Amethyst Brook Apartments

Notice of Intent



20-22 Amherst Road Pelham, Massachusetts December 15, 2020

Prepared by:



Prepared for:

Home City Development, Inc. 261 Oak Grove Avenue Springfield, MA 01109

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Project Description
Summary of Existing Conditions
Summary of Resource Area Impacts
Figures:

USGS Locus

Aerial

Existing Watershed

Existing Drainage Areas

Proposed Drainage Areas

FEMA Flood Maps Abutters Site Photos

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project proposes the redevelopment of two existing properties located at 18-22 Amherst Road in Pelham, MA. Currently, single-family residential homes occupy #18 and #20 Amherst Road. A 1,400 SF, 1-1/2 story ranch with an attached garage is located at #18 while a more substantial home sits next door at #20. This 2-1/2 story home consists of a 3,100 SF house footprint with an attached 1,570 SF barn. The property also includes a 148 SF shed and a 227 SF detached single car garage. Remains of a large wood shed adjacent to the barn is also visible. The house at #18 Amherst Road will remain and be sold as a separate single-family home. The structures at #20 are proposed to be demolished due to their deteriorating state. A new building on the eastern portion of the parcel is proposed which contain a total of 6 new affordable units.

This project also includes the redevelopment of 22 Amherst Road which is the site of the former Montague Fly Rod Factory which dates back to 1872. This site located along the southern banks of Amethyst Brook includes a large three-story wood structure and attached 1 & 2 story additions with a total building footprint of just over 3,100 SF. A detached 2,400 SF steel garage also exists on the site. All existing structures on this property are proposed to be demolished and replaced with a new 3-story apartment building containing 28 units. A new access drive and parking lot will replace the existing. New utility services and a storm water management system are also proposed.

Summary of Existing Conditions

The current site(s) located at 18-20 and 22 Amherst Road in Pelham, MA, are situated along a steep hillside between Amherst Road to the south and Amethyst Brook to the north. The larger 6.25-acre parcel associated with 22 Amherst Road is the home of the former Montague Fly Road Factory which was started in 1872 along the southern banks of Amethyst Brook. The start of the company originated roughly 200' further downstream from the current location where remains of the original gristmill can still be found. The factory was officially closed in 1931 leaving behind a host of buildings and additions that have since been owned and operated by several different entities. Most recently, the site has been the occupied by book publisher HRD Press. The existing 1,2 and 3-story wood framed structure occupies a roughly 3,100 SF building footprint and includes several decks, walkways and porches around the perimeter. The building is partially built into an existing ledge outcrop at the edge of Amethyst Brook and which formally had provided the foundation for a stone dam, which had been part of the waterway since 1820. The dam was decommissioned by the state in 2007 and finally demolished in 2012. Remains of the dam can still be seen from an overlook where an interpretive sign currently stands just to the east of the building. Between the north face of the building and the brook, the remains of a water wheel and stone sluiceway can still be found. To the south of the building, an existing paved parking lot, with room for approximately 12-16 cars, sits at the base of a rocky hillside which supports a singlefamily home separating the site from Amherst Road. More recently, a 2,400 SF wood and steel garage building was built at the western edge of the parking lot. Access to the parking lot and 22 Amherst Road property is from a narrow-paved driveway which drops from Amherst Road. The building and parking lot is largely surrounded by open lawn with a scattering of large mature trees down to the edge of the brook. Mature forest dominates the hillside on the opposite side of Amethyst Brook.

The 18-20 Amherst Road property consists of 4.03 acres along Amherst Road and containing two wood framed residences, two garages and a barn. The two homes are located close to Amherst Road due to the hillside which drops off towards Amethyst Brook on the north side. The large barn structure, located on the east side of the parcel,

is partially built into the hillside and is directly adjacent to the 22 Amherst Road driveway. A low stone wall and a line of scrubby understory vegetation and sparse mature hemlocks separate the buildings from the Amherst Road.

