)	7 ea	10 LF
Chamaecyparis pisifera 'Boulevard' (Boulevard False Cypress)	23 ea	5' tall
Picea abies 'Nidiformis' (Birds Nest Spruce)	37 ea	5 gal

FLOWERING SHRUBS		
SYMBOL	QTY	SIZE
Calluna vulgaris 'Spring torch' (Heather)	5 ea	3 gal
Clethra alnifolia 'Hummingbird' (Summersweet)	Ca	7 ea
Comptonia peregrina (Sweet Fern)	Cp	7 ea
Cornus baileyi (Red Twig Dogwood)	Cb	55 ea
Fothergilla gardenii (Dwarf Fothergilla)	Fg	5 ea
Hamamelis virginiana (Witchhazel)	Hv	10 ea
Hydrangea arborescens 'NCHA4' (Incrediball) (Blush Hydrangea)	HaBB	5 ea
Hydrangea serrata 'Blue Bird' (Blue Bird Mountain Hydrangea)	Hsbb	1 ea
Itea virginica 'Henry's Garnet' (Virginia Sweetspire)	Iv	4 ea
Ilex glabra 'Shamrock' (Shamrock Inkberry)	Ig	15 ea
Kalmia latifolia 'Tiddlywinks' (Mountain Laurel)	Kit	29 ea
Myrica pensylvanica (Northern Bayberry)	Mp	6 ea
Pieris 'Brouwer's Beauty' (Brouwer's Beauty Pieris)	Pbb	4 ea

AMHERST ZONING		
R-G (Residential General Zone)	ZONING	PROPOSED
Min Lot Size	12,000 SF	38,253 SF
Min Lot Frontage	100 LF	138.9 LF
Min Front Setback	15 LF	100'-11" LF
Min Side/ Rear Setbacks	10 LF *	31'-6" Side, 68'-4" Side, 27'-6" Rear
Max Building Coverage	25%	4799 SF/ 12.55%
Max Lot Coverage	40%	45%
Max # Floors	3 STORIES	2.5 STORIES
Max Height	40 VF	44' 11 5/8" to ridge, 38'-4" AV HEIGHT AT STREET SIDE

SHADE & FLOWERING TREES		
SYMBOL	QTY	SIZE
Nyssa sylvatica (Black tupelo)	Ns	5 ea
Quercus bicolor (Swamp White Oak)	Qb	7 ea
Platanus occidentalis (Eastern Sycamore)	Po	9 ea
Syringa reticulata (Japanese Tree Lilac)	Sr	3 ea
Celtis laevigata (Sugar Hackberry)	Cla	1 ea
Cercis canadensis 'Forest Pansy' (Eastern Redbud)	Cc	13 ea



* Setbacks to increase 2' each story for side and rear. Therefore Min Side and Rear for this project will be 15 LF

