

Hope Mill Redevelopment Project

DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

The Hope Mill Redevelopment Project is a three phase multifamily housing adaptive reuse project located in the Hope Village Historic District of Scituate, RI that will feature affordable units. The project is an adaptive reuse of a historic mill which will be renovated and transformed into affordable multifamily housing as well as market rate housing. This development will preserve and revitalize the historic Hope Mill site, the largest and most significant industrial mill site in the area. This structure was once integral to the economic, social and cultural history of the town.

Phases 1 and 2 will be exclusively (100%) affordable housing. Phase 1 will provide 58 units of which 12 are one bedroom units and 46 are two bedroom units. Phase 2 will provide 60 units of which 20 are one bedroom units and 40 are two bedroom units. Both phases will serve a wide variety of tenants at various income levels from.

Phase 3 is new construction, market rate apartments which will be located in the rear of the property. A total of 75 units will be created, 25-one bedroom units and 50-two bedroom units.

The renovation of this mill into housing addresses issues and concerns within the Town of Scituate as well as provides a number of benefits including cultural, economic, social, and environmental, which are summarized below.

Addressed Issues & Concerns

Hope Mill has not been in use since 2006 and since its last occupancy, the project has suffered damage from flooding, from a fire, and from lack of use. The building inspector has condemned the entire site for safety reasons. The Town of Scituate has lost money due to the blighting of this property. In addition the abandoned property is also a disfigurement to the historic and picturesque landscape of the town. Redevelopment of this blighted and troubled site is a top priority for the town.

By utilizing existing abandoned infill property and stipulating housing as affordable, the proposed project satisfies two important goals identified in the Town of Scituate Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan, and the Town of Scituate Comprehensive Plan. The adaptive reuse of the mill and peripheral properties strongly aligns with the planning goals and objectives outlined in both documents. Regarding the larger community context and engagement of the proposed project, Hope Mill satisfies several of the criteria laid out in the Rhode Island 2016 QAP. In three important ways the proposed Hope Mill multifamily housing project advances the fulfillment of these plans:

- First, the project preserves an important existing historical landmark for Scituate. This is evidenced by the project's location within the Hope Village Historic District; the mill is at the heart of this district both geographically and culturally. The Housing Section of the Town of Scituate Comprehensive Plan expresses the Town's desire for reinvestment in vacant mill properties and highlights affordable housing needs. The Town's stated goal to "identify structures for conversion to affordable housing" and "allow such structures to be converted into multi-family housing with affordable units including mill and commercial industrial structures"

Hope Mill Redevelopment Project

DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

aligns well with the overall development plan for the site, which involves reuse and redevelopment of an historic structure with a central location that will also create 193 mixed-income housing units.

- Second, the adaptive reuse of the mill for multifamily housing meets another clearly stated goal of promoting affordable housing without requiring the necessity of new construction. (Some new construction will occur during Phase 3.)
- Third, 118 units offered in this project will meet the criteria of affordable housing. Both the Town of Scituate Low and Moderate Housing Plan and the Town of Scituate Comprehensive Plan identify the production of affordable housing as a high priority for the town and this project directly satisfies this need.

Cultural Benefits

The Hope Mill, consisting of more than ten stone, brick, and wood-frame buildings, is associated with Hope Village's significant industrial past and its redevelopment will importantly contribute to its future. The complex is an essential feature of the Hope Village Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1995.

After the inaction of the 1750 Iron Act by Britain, American colonists were encouraged to produce iron for export to Britain duty free, while restricting the manufacture of steel finished goods for domestic use. The British policy was successful in its goal of suppressing the manufacture of finished goods for a short period until the Iron Act and others taxes began to bear heavily on the colonial Americans independence. In 1765 the Brown family formed a partnership to build a steel furnace utilizing the nearby mines in Cranston. The Furnace Hope, as it was then called, made steel hollowware, kettles, spittoons, barrel hoops, and nails for the region during these pre-war times in direct opposition of the Iron Act. The furnace became the centerpiece of a small factory town with a blacksmith shop, store house, four dwellings, and a boring mill. In fact, this business was the first venture to introduce an industrial lifestyle into the rural Pawtuxet River region 30 years before the construction of Slater Mill in Pawtucket.