Amethyst Brook represents the most significant protected resource area on the site. The brook runs east to west along the northern edge of the developed portion of the site. Within the site boundaries, remains of the old stone dam and associated impoundment can be found upstream. Downstream, evidence of the original gristmill and raceway is still visible. An additional wetland resource area was also identified on the site which is attributed to the storm water outlet and drainage swale located in the slope just south of the more modern garage building and west of the driveway. This outlet carries storm water from Amherst Road and discharges it to a swale which eventually leads to Amethyst Brook near the old gristmill foundation remains. Under the Rivers Protection Act, Amethyst Brook has a 200' protected Riverfront Area extending from the Mean Annual High-Water line which limits or restricts any new or redevelopment projects. The Bordering Vegetated Wetland area that follows the drainage swale also includes a 100' buffer zone which requires notifying the Pelham Conservation Commission of any work proposed within its boundaries.

Summary of Resource Area Impacts

310 CMR 10.54 Bank

There is approximately 630 linear feet of bank on the site which defines the southern limits of Amethyst Brook. Several stone walls, sluiceways and elements associated with the former rod factory and mill remain and are proposed to remain along the bank. This project is not proposing any disturbance to Bank.

310 CMR 10.55 Bordering Vegetated Wetlands

A small area of bordering vegetated wetland was identified just to the west of the detached steel garage associated with the 22 Amherst Road property. The area identified as BVW is associated with the storm water outlet pipe which carries storm water from a portion of Amherst Road. The pipe discharges to a swale starting midway down the slope just south of the garage. The swale, defined as BVW, continues down gradient to the stone foundation remains of the original mill adjacent to Amethyst Brook. The BVW continues to define the channel downstream of the stone foundation and historic mill remains to where it joins Amethyst Brook.

There is some minor repair/restoration work proposed within BVW beginning at the storm outlet location in the slope. Given the improvements proposed on other portions of the site, this project proposes to remove and replace the existing 15" corrugated metal pipe which conveys runoff from a portion of Amherst Road. The pipe is proposed to be removed and replaced with new HDPE pipe in its current location and the stone pad at the pipe outlet will be improved and reinforced. This work will necessitate a minor amount of disturbance (approximately 25 SF) within BVW. The proposed work and associated disturbance meet the general performance standards of 310 CMR 10.55(4)(b) in the following manner:

310 CMR 10.55/4/(b)/1/ – The surface of the replacement area equals that of the area to be lost. Approximately 25 SF of BVW will be 'lost' during the replacement of the existing pipe and stone outlet pad. Because the proposed condition will replace and

restore the current outlet location, elevation, and flow path, the 'lost' and 'replaced' areas will be equal.

- 310 CMR 10.55[4][b][2] The ground water and surface elevation of the replacement area will be unchanged. The area of BVW disturbance is associated with and limited to the replacement and improvement of the existing 15" storm water outlet pipe. The location and elevation of the replacement pipe will match the existing condition with respect to ground water and surface elevation.
- **310 CMR 10.55/4/|b)/3) –** The overall horizontal configuration and location of the replacement area with respect to the bank will be similar. The area of BVW disturbance is associated with and limited to the replacement and improvement of the storm water outlet pipe. The overall horizontal configuration of the outlet swale will be similar to the existing condition.
- 310 CMR 10.55/4/(b)/4) An unrestricted hydraulic connection to the same water body (Amethyst Brook) will be retained. The swale and BVW which conveys storm water from the outlet pipe to the brook will remain.
- 310 CMR 10.55/4/|b|/5/ The replacement area will be located within the same general area of the water body or reach of the waterway. The outlet pipe location and BVW replacement area will roughly match the existing condition.
- 310 CMR 10.55(4)(b)(6) The surface area of the BVW replacement area will be revegetated with a minimum of 75% native wetland plant species as identified on the plans.
- 310 CMR 10.55/4/|b|/7) The replacement area will be provided in a manner which is consistent with all other General Performance Standards. Minimal disturbance to existing BVW will occur during the replacement of the existing drainage outlet pipe. The proposed design locates the replacement pipe further from the wetland boundary allowing the installation of storm water improvements and an armored outlet pad at the discharge point. Any wetland area disturbed as a result of this work will be restored in its current location and revegetated with native wetland plants as required.