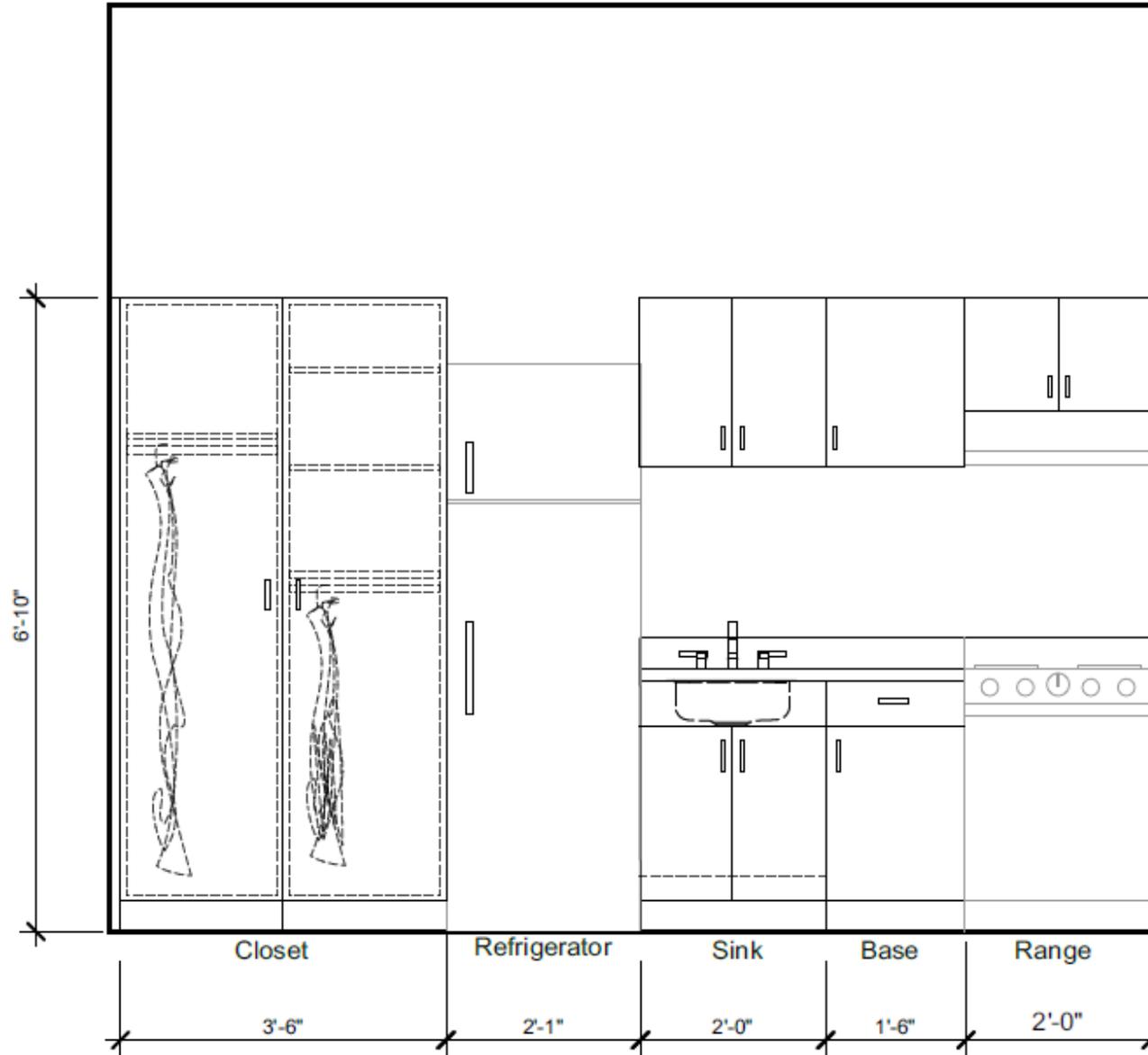
Dwelling Unit Closets

Request: Provide a detailed section elevation of closet(s);

