



SOUTH KINGSTOWN PLANNING DEPARTMENT
PROJECT REVIEW MEMO
Lofts at Fairgrounds
Major Land Development – Comprehensive Permit
Pre-Application Concept Review
 February 25, 2025

Project Type:	Major Land Development		
Review Stage:	Pre-Application Concept Review		
Address:	132 Fairgrounds Road		
Plat:	21-3	Lot:	9
Parcel Size:	20.22 acres	Zoning District:	IND-1
Applicant:	132 Fairgrounds LLC c/o Jonathan Fox 51 DeForest Avenue Summit, NJ 07901	Owner:	Same

Project Description *(as outlined in the addendum narrative included in the application)*

The project consists of 6 new multi-family buildings and a retail/amenity building at the entrance. Each building provides a mixture of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units for a total of 327 units. The design team has looked to provide key amenities to the future residents including an in-house fitness center, in-ground swimming pool with hot tub, outdoor passive/active recreation areas, new pedestrian walking paths, outdoor firepit/seating areas, detached covered garage spaces, and an outdoor pet area. The buildings will be professionally managed with onsite staff to serve the future residents.

Outdoor recreational areas are a key focus for the development and have been incorporated into the design. The applicant recognizes the importance of providing common areas (both indoor and outdoor) for the future residents to use. Potential outdoor recreation areas include new walking path connections to create an integrated pedestrian circulation system, an outdoor pet area, an outdoor firepit with seating/meeting area, an in-ground swimming pool and hot tub, and bike racks for multi-modal alternatives.

The architecture of the buildings at The Lofts at Fairgrounds has been an important aspect of the design from the beginning. In addition, the integration of a new residential community adjacent to an industrial building (Norpak, formerly Schnider Electric) which is presently situated amongst several existing industrial type buildings was also identified in the early stages as an important design factor that need significant thought and attention. In this case, Newbury Design Associates have created a site layout and residential community with building facades that the owners believe will be a great addition to the property. The architects will be prepared at the appropriate time to discuss with the board and staff what their design inspirations were, and goals in creating the new buildings.

Proposed Residential Unit & Bedroom Summary

Building 1 – 3-story building	Nine (9) studio units
	Six (6) 1-bedroom units
	Twelve (12) 2-bedroom units
Buildings 2 through 6 – 4-story buildings	Sixteen (16) studio units
	Twenty-eight (28) 1-bedroom units
	Sixteen (16) 2-bedroom units
Totals	327 Residential Units 419 Bedrooms

Housing types include residential multi-family with a mixture of studio, 1-bedroom, and 2-bedroom units including associated active/passive recreational amenities, an in-ground swimming pool, fitness center, pedestrian walking paths, and outdoor recreation areas. The low- and moderate-income housing units will be equally distributed between each unit type (studio, 1-bedroom, and 2-bedroom).

Anticipated Relief (Adjustments)

*The applicant anticipates adjustments needed for **building height**, allowable **building size** (# of units per building), **density**, **parking**, and **land use (multi-household in IND-1 zone)**. A full list of adjustments will be provided at the next stage of permitting (Comprehensive Permit – Preliminary Plan submission).*

Regulatory Considerations

Zoning Ordinance

Section 301 (Schedule of Use Regulations Table) of the Zoning Ordinance does not allow for residential use and/or multi-household land development projects within the IND-1 Zoning District. The submission of this project as a Comprehensive Permit provides an avenue to overcome that restriction, provided that 25% of the residential units created are deed-restricted for low and/or moderate income occupancy per Rhode Island Law.

Subdivision & Land Development Regulations

Article IV, Section H – Multi-Household Land Development Project

Section H(6) requires screening to provide a physical barrier and visual screen from adjacent properties. Section H(7) requires a minimum front yard setback of 100 feet along public streets with prohibitions on buildings, parking lots and other utility areas from being located within this setback. A 50’ landscaped or natural buffer zone is required to be maintained along said public street. Section H(9) requires that pedestrian walkways be provided for the development, and that parking lots be set back from the wall of any building (except garages, that 10% of the developable area (~5,653 square feet) must be dedicated as open space, type dictated by occupants and approved by the Planning Board, and that the minimum distance between buildings shall be 50’.

A more thorough analysis of Article IV, Section H will be conducted by Staff if this project moves forward to the next stage of review.

Decision Deadline

There are no decision deadlines associated with Pre-Application Concept applications as no decisions are rendered at this stage of review.

Required Findings

In accordance with [RIGL § 45-53-4 – Procedure for approval of construction of low- or moderate-income housing](#), the following findings will be required at future stages of review:

(E) Required findings for approval. In approving an application, the local review board shall make positive findings, supported by legally competent evidence on the record that discloses the nature and character of the observations upon which the fact finders acted, on each of the following standard provisions, where applicable:

- I. The proposed development is consistent with local needs as identified in the local comprehensive community plan with particular emphasis on the community's affordable housing plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies.
- II. The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the municipality's zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations, and/or where adjustments are requested by the applicant, that local concerns that have been affected by the relief granted do not outweigh the state and local need for low- and moderate-income housing.
- III. All low- and moderate-income housing units proposed are integrated throughout the development; are compatible in scale and architectural style to the market rate units within the project; and will be built and occupied prior to, or simultaneous with the construction and occupancy of any market rate units.
- IV. There will be no significant negative impacts on the health and safety of current or future residents of the community, in areas including, but not limited to, safe circulation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, provision of emergency services, sewerage disposal, availability of potable water, adequate surface water run-off, and the preservation of natural, historical, or cultural features that contribute to the attractiveness of the community.
- V. All proposed land developments and all subdivisions lots will have adequate and permanent physical access to a public street in accordance with the requirements of § 45-23-60(a)(5).
- VI. The proposed development will not result in the creation of individual lots with any physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable, unless created only as permanent open space or permanently reserved for a public purpose on the approved, recorded plans.

(F) Required findings for denial. In reviewing the comprehensive permit request, the local review board may deny the request for any of the following reasons:

- I. If the city or town has an approved affordable housing plan and is meeting housing needs, and the proposal is inconsistent with the affordable housing plan; provided that, the local review board also finds that the municipality has made significant progress in implementing that housing plan;
- II. The proposal is not consistent with local needs, including, but not limited to, the needs identified in an approved comprehensive plan, and/or local zoning ordinances and procedures promulgated in conformance with the comprehensive plan;
- III. The proposal is not in conformance with the comprehensive plan;
- IV. The community has met or has plans to meet the goal of ten percent (10%) of the year-round units or, in the case of an urban town or city, fifteen percent (15%) of the occupied rental housing units as defined in § 45-53-3(5)(i) being low- and moderate-

income housing; provided that, the local review board also finds that the community has achieved or has made significant progress towards meeting the goals required by this section; or

- V. Concerns for the environment and the health and safety of current residents have not been adequately addressed.