

## **Application to the Acton Board of Appeal for a Comprehensive Permit**

### **3.5 USE DESCRIPTION**

263 Great Road LLC, the applicant for a Comprehensive Permit from the Acton Board of Appeal, is headed by Steve Steinberg. Mr. Steinberg has a long acquaintance with Acton as a local real estate owner and manager, a developer of affordable housing, and as the director of the Steinberg-Lalli Foundation. Recently, 263 Great Road LLC received a Site Eligibility Letter from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, or DHCD. This letter is the culmination of a Local Initiative Program proposal begun in August of 2011 which has been presented to Acton town boards and committees, neighbors and abutters, and DHCD staff. Receipt of the Site Eligibility Letter qualifies 263 Great Road LLC as a state-approved limited-dividend entity to act as developer of affordable housing on this site under the state's Chapter 40B provision. 40B allows a developer to exceed the current zoning density on a site in exchange for restricting 25% of the homes to be occupied in perpetuity by income-qualified families. Prior to being submitted to DHCD, the Local Initiative Application for this site was unanimously approved last year by the Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) and the Acton Board of Selectmen.

The Use proposed for the site is Residential. Twenty six (26) units of housing have been designed for the site, with twenty four (24) homes being single-family detached. A duplex structure will contain two additional homes, which are intended to be sold to the Acton Housing Authority. These duplex homes will each have two bedrooms. Each unit will have one parking space in a garage and one space unenclosed. All other homes are designed as three-bedroom units with two car garages. Plans for these homes are designed in Greek Revival style or Colonial style. A mix of elevations is intended to provide architectural variety.

Of the twenty six homes proposed, seven will be made available to families whose incomes and assets qualify them as moderate-income. Income limits for the Local Initiative Program are typically restricted to a maximum of 70% of the median income for the Greater Boston area. The existing home nearest Great Road is intended to be sold to Habitat for Humanity, which will renovate and sell it to an income-qualified family. Habitat will also perform its own buyer selection process. The duplex unit mentioned above will be sold to the Acton Housing Authority which will rent the two units to income-qualified families. The four remaining single family homes will be sold to qualified moderate-income buyers. 263 Great Road LLC will initiate a DHCD-approved marketing program for these four buyers, in consultation with MCO Housing, Inc.

70% of the seven affordable homes (5 homes) will be designated for occupancy under the "Local Preference" section of Chapter 40B. Local preference criteria typically include current residents of Acton, children of Acton residents who have graduated from Acton High School, municipal employees who have worked for the town for a specified number of years, and others who meet specific criteria to be determined by the town of Acton and the ACHC. All buyers must be first-time homeowners.

Although the homes are designed as single-family structures, they will be owned in the form of a condominium with yard areas designated for exclusive use by the occupants. The site design allows for areas of open space which will be designated as common land. The new private access driveway will be owned in common by the condominium association and will not be proposed for acceptance by the town of Acton. Prices for the market-rate homes will be in the high \$400,000's. Home sizes will range from approximately 1,850 square to over 2,000 square feet, not including garages or basements. The affordable homes will be sold for approximately \$195,000 with the exception of the Habitat home, which will be sold for less. Both the market-rate homes and the affordable homes will be similar in size and exterior appearance. Many homes are designed to be adaptable for persons with disabilities. The first floor design can be reconfigured to allow for a first-floor master bedroom suite.

The developer intends to offer options to buyers in order to optimize market acceptance of the home designs. To this end, the homes at The Meadows at Acton may be somewhat larger or smaller than those presently shown, and may also be located somewhat differently than shown on these conceptual site plans. Likewise, the locations of the affordable homes will be scattered throughout the development but may not be located precisely where the current plans indicate.