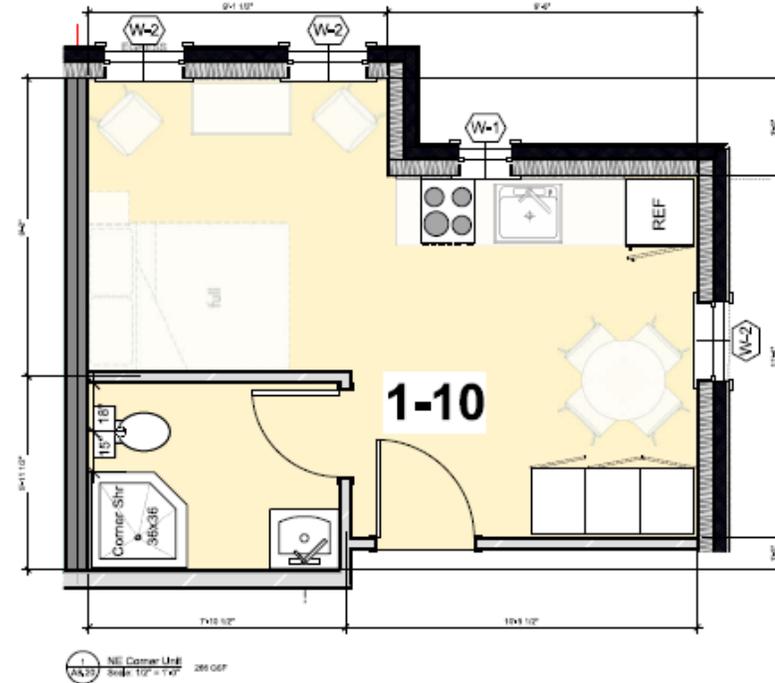
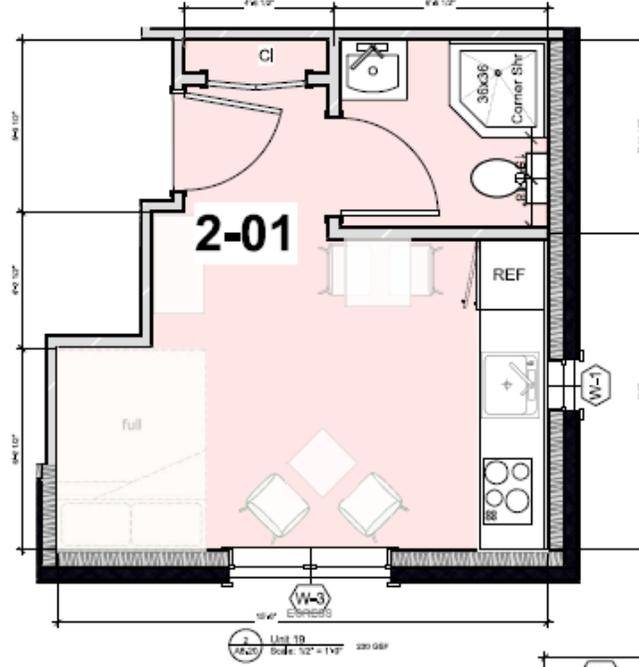
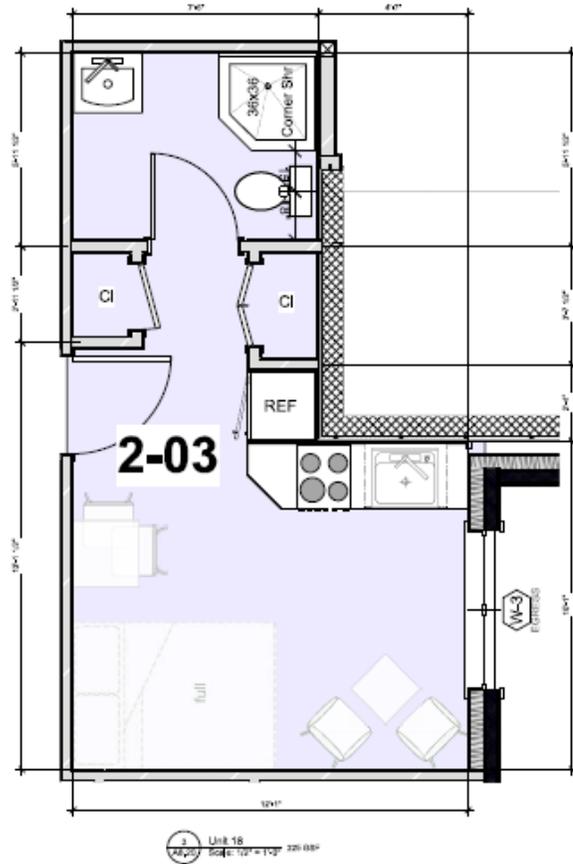
Response:

See typical kitchen elevation with adjacent closet on following slide.

Typical Closet Layout and Size



Other Closet Layouts--all larger than Typical Closet



AUSTIN DESIGN
architecture for enjoying life

2 Mead St
Greenfield MA 01301
413 624 9655
187 Main St
Bridgewater VT 05301
802 451 5566

AMHERST COMMUNITY APARTMENTS
132 Northampton Rd.
Amherst, MA, 01002

Comprehensive Permit Submission

8 May 2020

Valley Community Development
256 Pleasant Street, Suite A
Northampton, MA 01060
413-586-5855

Tighe & Bond
Professional Development Specialists
53 Southampton Road
Westfield, MA, 01085

SA STEVENS & ASSOCIATES, LLC
85 MAIN ST
BRATTLEBORO, VT 05701
802-257-8029

Berkshire Design Group
Berkshire Design Group
4 Allen Place
Northampton, MA 01060
413-582-7100

Not For Construction



LARGE SCALE VIEWS

A8.20

© Austin Design Inc.

