



December 1, 2020

Boxford Zoning Board of Appeals
Attn: Robert Aldenberg, Building Inspector
7A Spofford Road
Boxford, MA 01921

RE: The Willows at Boxford, an Active Adult Community
Special Permit Application
Off Willow Road (Map 6, Block 2, Lot 2.2)

Dear Members of the Board:

On behalf of Toll Bros, Inc. (Applicant), The Morin-Cameron Group, Inc. (MCG) hereby applies for a Special Permit for the project known as The Willows at Boxford, an Active Adult Community.

Included herewith are the following:

- Boxford Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing Application dated December 1, 2020.
- Boxford Zoning Board of Appeals Legal Advertisement Authorization Form
- Certified Abutters List
- Application Fee Check No. 2786
- Abutter Notification Fee Check No. 2787 and fee calculation worksheet
- Deed Book 32071, Page 540
- Permit Plans entitled "Site Plan of Land, The Willows at Boxford, an Active Adult Community located off Willow Road Boxford, Massachusetts (Assessor's Map 6, Block 2, Lot 2.2) Sheets 1 through 27" prepared by MCG on November 19, 2020.
- "Landscape & Lighting Plans for The Willows at Boxford located off Willow Road, Boxford, Massachusetts" prepared by ESE Consultants on November 19, 2020.
- "Technical Narrative & Stormwater Management Report, The Willows at Boxford located off Willow Road, Boxford, Massachusetts" prepared by MCG on November 19, 2020.
- "Traffic Impact Study, Active Senior Residential Development Willow Road (Route 133) Boxford, MA" prepared by McMahon Associates, Inc. in November 2020.

This application has been filed in support of the proposed project. The following special permits are being requested from the Boxford Zoning Bylaw (Bylaw):

- Elderly Housing Site Plan SP under Section 196-20 and 196-30
- Shared Driveway SP under Section 196-13.B(11)(l)
- Soil Stripping SP under Section 196-33

A discussion on each special permit to follow herein.

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25 Kenoza Avenue, Haverhill, MA 01830 978.373.0310
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Project Summary

Toll Bros, Inc., the project proponent, proposes to develop a 66-unit age-restricted, active adult community on a 117.62-acre parcel located off Willow Road in Boxford, Massachusetts. The project consists of thirty-three (33) duplex style buildings, an accessory community building and outdoor amenity space. The new neighborhood will be supported by a private drive, stormwater management systems, electric and communications utilities, private water supply and an onsite wastewater disposal system. A large portion of the parcel will be preserved as permanent open space.

Site Plan Special Permit (Sec 196-20 & 196-30)

In accordance with the Elderly Housing Bylaw under Section 196-20, applications must comply with the standards of Section 196-30 (site plans) and be consistent with the following design guidelines:

Section 196-20

- (1) *All proposed buildings and structures shall be compatible with other quality buildings of similar village-style architecture, building materials and colors;*

The Willows at Boxford will be an active-adult, 55+ community consisting of 66-carriage-style townhomes. The dwellings will be set in the wooded surrounding of the Price Estate and will offer a variety of floor plan designs for customization by the residents of the community. The dwellings will consist of a variety of 1- or 2-story carriage style designs in either a ranch or colonial style. Each dwelling will be fit with a 2-car garage accessed by a dedicated driveway. The livable floor area will vary between 1,627-2,900 square feet per home, including the second-floor guest bed/study area. Each home will have its own private deck or patio in the rear. There will be a variety of classic finishes using high quality, durable and architecturally pleasing construction materials to create a diverse experience for residents and visitors to the community.



Image 1: Typical Dwelling Rendering

There will be multiple unit styles available for buyers to select each with a relatively consistent exterior appearance. Various structural options will be available for each unit style along with

the flexibility of customizing interior finishes. The unit floor plans will all include a first-floor master bedroom.

Landscaping around each unit is illustrated on the landscape plans included with this report. There will be a community clubhouse with a pool, and outdoor recreational area for use by residents of The Willows at Boxford. The project will also feature an extensive passive recreational pedestrian trail network throughout preserved woodland and open space for use by the residents of the neighborhood and public at large.

