

Explanatory Statement
455 Post Road East (D09/160/000 & D09/161/000)
Zone Map Change, Site Plan, & Special Permit Application

1. Summary

455 Post Road Holdings, LLC, is the owner and applicant of the subject property 455 Post Road East. The applicant is proposing a Zone Map change to the Inclusionary Housing Overlay District (IHZ), Site Plan, and Special Permit application to facilitate a residential redevelopment. The redevelopment will consist of up to 30 units, 17 surface and 34 underground parking spaces, patios, and associated landscaping.

To facilitate the proposed changes, an accompanying Text Change application has been filed to create appropriate standards for residential redevelopment and site design. Current IHZ regulations limit the number of new homes in favor of the non-residential development for at least 30% of the total.

2. Existing Site/Surrounding Area

The existing site is currently two lots with 1.77 acres ± split zoned in the GBD and Residence A Districts with frontage on the Post Road E and East Main Street. The building was most recently occupied by the Connecticut Humane Society, which recently opened their new facility in Wilton. The site is within a primarily commercial portion of the Post Road with a gas station and commercial to the east, residential to the north, commercial to the west, and the Post Road East to the south.

The site is currently developed with a 7,195sf± one-story commercial building built in the 1950s, separate one-story residential home built in the 1960s, shed, 17± surface parking, and associated landscaping.

Please note that, while the site is currently split into two parcels, it will be consolidated as part of the application process.

3. Proposed Development

The proposed residential development will be housed in two separate buildings consisting of 30 units, including 6 onsite affordable units, above a 34-space parking garage. Building A contains 25 units and Building B has 5 townhouse style homes in the rear. This residential development is intended to be rental.

A zoning data chart detailing compliance with the regulations is enclosed.

a. *Residential Mix*

The unit mix will consist of 9 one-bedrooms, 9 two-bedroom, and 12 three-bedroom units. It is anticipated that there will be 2 one-bedroom, 2 two-bedroom, and 2 three-bedroom affordable units evenly distributed meeting the 20% unit and Floor Area requirements.

b. *Site/Building Composition and Features*

Rooted in the setting of coastal New England, the design distills familiar regional forms into a minimal, contemporary composition of Westport. Located just off the Post Road (Route 1), between East Main Street and Crescent Park Road, the buildings are an abstract and simplified representation of the traditional New England residential vernacular.

A repetition of gable roofs is emphasized through simple lines, minimal trim, and the deep texture of vertical wood cladding. Large operable four-pane windows highlight the contemporary shed aesthetic and punctuate the gable rhythm with a glass-like volume. The townhouse building follows a similar design aesthetic, relating to the main structure while introducing additional interest through dormers and recessed balconies.

Programmatically, the site emphasizes the pedestrian experience, highlighted by an arrival point fronting the Post Road. This entry is the amenity space, an area of community for residents and visitors.

The primary building includes 25 residential units, eight of which are loft spaces, while the townhouse contains five multi-level residences with individual lofts.

c. *Parking/Traffic*

Parking will be provided through a 34-space parking garage and 17 surface spaces providing a ratio of approximately 1.66 spaces per unit. Vehicular access will make use of the existing curb cuts with in and out on the Post Road and one way out on East Main Street. There are no additional curb cuts proposed.

Based on the Traffic Report prepared by SLR International Corporation there are, “no notable impacts to traffic flow are expected to be caused by the proposed residential development at 455 Post Road East.”. The report also provides various recommendations that the applicant plans to implement to improve upon the existing conditions with this redevelopment.

Peak non-residential retail ITE trip generation would be 26 in/21 out in the AM and 37 in/ 38 out in the PM. The 30 units proposed trip generation would be 2 in/10 out in the AM peak and 10 in/ 6 out in the PM Peak, which is a significant reduction in peak hour traffic in comparison to what could be developed today.

4. Purpose/Benefit

The changes also serve to address several goals and strategies highlighted in the Westport Plan of Conservation and Development, including:

1. 4.3 Promote Good Design, A Community Design, p. 30
 - Maintain an architectural review process to help preserve and enhance the character of Westport and maintain the overall “sense of place.”
2. 9.4 Improve Business Areas Along Route 1 p.76
 - Require all new or redeveloped sites along the Post Road to install sidewalks and provide landscaping in ways to enhance the Post Road.

- Seek ways to modify the Zoning Regulations to encourage appropriate improvements and/or redevelopment along the Post Road, p. 78
 - Consider the potential for some properties on the Post Road to accommodate mixed-use buildings and/or mixed-use developments (containing housing) in order to increase the variety of housing choices in locations with access to shopping and public transportation.
3. 10.1 Overview (“Westport’s wide variety of housing types from modest homes and historic structures to grand manor homes is one of its strongest features.”), p. 79.
 4. 10.2 Maintain Residential Character, p. 80
 - Protecting residential neighborhoods from encroachment by inappropriate uses, and
 - Managing residential development and redevelopment and other activities on residential properties to ensure they are appropriate for the site and/or given the impacts on neighbors.
 5. 10.4. Monitor Changing Housing Needs, p.85
 - Seek ways to address changing housing needs while maintaining the character and integrity of Westport.
 6. **Zone Map Change to §39A Inclusionary Housing Overlay District (IHZ)**

The applicant is requesting a Zone Map change to IHZ. The existing property contains approximately 1.10 acres in the GBD and 0.67 acres in the Residence A. This Zone Change serves to satisfy the purpose of the IHZ by creating an opportunity for an increased diversity of housing choices along the Post Road as well as providing additional below market rate housing to help serve the growing need for the Town of Westport.

7. Special Permit Request

- §39A-3 to allow the proposed all residential redevelopment.

8. Conclusion

The Zone Map Change, Site Plan, and Special Permit applications are accompanied by a Text Change to establish standards for redevelopment and site design.

The submitted applications seek to realize the above stated goals and strategies established in the 2017 Plan of Conservation and Development by encouraging additional housing choices and below market rate housing.