Covered smoking bench

Request #1: Provide a stock photo of proposed bench

Request #2: Please provide a few alternative locations for the smoking pavilion

Response:

Valley proposes removal of the smoking area from site, making both the building and the site smoke free

Property Management Plan and Assessment Management Plan

Request: If either of these plans have been updated, please submit

Response:

These plans have not been updated. A request was made to provide summaries of the full plans, which Valley has done.

Tenant Referral and Selection Process

Request: Please provide a written narrative explaining the Tenant Referral and Selection Process

Response:

- **As for all housing funded by local, state or federal funding sources, the selection process for the property must identify qualified applicants using consistent procedures and criteria that are fairly administered.**
- **An Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan and a Tenant Selection Plan must be approved by DHCD prior to funding.**
- **The marketing time period, methods of outreach, lottery process, and tenant selection procedures all must be vetted by DHCD.**

Selection Process

- **Screening Procedures and Selection Criteria must not:**
 - **Discourage or prevent members of any protected class from being evaluated equally as prospective tenants.**
 - **Protected classes:**
 - **Race**
 - **Color**
 - **Religion**
 - **National Origin**
 - **Sex**
 - **Disability**
 - **Familial Status**

Selection Process

- **Use affirmative (proactive) marketing procedures and materials that ensure access to housing by vulnerable, underserved, and at-risk populations.**
- **Screening Criteria:**
 - **Applicants demonstrate that they meet the criteria by these methods:**
 - **Credit and CORI checks**
 - **Landlord references and / or service provider references**
 - **Interviews**
 - **Determination of income eligibility through 3rd party documentation**
 - **For handicapped accessible units, demonstration of need for adapted unit**

Selection Process

Reasons for denial:

- **Criminal record:**
 - **Sex offender or anyone listed on the State Registry for Sex Offenders**
 - **Persons with a history of production or distribution of methamphetamine (this is a federal requirement)**
 - **Criminal record of offenses that involve physical danger or violence to persons or property or that adversely affected the health, safety and welfare of other people.**

Valley does not accept tenants we believe would pose a threat to other tenants or to neighbors. We believe this level of screening and due diligence (in particular CORI checks) is more comprehensive than is undertaken by most private landlords.

Tenant Referrals

Special Populations:

- **Referrals from the Department of Mental Health (DMH) are for persons receiving mental health services (2 units).**
 - Referrals are made by the Western MA Department of Mental Health
 - These referred prospective tenants go through the same screening process described above. If a tenant does not meet screening criteria, Valley can reject the referred tenant and DMH will refer a different client.
 - Clients referred by DMH receive on-going services provided by DMH such as case management and clinical services.

Tenant Referrals

Special Populations:

- **Homeless preference**

- Referrals are made by service providers who can vouch for the prospective tenant and assess that the tenant is an appropriate candidate for independent living with supports.
- If a homeless applicant is not affiliated with a service provider already, Valley will seek to make a match to a provider.
- 6 months of sobriety for those with a history of substance abuse.
- The service provider commits in writing to provide on-going support services for the referred tenant for a period of time (typically at least 9-12 months) to help the person stabilize in their new housing.
- After this stabilization period, the service provider ensures that the tenant has all needed community-based support services in place.
- If a tenant faces future challenges, the original service provider can re-connect to help the tenant address these challenges.
- Homeless tenants must also meet the screening criteria described above.