310 CMR 10.56 Land under Water Bodies and Waterways

There is no proposed disturbance to Land under Water.

310 CMR 10.57 Land Subject to Flooding

There is no Land Subject to Flooding located on this site.

310 CMR 10.58 Riverfront Area

The majority of the developed portion of this site is located within Riverfront Area associated with Amethyst Brook. This includes most of the 22 Amherst Road property as well as a significant portion of the 20 Amherst Road property. The General Performance Standard under 310 CMR 10.58(4) requires that there be evidence that demonstrates there is no practicable and substantially equivalent economic alternative to the proposed project. In conformance with the regulations, we offer the following evidence:

- (a) The proposed project has been designed to meet the performance standards for all other resource areas within Riverfront Area, including Bordering Vegetated Wetland, which is the only other resource area present.
- (b) The proposed project will not harm or have an adverse effect on specified habitat sites of rare wetland or upland, vertebrate or invertebrate species as identified under 310 CMR 10.59 or 10.37. This site does not include any Priority Habitat.

(c) The current project has no practicable and substantially equivalent economic alterative. The current site consists of a steep narrow drive which provides access to the parking lot, garage, and existing 3-story building which sits along the bank of Amethyst Brook. The current building site and parking lot is located at the base of a steep rocky hillside and adjacent to several ledge outcrops to the east which provided the foundation of the prior dam and mill operations along Amethyst Brook. Steep slopes and ledge outcrops encroach on the eastern end of the current building with portions of exposed rock visible inside the lower basement floor. Without blasting or drilling efforts, there is currently no available or developable land to the east or south of the current building site due to these topographic and geological constraints. The northern boundary of the site is limited by Amethyst Brook. The current development consists of improvements up to and beyond the mean annual high-water line including various sluiceways, foundations, and a wood deck which extend over the edge of the brook. The steel garage and parking area, located just to the west of the main building, occupies a flattened terrace west of the driveway and also at the base of the steep hillside. A flattened area of lawn separates the garage from Amethyst Brook and the site of the original stone mill foundation. Opportunities to develop areas to the south and east of the current footprint are limited by the steep rocky slopes, ledge, and abutting homes. Extensive earthwork and blasting efforts adjacent to Amethyst Brook would be required. To the south of the garage structure, the steep hillside and bordering vegetated wetlands present similar constraints. Expanding much beyond the current footprints would require a substantial amount of regrading and land disturbance. Developable land area is present to the north of the garage however this area is closer to Amethyst Brook on currently undegraded land. This project proposes to redevelop only those portions of the site which are presently occupied by building, parking area, or other impervious surface and seeks to minimize the extent of any new disturbance. The current commercial use of the property will change to residential housing to further the efforts of the Town of Pelham to create affordable housing opportunities in town. To date, Pelham has not been able to identify or acquire any other land in town which would support a similar housing project.

310 CMR 10.58(4)(c)

(1) No Practicable Alternative

- a. This project proposes the redevelopment of an existing and historically disturbed site. Project costs are minimized by utilizing existing building and structure areas, paved surfaces, and infrastructure. This project is made feasible through the cooperative relationships between the current landowner, conservation groups, town officials, and others. An opportunity that has not been achieved on any other property available in Pelham. Due to limitations on public utility services available in Pelham, development costs associated with a project such as this on raw land far exceed the cost of redeveloping an existing site with services available.
- b. The design and redevelopment of this site is employing the best management and development practices available and which fall within the means of this project. Opportunities which limit the extent of riverfront area disturbance have been explored and utilized in certain aspects of the storm water management system, structural wall and foundation design, and building architecture.
- c. The existing use of the site for commercial business purposes is proposed to be changed to an affordable residential housing project.

20 Amherst Road

The 5200 square foot rambling farmhouse was originally constructed in 1829 and is currently configured as two separate dwelling units. A barn, garage and shed are also present on the property. Plans call for demolition of the existing house, barn, garage and shed. A new 6 units building on the eastern portion of the site will replace the existing structure(s). A new parking lot will be located to the west of the new building.