(2) The compatibility of such buildings and structures shall be analyzed in terms of the following factors: size and bulk; orientation to the street; distance from the street; height and roofline articulation; the pattern of window, door, and other building openings; architectural styles; and exterior building materials and colors; and

- The size and bulk of the dwellings is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood with livable floor areas varying between 1,627-2,900 square feet (sf) per home and 1- or 2-stories in height with a gable roof. Existing dwellings in the surrounding neighborhoods range in size from approximately 1,600 sf to 3,600 sf per home with an average size of approximately 2,950 sf.
- All dwellings will be oriented towards the new site drives to create a neighborhood feel within the development.
- The dwellings or buildings will be no closer than 200' to Willow Road, meeting the Bylaw setback requirement.
- The height and roof line articulation will be complex with many gables and architectural fenestrations to break up the façade and create a rich and distinct architectural aesthetic.
- The window, door and other building openings are distributed around all exterior walls so there are no large, bare wall surfaces on any side of the dwelling.
- The ranch or colonial "carriage house" style architecture is consistent with that found in the surrounding neighborhood. The surrounding neighborhood consists of a wide variety of styles including cape, ranch, split level, colonial and contemporary.
- The building exteriors will be finished with high quality vinyl siding, cultured stone, and architectural shingles.

(3) The applicant shall submit a separate landscaping plan, prepared by a registered landscape architect, that provides for intensive high-quality landscaping of all open areas, including areas adjacent to paths, driveways and parking lots, and, where appropriate for screening purposes, dense buffers of trees and shrubs.

A landscaping plan has been included herewith. The plan illustrates typical planting plans around the dwelling units, along the site drives, around the amenity areas and other open spaces in the community. The site is situated in a manner that it will be screened by the preserved woodlands of the Price Estate so that it is only visible along the small portion of frontage along Willow Road.

*Section 196-30.B**The site plan shall provide for:**(1) Compliance with the requirements for parking and loading spaces, for lot size, frontage, yards and heights and coverage of buildings, and all other provisions of this bylaw.*

- The project complies with the parking requirements of the Bylaw by providing 2 parking spaces per dwelling unit in enclosed garages. The Bylaw requirement is to provide 4 spaces for every 3 dwellings (1.33 spaces per dwelling) and the project provides 2 spaces per dwelling. There is no need for loading spaces at this project as it is a residential development, however moving trucks can park in the driveways in front of each garage. Up to 2 guest cars can also park in front of each garage.
- The project meets the Elderly Housing dimensional and density requirements.

	Requirement	Provided
Area	24 acres	117.62 acres
CBA	1 acre	5.3 acres
Lot Coverage	25%	3.5%
Frontage	100 feet	>2,000 feet
Front Setback	200 feet	>201 feet
Side/Rear Setback	100 feet	126 feet
Height	35 feet	<35 feet
Max # Dwellings	104 Dwellings	66 Dwellings
Max # Res. Buildings	1 per 2ac. (58 bldgs.)	33 Buildings

(2) Convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement on the site and for the location of driveway openings in relation to street traffic.

The development includes a sidewalk which will be constructed along 1 side of the site drive to provide pedestrian circulation along the drive. The sidewalk connects to existing pedestrian trails that traverse throughout the property, including throughout the open space areas. There is no sidewalk on Willow Road, however the site sidewalk was extended to Willow Road so that pedestrians can access the road shoulder off the property. Near the clubhouse, cross walks will be painted across the site drive.

(3) Convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement off the site, if vehicular and pedestrian traffic off site can reasonably be expected to be substantially affected by on-site changes.

According to the traffic report prepared by McMahon Associates, the proposed site driveway and emergency access drive far exceeds the safe stopping sight distance for the Willow Road intersections. Vehicular access to/from the site will not impact Willow Road traffic. As noted above, pedestrian access is being extended by a sidewalk to Willow Road, however Willow Road does not have a sidewalk. Pedestrian use of Willow Road will be in keeping with its current use. The proposed site drive does not impact the pedestrian use of Willow Road. See the traffic report prepared by McMahon Associates for more detailed information on the pedestrian and vehicular access to the development.

(4) Adequacy as to the arrangement and, where not herein specified, the number of parking and loading spaces in relation to the proposed uses of the premises.

All parking spaces are a minimum of 9' x 18' in dimension within the garages or surface spaces for the clubhouse. All parking is directly accessible from the site drive.

(5) Design and appearance of proposed buildings, structures, freestanding signs, screening and landscaping.

The design and appearance of the buildings is discussed above. A freestanding sign will be constructed at the main entrance to the site. A detail of this sign is included in the landscape plan set. Screening and landscape plantings are also illustrated on the landscape plans.

(6) Adequacy of water supply, method(s) of waste disposal, surface and subsurface drainage and lighting.