With the first battles erupting in nearby Lexington and Concord, MA in April 1775, Rhode Islanders found the need to forge steel for rifles and cannons. The wealthy Brown family was prepared and began soliciting for experienced cannon makers in January 1776 to come to Furnace Hope as they just secured a contract for 60 cannons for land and 60 cannons for two naval frigates being built in Providence. For the next ten years the Furnace produced "the finest cannon in America" as noted by many privateers and continental navy captains. It was common to find the "HF" crest on cannons aboard many ships between Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Suffolk, Virginia. The largest order for cannons occurred in 1798 in preparation for a war with France and subsequent orders continued to supply the U.S. War Department through 1799.

Hope Mill Redevelopment Project

DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Despite the quality of cannon cast at Hope, the peace with Britain brought no need for cannons and instead shepherded a new era of manufacturing with the advent of the Arkwright system to produce linens. The remnants of the furnace were "cannibalized" to build the first adjacent mills for the Hope Manufacturing Company in 1806.

Modern day accounts of the colonial history of Hope are vividly recounted as gardeners and landscapers regularly uncover the errant cannon balls that were shot to every direction in testing exercises.

In light of the fact that the proposed project will bring new life to a large and centrally-located blighted property in Scituate, the neighborhood impact of the project may be characterized as a net gain to the community. The complex includes the oldest extant mill building erected in 1844, along with a collection of related buildings that include a picker house and weave shed. The complex of buildings will be rehabilitated for residential use through careful work that retains the features that define its architectural character and ensure architectural consistency; in addition to the buildings mentioned, the redevelopment also includes the adjacent raceway, mill pond, and dam. Maintaining the historical integrity of the project's existing architecture has been identified as a priority by Scituate residents and it is a priority of the developer as well.

Economic Benefits

Several economic benefits exist for the Hope Mill redevelopment project as follows:

- The project is situated within one mile of a wide variety of possible employers.
- The project is expected to generate 140 construction jobs per phase (total of 420) and two permanent jobs. Not only will local workforce gain from this development through enhanced employment opportunities, but, the Town will also gain due to income taxes generated by this employment.
- The adaptive reuse of this currently blighted property will restore the property's ability to generate property tax for the township and contribute to the general economic health of the town.
- Scituate is located just 15 miles west of Providence, RI with a median commute time to the city of just 20 minutes. Scituate has been identified as a highly desirable place to live by CNN/Money Magazine and yet there is very little rental housing in Scituate and virtually no affordable housing in the town. The proposed development would provide current residents of Scituate new opportunities to rent and live affordably in town, capturing rental income and consumption that is currently leaking to communities outside of Scituate.
- This project will also compliment other revitalization efforts taking place in Scituate.

Hope Mill Redevelopment Project

DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

Social Benefits

The Town of Scituate will benefit from the proposed new residences because the town currently has very few apartment units and virtually no affordable housing. According to the Novogradac 2016 Market Study conducted in Scituate, there are no direct comparable properties to the proposed site in the immediate vicinity. There is a high level of need for affordable housing in the market. The market study confirmed that given the presence of waiting lists, and low incidence of concessions, as well as information obtained from interviews with market participants, ample demand exists in the market for the Subject as proposed.

In addition, the development was planned in conjunction with the key principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and will implement a written smoke-free policy. It has also been designed to integrate both pedestrian and bike infrastructure. Walkable streets and paths are interwoven throughout the project and the project also has safe, covered, secure bike storage.

The community facilities and amenities on site include a computer lab, courtyard, central laundry, off-street parking, picnic area and recreation area; the amenities proximate to the development that are available to future residents for quiet enjoyment include walking/biking/hiking paths, river and pond access for swimming, boating, and fishing, and wooded land for hiking and wintertime activities (cross-country skiing, snowshoeing). There are Google mapped bike roads that surround either side of the project and there is the possibility that it will become a destination or rest point.

One of the greatest features of the Hope Mill redevelopment project is the opportunity for healthy living it will provide for its future residents. The Hope Mill 32-acre site is surrounded by a greater community land trust that is comprised of outdoor green space and community space, i.e., hundreds of acres of forest/wooded land. The purpose of the Land Trust is to preserve suitable open spaces biking/hiking and public recreational use as well as possible agricultural use (Scituate Land Trust Mission, 1990). Hope Mill is proximate to this preserved land. In addition, the project is situated along the Pawtuxet River and is not far from the Hope Mill Pond and Falls. Future residents of this proposed development will benefit from easy access to ample green space and nature trails suitable for jogging, hiking, and picnicking and access to river and pond that afford boating, swimming, and fishing recreational opportunities.