*The definition of a homelessness relates to a person's **housing status**. A person could be fleeing domestic violence, doubled up in a unit with family or friends, living in a building that is being condemned or has suffered a fire, paying an unaffordable percent of their income for rent, or be otherwise without adequate, permanent housing. **It is not defined by a history of criminal activity or substance use or mental illness.***

Transportation

Request #1: Please provide a written narrative explaining how the Resident Services Coordinator assists tenants with transportation options

Response:

- **As described in Draft Supportive Services Plan**
 - **The RSC can assist residents by:**
 - Post current bus schedules in Common Room
 - Organize shared rides
 - Help tenants procure bus and bike share passes, as applicable

Transportation

- Help eligible tenants access public transport options, such as:
 - PVPA van service
 - Amherst COA van service
- Provide rides, as schedule permits or in emergency
- NEW: Maintain a log for several grocery pull carts owned by the site, which tenants will sign out and check back in following use.



Transportation

Request #2: What are the transportation options

Response:

Excerpt from Draft Supportive Services Plan (Transportation Section):

i. Walkable Location.

**Stores and services in downtown Amherst are within 5/10 – 8/10 of a mile.
Major shopping centers on University Drive are within 6/10 – 8/10 of a mile.**

MA Department of Transportation plans (100% design status) to improve sidewalks and crossings on Northampton Road beginning in 2021

- Widen sidewalks to 5' wide on north and south sides of Northampton Road**
- All sidewalks will meet ADA standards**
- Install 2 new crosswalks equipped with flashing lights at the intersections of Orchard and Hazel Streets.**

These wider, improved sidewalks will improve pedestrian safety and facilitate clearing snow in the winter.

Transportation

ii. Bike Friendly Location.

- **Well-used and well-maintained bike trail located very proximate to 132 Northampton Road. The Norwottuck Rail Trail is 11 miles long and connects Amherst to the neighboring communities of Belchertown, Hadley, Northampton, and Easthampton.**
- **(2) Valley Bike Share stations within walking distance of 132 Northampton Road. Payment can be one-time use or monthly or annual membership.**
- **Bike shop (Hampshire Bicycle Exchange) is located on University Drive--8/10 of a mile from site.**

iii. Public Bus Service

There are half a dozen PVTA bus stops located in proximity to 132 Northampton Road—ranging from 4/10 to 6/10 mile. During normal college openings, buses run daily except on major holidays. Riders can pay by the ride or purchase a monthly bus pass for unlimited 30-day use. Bus passes can be purchased at a discount at Big Y, located 6/10 mile from 132 Northampton Road.

iv. Transportation for Special Populations

Additional transportation options in Amherst for seniors and persons with disabilities:

- a. The Town of Amherst offers van service for seniors (60+ years) and persons of any age with a disability that prevents them from using typical bus services.**
 - \$3 - \$4 per ride for seniors (depending upon distance).**
 - \$3 - \$5 per ride for the accessible van service (depending upon distance). Persons need to provide 1-day notice.**
 - Vans travel within Hampshire and Hampden Counties.**

- b. PVTA Paratransit vans**
 - Door-to-door transportation for people aged 60 and older Monday through Friday, 8:30 am - 4:00 p m. To schedule, call 2-5 days prior to the trip date. Van tickets purchased at the Senior Center**

Transportation

c. **PVTA ADA Paratransit vans**

- ADA Paratransit Service persons with a disability (of all ages) that prevents them from using the fixed route bus. ADA rides can be booked seven days a week and holidays. If you require a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) that person rides for free.**

v. **Other Transportation**

The RSC will be responsible for coordinating other transportation options for tenants. These may include tenants who do not have cars sharing rides with those who do or coordinating community volunteers to provide rides.

Since patrons can only access the Amherst Survival Center Food Pantry once a month, the RSC may coordinate a monthly ride to the Pantry for several tenants. The RSC will help tenants access subsidized fares, as applicable, for bus and Valley Bike Share passes.

The RSC is required to have a vehicle and license and will provide rides for residents as schedule permits. Valley will carry umbrella insurance for this purpose.

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF LIVING ON NORTHAMPTON ROAD

HEALTH BENEFITS OF WALKING

From the article “Why Walking is the most Underrated Exercise” (excerpts from Better Today on-line):

- **Physical Health:**

- Walking improves fitness, cardiac, creates less stress on joints and reduces pain, can prevent weight gain, reduce risk for cancer and chronic disease, improve endurance, circulation, and posture, and the list goes on...”
- When comparing the results of the most recent National Runners’ Health Study with the National Walkers’ Health Study, researchers found that the energy used for moderate-intensity walking and vigorous-intensity running resulted in similar reductions in risk for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and heart disease.

