



The plan for riverside locates more than one million square feet of mixed use at a prominent train stop.

In Newton, Mass., the 10-acre, 1000-car surface-parking lot at the end of the Green Line’s “D” branch offers an ideal site for sustainable growth. Riverside has been identified by the City for many years as a key redevelopment site, but previous schemes lacked the critical mass to be financially viable.

This recently-approved plan places about 600 apartments, 250,000 square feet of office space, 40,000 square feet of shops, and a hotel on a site amenitized with a full variety of public spaces. These include a transit plaza and square, a hillside amphitheater green, and a second large square with a central playground.

The principal site strategy was to replace the surface parking lot with a linear parking structure located to hide the adjacent railyard from view. This structure itself is then hidden behind “liner” apartments running the length of the main street. All cars are centralized in this one garage, at the aggressive ratio of one new parking stall per 1000 square feet of construction.

Importantly, the park-and-ride facility is located a short distance from the train station, across a square, to create street life. Also key to the design is the use of “demise lines” that artificially split the longer structures into a collection of smaller “buildings” and pavilions, including “rowhouses” with individual stoops to the street, serving first floor apartments.

In addition to creating the site plan, Jeff Speck also completed preliminary design of all building facades. Now a team of firms including Stantec, VHB, Halvorson, and David Schwarz Architects are preparing plans for construction. The plan received its final approval from the City of Newton in October of 2020.

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