Rehabilitation of the existing structure for multi-family residential use is not an economically feasible option. Considering the large size of the building, age and condition of the structure, the cost to renovate to current building to conform to existing codes for either single-family or two-family use would be prohibitively expensive. Other than renovation for multi-family use, new construction is the only alternative development scenario for the property.

22 Amherst Road

The existing commercial building, along with a garage and shed are proposed to be demolished and replaced by a new, 28-apartment residential building. The alternative scenario of renovation of the building for residential use would yield 5-6 apartments and would require sanity sewer connections to Amherst Road as well as significant site drainage improvements. Rental income would be insufficient to service debt and/or provide an adequate rate of return on the investment needed to fund required improvements. Similarly, even without significant building and site improvements, rental income from a commercial tenant(s) would be insufficient to repay the acquisition loan, operating expenses, taxes, insurance, etc., and provide an adequate rate of return.

d. This site represents the only viable site for a housing project such as this which has not been met by opposition, zoning limitations or lack of availability. The town of Pelham, through the Pelham Housing Authority, has been searching for a viable site for an affordable housing project and to date, this is the only property that has become feasible. With regards to the physical characteristics of this site, the profound physical constraints that surround the property include steep rocky slopes, ledge, and riverfront area severely restrict the available design options for the project. The project has been designed to maximize the use of the currently developed site and with consideration of the provisions allowed under Chapter 40B, includes a reduction in parking and other site requirements otherwise necessitated by the underlaying zoning district, as a way to minimize site disturbance.

(2) Scope of Alternatives

- a. This project does not propose a single-family home.
- b. The area considered for this project has included the entirety of this and adjacent property owned by the same owner, all of which were created and recorded prior to August 1, 1996.
- c. Adjacent property was pursued, purchased, and considered as part of the alternative to help alleviate impacts and potential development closer to resource areas. No other developable land is available which is adjacent to this lot(s).

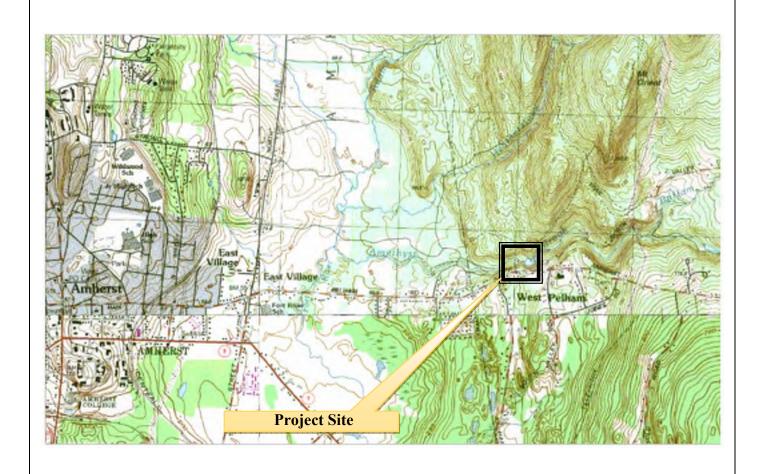
d. This project proposes an affordable housing development which would serve the community of Pelham. An alternative location regional to this site is not an option.

(3) Evaluation of Alternatives

As described elsewhere, there are no other properties have been identified within the town of Pelham which would support the proposed project or offer an alternative site. Similarly, the topographic and physical constraints of this specific site, and adjacent available sites, relative to the riverfront area is very limiting. The current site plan has located as much of the development outside or towards the resources area boundaries as feasibly possible without necessitating an extensive regrading of the adjacent hillside. Multiple alternatives for development, beyond the proposed area, were not pursued due to the small buildable envelope available on this site. No alternate building location or parking arrangement could be developed which did not result in greater or substantially equivalent adverse impacts.