Environmental Benefits

Paramount Apartments, LLC (the current proposed developer) is proposing a redevelopment plan developed under the guidance of licensed and certified environmental professionals that will meet or exceed the requirements set forth by the various agencies of the State of Rhode Island.

The project plans to rehabilitate an old cannon factory into an attractive and sustainable residential development. The site houses a defunct hydro-electric facility that once powered the mill's last remaining commercial tenants who occupied the property in the early 1980's. The project will use the latest design and technology to rejuvenate the 18th century mill and all of its hydro-electric capabilities.

Hope Mill Redevelopment Project

DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

In addition to the benefits described above, the following environmental benefits are also present with this project:

- Soil and fill on the subject property is known to be intermittently impacted with metals and polyaromatic hydrocarbon compounds above RIDEM's Residential Direct Exposure Criteria. The preferred remedial alternatives that are intended to be protective of future occupants and visitors generally include: capping certain areas with clean fill; re-use of impacted soil beneath certain impervious areas; placement of fencing along wetland and river front areas; and use/placement of an Environmental Land Use Restriction. Following these remediation strategies, residents may enjoy access environments free of historical contaminants.
- Groundwater quality testing has shown compliance with applicable RIDEM's GA Leachability Criteria, with the exception of benzene at one location. While the proposed project does not involve the use of on-site groundwater for potable use, the project is located in a groundwater classification area that is available for development of drinking water. The project will develop remedial strategies to address this contaminant.
- Protection of groundwater is also achieved through the development of best management practices for stormwater on the site. Innovative strategies for the collection and conveyance of stormwater in to the subsurface, thereby returning it as groundwater, will enhance the site's ability to treat common contaminants found in parking areas, while slowing the speed at which a rain event will raise the nearby floodplain.
- Various interior and exterior building materials are known to be impacted with asbestos, lead-based paint, and PCBs and other potentially hazardous compounds. The developer is fully aware of the presence of these materials and is committed to the proper removal/abatement activities of these materials in accordance with applicable state and federal guidelines and regulations.
- Numerous orphaned drums and miscellaneous containers, known to contain chemicals and petroleum-based compounds, exist on the subject property. The developer is fully aware of the presence of these containers/wastes and is committed to their proper characterization and removal in accordance with applicable state and federal guidelines and regulations.
- Wetland restoration activities will be performed along the riverfront at certain areas of the subject property in order to address past impacts created by former owners. This will also include the removal and monitoring of invasive species. Wetland restoration and creation will help maintain the benefits of wetlands and their surrounding ecosystems, better water quality and improve esthetics and recreational opportunities.
- Landscaping will be incorporated into parking areas and around buildings.

As previously mentioned, there are a number of trails surrounding the project site. The developer is proposing the possibility to create a pedestrian connection from the reservoir to the Washington Secondary Bike path. This would utilize the existing Arkwright Harris River Walk. At the east end of the

Hope Mill Redevelopment Project

DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

project there are existing rail road abutments. The developer hopes to make a connection across the river to connect to the Hope Associates land on one side, which could provide the pedestrian connection the Arkwright Harris trail, and the Village Green on the other. On the south side of the property, leading from the bridge, the project will incorporate a proposed soft surface walking trail along the river. This trail would include areas for rest with picnic tables or seating and signage that might highlight an important ecological or historical feature of the river. This trail would extend all the way around the site and connect to building #9, the proposed Hope Historical Museum. This would be an excellent destination and rest areas for regional cyclists. The trail would then connect from the museum up to Main Street with a welcoming entrance that encourages people to enter the site. It is important that the site feel open to the public and not just a residential community. The trail would cross Main Street and enter the area of the old Hope Furnace. The developer proposes that this area be improved and developed into Foundry Park to provide further recreational space but also highlight the history of the Hope Furnace. The significance of this site when paired with the new park and museum could become a landmark destination to explore Rhode Island's revolutionary past.

Located inside the Hope Mills building, but open to the public, would be a Renewable Energy Education Center. This center would have demonstrations on the types of renewable energy systems planned for the mill. It would also explore the idea of hydro power, both old and new, as it would be located in the hydro room of the mill.

This project would be the first step in creating a link between the Hope Mill and the surrounding community as well as celebrating its unique history and ecology.