- **Mental Health:**

- Walking has also been shown to improve memory and prevent the deterioration of brain tissue as we age. Psychologists studies indicate that exercise relieves anxiety and depression and suggest that a 10-minute walk may be just as good as a 45-minute workout when it comes to relieving the symptoms of anxiety and boosting mood.

- **The Value of Incline Walking:**

- The higher you set the incline, the more energy your body is forced to use. This increase of energy burns more calories and depending on your weight and cardiovascular endurance can also burn more fat.
- Plus, it can be a better option for those with injuries or pain. “Adding an incline is a great way to increase the challenge for your cardiovascular system and get the same kind of benefits that you can get from jogging or running without the same amount of wear and tear on your knees...”

Changes Coming

A nearby deli has been approved by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources to convert their dining space to provide groceries.

This is located 5/10th of a mile from the site. Residents travelling on foot who shop at this location will travel downhill with groceries rather than uphill.



State Representative Mindy Domb ✓ 20h · 🌐

Congratulations to Amherst's [The Black Sheep](#) on receiving a food insecurity infrastructure grant!

With appreciation to the [Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources](#) and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.



Congratulations to
The Black Sheep

on receiving an award
in the amount of **\$98,000**
in order to transition
their dine-in space
into a grocery-store style market
to provide groceries in an area
without other grocery options
as part of the **COVID-19 Food
Security Infrastructure Grant
Program**

State Representative
MINDY DOMB

🐦 @MindyforMA 📘 @RepMindyDomb
mindy.domb@mahouse.gov

Tenants and surrounding neighborhood and community

Request: Please provide a written narrative explaining how tenants located at other single room occupancy (SRO) residences, operated by Valley Community Development, integrate to the surrounding neighborhood and community. Has there been any problems between a tenant(s) and the neighbors and/or community? If so, how was it dealt with? Do you have any examples to provide?

Tenants and surrounding neighborhood and community

Response:

- Tenants serve on Valley's Community Engagement Committee. This Committee plans events that bring residents and the larger community together, for example ice cream socials and block parties.
- The Draft Supportive Services Plan includes a Community Engagement Plan for Amherst Studio Housing. Here is an excerpt:
 - **Welcome Event**
 - Potluck, bar-b-que, etc for new residents and neighbors
 - **On-Going Ways to Connect**
 - Social Events
 - Jobs Board
 - Shared gardening
 - Tutorials / Classes
 - Mentoring
 - Transportation: Similar to the Council on Aging Ride Programs or Neighbor to Neighbor Ride Shares, tenants needing transportation may be assisted by neighbors.
 - Volunteerism

Tenants and surrounding neighborhood and community

- III. Four neighbors to Valley's single person occupancy properties in Northampton provided letters of support within the PEL. These were written by: Kitty Johndrow, Ellen Goldmith, Ann Cleaveland, and Lilly Gaev.

Quotes from these letters:

“At this time we have not had any issues or complaints from our customers regarding the residents and their actions. Any minor items that have come up regarding the tenants and our business space have been promptly taken care of through communication with the office staff at Valley. At this time, we are very happy sharing this building space with the residents.” -- Kitty Johndrow

“In eight years, not one of my professional tenants, nor any of their clients, have ever received anything less than pleasantness from our studio apartment dwelling neighbors.” --Lilly Gaev

Quotes from Neighbors:

“The one issue that has come up with the building is that a few months ago a very loud, engine like sound started coming out of the building. As soon as I reached out to Valley CDC, I was put in touch with the building manager and slowly we were able to identify the sound (an issue with a new heating system) and they were able to get the contractors out to fix the situation. I felt that having an organization as a neighbor actually made that situation a bit easier because they were very motivated to make their neighbors satisfied. That is not always the case with an individual home owner. I have only had pleasant interactions with any residents of the building but I must say I hardly see them. The curse of our busy lives.” --Ellen Goldsmith