- (d) This project will result in no significant adverse impacts on the riverfront area. The project satisfies the following requirements.
 - 1. There is a total of 415,621 square foot of riverfront area existing on the current lot(s). The project is proposing 39,195 SF of alteration which is less than the 10% (41,562 SF) allowed.
 - a. This project proposes the redevelopment of an existing site which consists of developed and degraded areas within 100' of the mean annual highwater line. Natural vegetation beyond the limits of existing alteration will be preserved and portions of existing degraded areas within 100' of the mean high-water line are proposed to be vegetated wherever feasible.
 - b. Storm water has been managed in accordance with the MA DEP Storm Water Policy.
 - c. The proposed work will not impair the wildlife habitat functions of the riverfront area. Portions of currently degraded areas will be vegetated with natural plant species to encourage and increase the habitat diversity and activity. No other changes to the existing habitat functions are anticipated.
 - d. The proposed work will not impair groundwater or surface water quality. Project plans include provisions for sediment and erosion control in accordance with state and local requirements. The project will also trigger the need for an EPA NOI and the submission of a full Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.
 - 2. Within the 25-foot riverfront area, alteration is being minimized and includes areas of restoration and/or mitigation. All other standards (a-d) are being met.
 - 3. This project does not include a single-family home.
 - 4. The project has been designed in accordance with the regulations.
 - 5. This project is proposing redevelopment within previously developed riverfront area under 310 CMR 10.58(5). The project conforms to the criteria in the following:
 - (a) The proposed project will result in an improvement over the existing conditions. The current site includes portions of development and degraded areas up to the mean annual high-water line associated with Amethyst Brook. Developed and/or degraded portions of the site include several stone walls, gravel surfacing, old mill remains, (2) two storm water

- discharge pipes, and approximately 9,800 SF of paved area with no storm water controls. The proposed project proposes to revegetate roughly 1,600 SF of currently degraded area closest to the brook with native plant species, provide storm water management controls and systems which comply with the MA Storm Water Regulations, and moves any new developed area away from the resource area boundary.
- (b) New storm water management systems and controls are proposed which comply with the Massachusetts Storm Water Regulations established by the Department. A full Storm Water Management Plan is included with this NOI and which documents compliance.
- (c) The current site includes developed and/or degraded portions of the site up to the mean annual high-water line. No work associated with this project is proposed closer to the river's edge than existing conditions. Some restoration of existing degraded area immediately adjacent to the river is proposed in accordance with 310 CMR 10.58(5)(f).
- (d) All proposed work, including expansion of existing structures, is located outside the riverfront area or toward the riverfront area boundary and away from the river, except for areas of proposed mitigation in accordance with 310 CMR 10.58(5)(f).
- (e) The area of proposed work slightly exceeds the amount of degraded area (39,195 sf proposed vs. 31,369 sf degraded) however the proposed work area is less than 10% of the total Riverfront Ara on the property which totals 41,562 sf.
- (f) While not specifically required by the regulations, this project is seeking to restore approximately 3,579 SF of area within 100' of the mean annual high-water line plus an additional 358 sf between the 100' and 200' boundary. These areas will be raked and loamed as necessary to restore the locations and planted with native herbaceous plants and seed mix as identified on the project plans. The total area of proposed restoration is equal to 3,937 SF.
- (g) The project is also proposing mitigation in the form of a permanent conservation restriction under M.G.L. c. 184, §§ 31 through 33 and in the form of improvements to existing storm water outlet discharges which presently discharge uncontrolled and untreated storm water directly to bordering vegetated wetlands and riverfront area. The conservation restriction will encompass roughly 153,933 SF on the north side of Amethyst Brook. The area of mitigation will greatly exceed the 2:1 ratio required. Improvements to BVW at the storm water outlet location(s) will remain consistent with regards to location and extent however new storm water management elements including treatment chambers, settling basins, and rain gardens will improve storm water quality and flow rates entering the resource areas.
- (h) This project anticipates an Order of Condition which will prohibit additional disturbance of proposed restoration or mitigation areas, except for those activities required to maintain those areas and as allowed by the Department.
- 6. This project is not claiming any portions to be grandfathered.