- Domestic water will be supplied by a community well permitted through MassDEP. The wells, already installed as part of the permitting process, have enough capacity for the proposed development of 66 age restricted dwelling units.
- Solid waste will be collected by a private waste disposal company.
- Wastewater will be disposed of in an onsite wastewater disposal system meeting 310 CMR 15.00: Title 5 and the Boxford Board of Health Regulations or will comply with 314 CMR 5.00: groundwater discharge permit program.
- Stormwater will be managed by a combination of proprietary "closed" treatment systems including catch basins and hydrodynamic separators and surface retention systems. A detailed summary of the stormwater management system is included in the stormwater report.
- Site lighting is illustrated on the landscaping plans. All lighting will be dark sky compliant and in keeping with ordinary residential lighting along the site drive and building egress.

Section 196-30.B

Site plans shall indicate existing and proposed:

The Bylaw requires the following information to be included in the site plans. This information has been provided.

- *Boundaries.*

The parcel boundaries and total land area are illustrated in the plans.

- *Structures.*

The structures illustrated on the plans are a composite of the various house footprints, representing the largest possible footprint for the dwelling. The dwellings are anticipated to be smaller than what is shown on the plans on average. Behind the dwellings, each dwelling will enjoy a limited common area for outdoor living features such as a deck or patio.

- *Parking and loading spaces.*

All parking areas, handicap parking and dimensions are illustrated on the site plans

- *Driveways and driveway openings.*

All driveways and the site drive are illustrated on the plans. The site drive is also shown in profile view.

- *Service areas and other open areas.*

All common community and open space areas are illustrated on the plans.

- *Facilities for lighting, for water supplies, for sewage, refuse and other waste disposal, for drainage and for screening.*

All site lighting, water supply system, sewage disposal system and stormwater systems are illustrated on the plans.

- *Landscape features.*

All proposed landscape features are shown on the plans.

The above summary and supporting documentation demonstrate that the development addresses the specific interests of the Bylaw. In accordance with the Bylaw, the applicant intends to meet with the Building Inspector and Planning Board to seek recommendations from each in favor of approving the project. Presuming receipt of these recommendations, the applicant requests approval of a site plan special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Shared Driveway Special Permit (Sec 196-13.B(11)(l))

Section 196-13.B(11)(l) specifically addresses special permits for shared driveways serving up to 3 lots. This application involves only 1 lot under single ownership through a condominium association. The association will manage and maintain the proposed site drive which serves access to the dwelling units. It is reasonable to contend that in the absence of a clear definition of "shared driveway", that the site drive is in fact not shared as it is owned by 1 condominium. However, a special permit is nonetheless being requested herein under the description provided in Section 196-29.D. Finally, it should be noted that this project does not appear to qualify for a driveway permit from the Planning Board as it is not serving a detached single-family home per Section 196-29.A.

Section 196-29.D states that shared driveways must comply with Section 196-13.B(11)(l). This section states that a shared driveway special permit can be approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals. The shared driveway shall conform to the following criteria:

1. *The shared driveway shall not enter the roadway at a point separated by less than 100 feet (centerline to centerline) from any other driveway or intersection.*

The proposed site drive intersection is situated on the northerly side of Willow Road approximately 810 feet east from the nearest site drive located at 62 Willow Road. The site drive is approximately 1,500 feet west of the intersection of Pine Plain Road, the nearest intersection in that direction.

It should be noted that the project includes 2 other site egress points from Willow Road. An emergency access drive is proposed approximately 975 feet west of the main access drive. This emergency access will be gated and not for use by anyone but the fire department or emergency services. Another maintenance drive will be situated 600 feet to the east of the primary site drive. This maintenance driveway will be utilized approximately once per week for service and testing of the public water supply well.

2. *The shared portion of the driveway shall have a finished width no less than 12 feet plus a one-foot level shoulder on either side.*

The private driveway will have a paved width of 24 feet for 2-way vehicular access. The road will have curbed shoulders.

The application for Shared Driveway requires submission of an operation and maintenance plan for said drives. The following is a draft of this plan:

Site Drives & Maintenance/Emergency Drives

Operation & Maintenance Plan

Willow Road – "The Willows at Boxford"

Site Drives & Emergency/Maintenance Drives to Willow Road

The following preventative maintenance measures should be performed routinely to avoid costly rehabilitation work in the future. Routine maintenance is based on re-occurring inspections of the condition of the pavement, cut & fill slopes, drainage & other structures, and facilities to monitor any defects and damage. Typical maintenance activities during such inspections shall include:

- *Pothole patching and crack sealing*
- *Shoulder grading*
- *Snow removal such that a 20' wide (minimum) travel path is maintained throughout the development to allow for a fire truck apparatus or other emergency vehicles to navigate*
- *Repair of cut and fill slopes*
- *Repair of all traffic, directory & identification signs including road markings*
- *Clearing of ditches and culverts to reduce the risk of flooding*
 - *Refer to Stormwater Operation & Maintenance Manual dated November 19, 2020 for The Willows at Boxford*
- *Mowing & maintenance of plants*
- *Clearing debris off pavement*
- *Repair damaged Belgian block curbing*

Detailed inspections shall occur at certain time intervals such as seasonally or yearly. These designated inspections shall test the condition of the roadways. If defects and or damages are observed, it shall be reported for repairs. Typical maintenance activities during such inspections shall include:

- *Re-grade non-pavement road surfaces as necessary*
- *Resealing/surface dressing*
- *Overlay of site drives and emergency/maintenance drives*

If emergency maintenance is required, such as works to restore drive & drive related facilities to their normal operating conditions after they are damaged by accidents or natural causes. No frequency is specified with such repairs; however, such maintenance requires immediate action. Typical maintenance activities during such situations shall include:

- *Repair of damage to site drives caused by traffic accidents*
- *Removal of debris or obstacles from natural causes.*

By demonstrating compliance with the conditions of the special permit as described above, the applicant is requesting approval of a shared driveway special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Soil Stripping Special Permit (Sec 196-33)

The Bylaw permits the removal of soil exceeding 500 cubic yards through a special permit approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals. The project has been designed to balance earth cuts and fills to the extent practicable. However, current projections indicate that there will be an export of approximately 9,500 cubic yards of soil. This material is primarily expected to be loam or other unsuitable material which cannot be used as fill on the site. Section 196-33 sets forth the following consideration for approval of the soil stripping permit.

...use of the premises ... shall not constitute a nuisance because of noise, vibration, smoke, gas fumes, odor, dust or other objectionable features; shall not be hazardous because of fire or explosion; shall not adversely affect the economic status of the district or the Town; and shall not be injurious or dangerous to the public health and the welfare of the district or Town

Most of the project earthwork activities will occur beyond the wetland crossing, tucked more than 500 feet from Willow Road and within an area fully enclosed by woodlands. Except for the emergency access drive, the nearest dwelling to the site work is 300 feet away through woodland. Residences along Pine Plain Road are approximately 650 feet away from the well construction area and 1,000 feet from the main site work area. Due to these unique characteristics of this site being isolated and set within a wooded buffer, with most of the residences considerably separated from site work activities, potential nuisances to the neighborhood due to noise, vibration, smoke, gas fumes, odor, dust or other objectionable features are not expected to have a measurable impact. Further, the time in which site work activities will occur will follow industry standards between 7 AM to 6 PM Monday to Friday, 8 AM to 4 PM Saturday and no work on Sundays or holidays. This is typically the time when most people are at work/school or out doing errands.

In the event blasting is necessary to remove bedrock, it will be conducted in strict compliance with 527 CMR Board of Fire Prevention Regulations which is enforced by the Boxford Fire Department. The Regulations set forth very strict limitations on blasting activities including notification and surveys of all abutters within 250 feet of the property, vibration monitoring using seismographs, dust controls and other protections.

Exported material will primarily be transported from the site utilizing Route 133 east to Interstate 95 or west to Route 125/Interstate 495. No transport of material through neighborhoods is necessary.

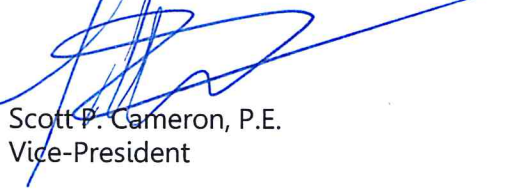
The use of public roads for transporting soil will be minimized to the extent practicable and will occur on numbered routes, capable of supporting the truck loads. No impacts to the public roads are anticipated as a result of the transport of earth materials other than routine sweeping along the project frontage.

The project has been designed to minimize earthwork activities thereby protecting the health and safety of the residents of Boxford to the maximum extent practicable. The earthwork will be limited to that which is incidental to the ordinary development of the project and will follow best construction practices. For the reasons stated herein, the applicant is requesting approval of a Soil Stripping Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

On behalf of Toll Bros, Inc., we thank you for consideration of this request for approval of the special permits for this project. Please contact the undersigned at (978) 373-0310 should you have any questions or requests for additional information.

Sincerely,

THE MORIN-CAMERON GROUP, INC.



Scott P. Cameron, P.E.
Vice-President

SPC/kmm

Cc: Toll Bros., Inc.

Attachments