

## **Design Guidelines Narrative—Phase I, 550 King Street, Littleton, MA**

Phase I of the 550 King Street development lays the foundation for a walkable, mixed-use village center that aligns directly with the Intent of Article XXX Village Common (§173-215). The ordinance calls for “a mixed-use, inherently walkable, and environmentally sound town center” and emphasizes the need “to promote pedestrian safety and prioritize sidewalk continuity.” Responding to these goals, the plan organizes five buildings around a central pedestrian way that is intentionally pulled inward from busy King Street. This strategy creates a safe and comfortable environment for those enjoying the vibrant retail district. Inspired by successful precedents such as Mashpee Commons, Patriot Place, Downtown Salem, and Bicester Village, it reflects a standout and uniquely memorable approach that moves beyond the conventions of ordinary lifestyle centers and helps attract high-quality retailers, restaurant operators, office users, and residents.

Designed in a distinctly New England architectural language, the buildings establish a unified sense of place and a human-scaled environment. Each structure is separated by at least 20 feet, providing visual relief, opportunities for landscaping, and generous pedestrian circulation throughout the district. Collectively, these elements set the tone for a lively mixed-use neighborhood grounded in familiar regional traditions.

Consistent with Article XXX Village Common, the architectural massing is rooted in the interplay of primary building masses. Buildings 1100, 1200, 1400, and 1500 each utilize two primary masses to define their character. Building 1300 incorporates four primary masses, exceeding the guideline maximum of three, yet this intentional move allows the structured parking to be completely

screened from King Street, the new town green, and the pedestrian way. Leasable retail footprints have been carefully vetted with prospective tenants, resulting in several primary masses that exceed maximum allowable size. These expanded footprints are essential to the ability to lease these spaces to retail and restaurant tenants.

Most buildings meet the prescribed height and story limits; however, Building 1100 is designed as a signature architectural element at the heart of the district. Anchoring the new town green, it pushes the height slightly above the requirement to create a memorable focal point and to support second-story restaurant space, which requires additional height. Throughout the district, sloped roofs, predominantly gables, reinforce the New England character. Decorative dormers introduce variety and rhythm and, in some cases, are strategically employed to conceal rooftop mechanical equipment, maintaining clean and traditional rooflines.

A rich composition of architectural components, including front and side additions, projecting gables, articulated storefronts, dormers, and balconies, creates a visually dynamic and pedestrian-focused environment. These elements break down building scale, introduce rhythm, and contribute to an engaging public realm. The material palette further supports this character: painted brick, lap siding, shingle siding, panel-and-trim systems, and durable stone and masonry bases, paired with asphalt shingle or standing seam metal roofs, all reflect New England's long-established architectural vernacular.

Fenestration requirements are fully met along both the town green and the pedestrian way, reinforcing these areas as active, people-centered environments. Along King Street, facades remain engaging and pedestrian-friendly while clearly orienting their primary frontage toward the internal pedestrian spine and the

heart of the retail village. Residential fenestration at Building 1300 meets all applicable minimums and maximums. A variety of frontage conditions, including galleries, entry plazas, dining patios, and a shared lobby, activate the ground plane and seamlessly integrate building edges with the public realm.

Together, the buildings of Phase I at 550 King Street introduce a memorable and walkable New England inspired village environment. The design thoughtfully balances Littleton's guidelines with purposeful architectural expression, establishing a vibrant community core that will set the standard for future phases to come.