Mass GIS Scale: Not to scale



Figure 1

USGS Locus



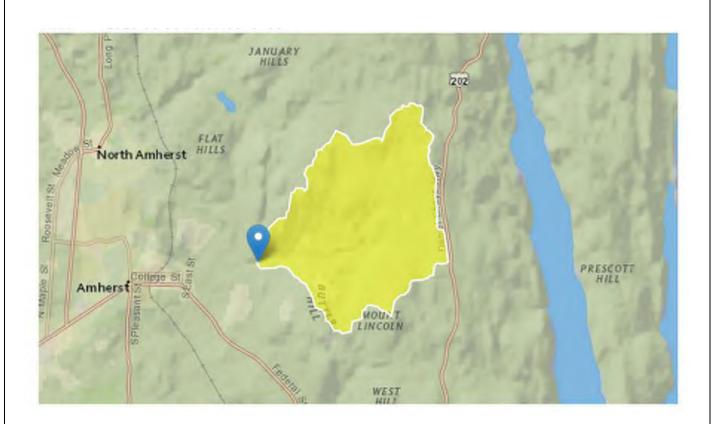


Mass GIS – "Oliver" online data viewer Scale: Not to scale



Figure 2 Aerial t Brook Apartments





Scale: Not to scale



Figure 3 **Existing Watershed**



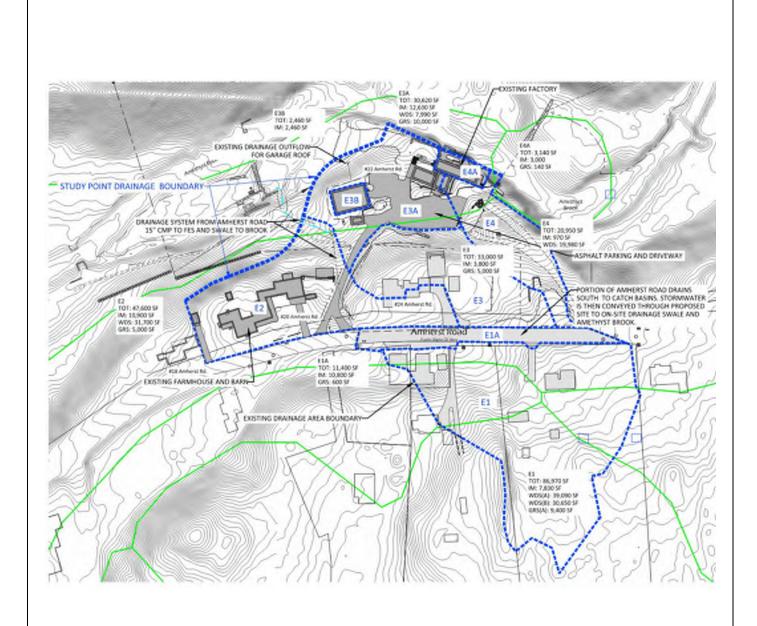




Figure 4

Existing Drainage Areas



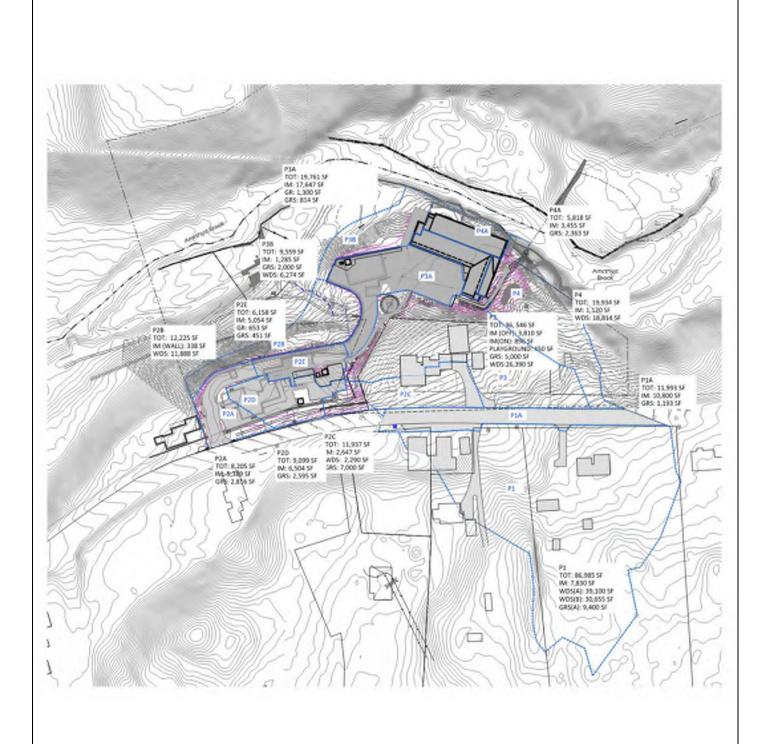




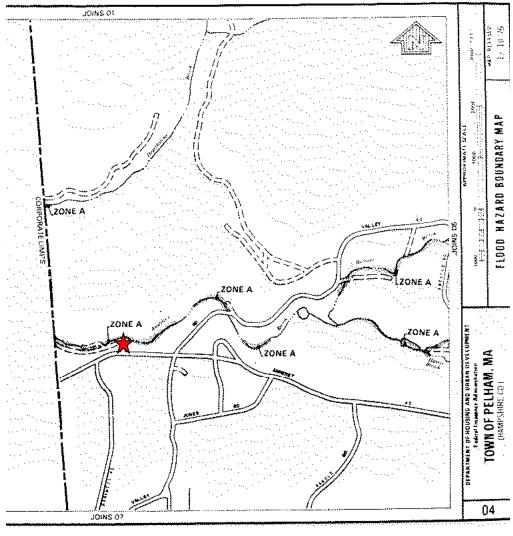
Figure 5

Proposed Drainage Areas

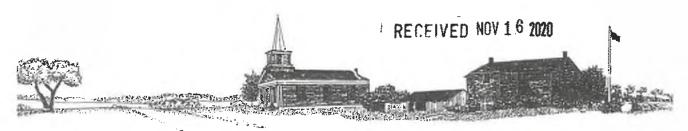


FEMA FLOOD MAPS





ABUTTERS



Town of Pelham

Board of Assessors \$351 Amherst Road \$Pelham MA 01002 Phone-413-253-0734\$Fax 413-253-0847 pelhamassessor@comcast.net

MAP/BLOCK/PARCEL: 3-30 & 3-32

APPLICANT: HOME CITY DEVELOPMENT, INC

DATE: NOVEMBER 11, 2020

BOARD: CONSERVATION PLANNING SELECTBOARD ZONING

CERTIFIED LIST OF ABUTTORS

The Assessor's Office, Town of Pelham, hereby certifies the attached list of names and addresses. This list reflects the current names and addresses as they appear in our records as of January 1, 2020

This list is only valid for a period of thirty (30) days from the date of certification by the Assessor.