Tenants and surrounding neighborhood and community

- Last year, Valley conducted an analysis of 911 call data for Valley's 4 single room occupancy properties (housing 53 individuals) over a 3-year period. During this time, there were only 2 calls initiated by a neighbor (both noise complaints). There were 0 calls initiated by neighbors that related to harm to a neighbor or to neighboring property.
 - After owning single room occupancy properties for 30 years, Valley has received only a handful of calls from neighbors. The issues being reported (for example, tenants putting trash in the wrong place in a shared dumpster area; care of shared landscaping; or noise) have been promptly addressed by property management.
 - Valley posts its 24/7 emergency call number for property management at all properties. This number will be available also to neighbors in the event they need to contact property management directly.
 - Valley staff (Laura, Jane) are readily available via e-mail or phone. Our contact information is on Valley's web site. We are committed to safe and well-kept conditions at our properties for the mutual benefit of residents and neighbors.

BUILDING HEIGHT COMPARISON

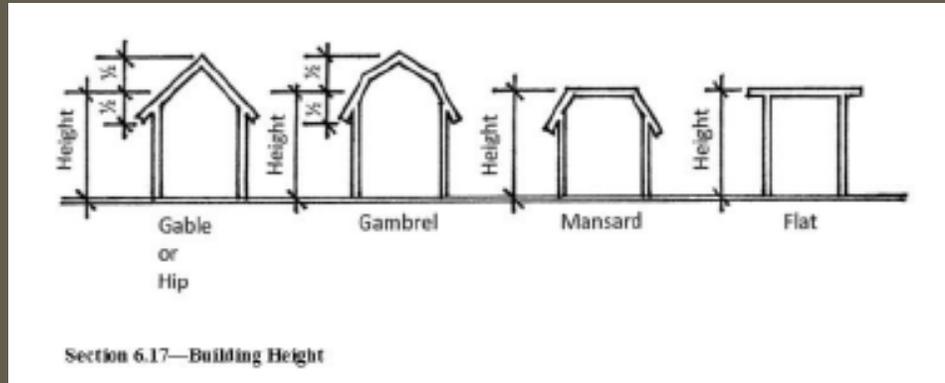
ZONING DEFINITIONS:

**ROOF HEIGHT
NUMBER OF STORIES**

- **Amherst Zoning Bylaw Definitions:**

- 6.17 Minimum and Maximum Height [Building Height]

- 6.170 In all districts, the minimum or maximum height of a building shall be measured as the vertical distance from the average finished grade on the street side of the structure...to the average height (midpoint) between the highest eaves and ridge of the main body of the roof for gable, hip, shed, saltbox, and gambrel roofs, or combinations thereof.



- 6.18 Minimum or Maximum Floors

- A basement half story shall be any lawful habitable space with required means of access and egress and in which a minimum seven (7) foot floor-to-ceiling height exists in at least half of the habitable floor area but no less than one-third of the habitable floor area of the full story above, and where more than half of the habitable space is located above the average finished grade of the exterior of the building.

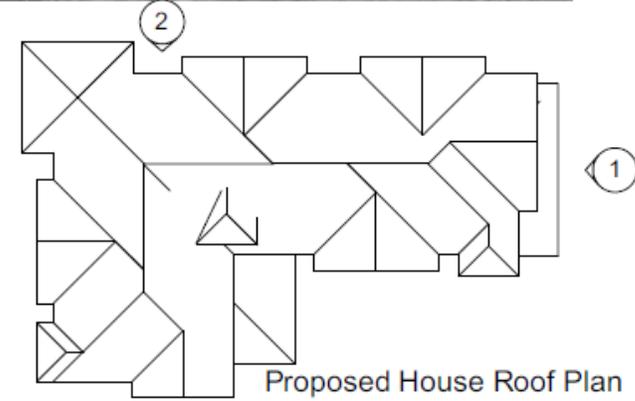


2: Proposed House - Partial West Elevation



1: Proposed House - North (Street) Elevation

Existing House - West Elevation



Proposed House Roof Plan



Existing House - West Elevation