LORI J. TURATI

ADMINSTRATIVE ASSESSOR

APPLICANT
ASSESSORS
CONSERVATION
PLANNING
SELECTBOARD
ZONING

3-33 & 3-37 KESTREL TRUST PO BOX 1016 AMHERST, MA 01004

LOUISE MACDONALD LIFE ESTATE 17 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

2-33 JOHN & MARGUERITE SEARLE 27 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

3-29 AMCAS MANAGEMENT LLC 95 OLD AMHERST RD BELCHERTOWN, MA 01007

2-22 FRANK & FRANCINE OZEREKO 5 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

2-19 CHARLES & KAREN SMITH 1 HARKNESS RD PELHAM, MA 01002

2-1B ANNE MARIE FOLEY & DAVID SCHEIN 5 HARKNESS RD PELHAM, MA 01002

2-31 CHRISTIAN SANTANGELO & J ROSS 144 MONTAGUE RD LEVERETT, MA 01054-9765

3-30 & 3-32 AMETHYST BROOK APARTMENTS LLC 261 OAK GROVE AVE SPRINGFIELD, MA 01109-3023 3-38-39 TOWN OF PELHAM 351 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

3-3 & 3-4 WILLIAM & THERESA ROCK 23 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

3-6 RUBEN RODIGUEZ & SARAH PACHECO 29 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

3-B DANIEL ROBB & MAIA PORTER 37 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

2-21 FRANK LLAMAS 7 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

2-2B LARRY CROOK PO BOX 2B38 AMHERST, MA 01002

2-30 JAMES FITZGIBBON 1B ROOSEVELT RD HADLEY, MA 01035

3-40 EUGENE WAGNER LIFE ESTATE 335 NORTH EAST ST AMHERST, MA 01002 2-20-20.A BARBARA KAUFF 11 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

3-31 MICHAEL & CLAUDIA WEINBERG 24 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

3-7 BRUCE KLOTZ & JOANNE LEVINE 33 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

2-26 THOMAS HARTMAN & KRISTIN DEBOER 4 AMHERST RD PELHAM, MA 01002

2-27
PV HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
PO BOX 60642
FLORENCE, MA 01062

2-29 WM ROBERT KILLINGSWORTH III 4 HARKNESS RD PELHAM, MA 01002

2-32 JOSEPH CALLAHAN BA HARKNESS RD PELHAM, MA 01002

3-2B ALEXANDRA TAYLOR & CHARLES LYNCH B NORTH VALLEY RD PELHAM, MA 01002

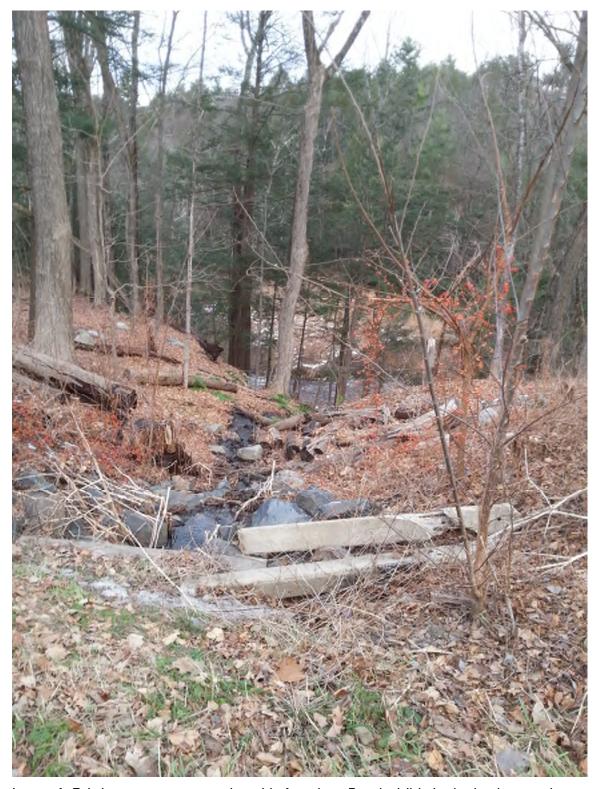


Image 1. Existing storm water outlet with Amethyst Brook visible in the background.



Image 2. Existing "woods road" located to the east of the current building seen in the distance.



Image 3. Garage and shed on the western edge of the existing parking lot.

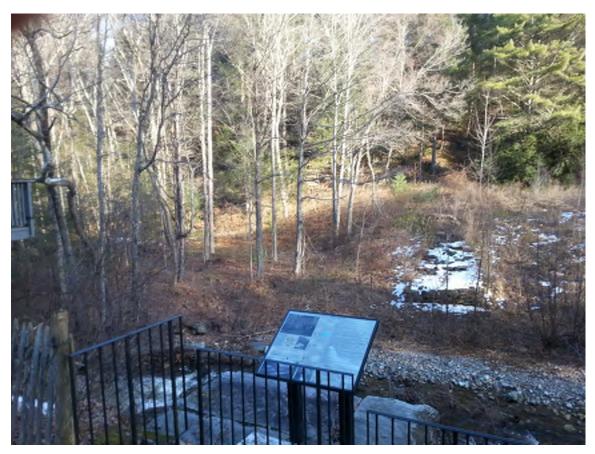


Image 4. Overlook at the former dam location off the east end of the existing building.



Image 5. View of the rear of the current building. The old sluiceway and walls are visible on the left.



Image 6. The existing building at 20 Amherst Road as it faces the parking lot. Amethyst Brook is located directly behind the structure.

