

Town of Woodstock, NY Design Competition

Affordable housing, parking and community development in the town's center

Second Draft

The Town of Woodstock is seeking creative, practical, and community-minded design ideas for transforming a centrally located municipal parking lot into a mixed civic asset, with affordable housing integrated near Woodstock's town center while preserving meaningful parking capacity, supporting local businesses, and enhancing the character, vitality, and walkability of the community.

Background

Fisher Associates, an engineering firm retained by the Town, has evaluated several Town-owned parcels for their suitability for affordable housing. The Mountain View parking lot, shown in Figure 1, emerged as a leading candidate because of its central location, relatively flat topography, and access to Town water and sewer infrastructure. *Document 1* on the "Provided Materials" web page (see below) provides the Woodstock Housing Committee's brief description of the work with Fisher Associates, the Fisher Associates' assessment of this parcel (along with two other parcels that were evaluated), and the Housing Committee's preliminary recommendation of how to respond to this report.¹

A central challenge of this location is the lot's current role in supporting Woodstock's commercial and tourism economy. The parking lot, which has about 110 spaces, is one of three municipal parking lots (totaling approximately 300 spaces) located close to the center of the town. Municipal parking is important to visitors, merchants, and residents, and there is understandable community concern about converting existing parking spaces to housing. At the same time, a study by the Woodstock Housing Committee suggests that it may be possible to reduce the number of parking spaces at the Mountain View lot while maintaining an adequate parking supply for visitors to the town. Details of the parking study are provided in Appendix II of *Document 1*.

Many community members also see the Mountain View parking lot as an underutilized and visually uninviting site in a location with significant potential to enhance the surrounding neighborhood. The parcel is bordered by a historic cemetery on one side and by a small wetland on another, and it faces a large historic brick building that serves as a popular music venue (Colony Inn). Although the lot is connected to the center of town by sidewalk, the existing pedestrian route is difficult to navigate, and there may be opportunities to create a clearer, safer, and more inviting pedestrian connection to the central business district. A successful conceptual design will therefore need to address multiple goals at once: integrating the site into the surrounding community, preserving meaningful parking capacity, creating affordable housing,

¹ The document references a third stage of the work with Fisher, which will **not in fact proceed**.

and potentially adding public space or other civic benefits that help build community support for the project.

Design Challenge

The Town invites contestants to develop a conceptual plan for affordable housing, municipal parking, and public space on the Mountain View parking lot. Proposals should show how the site can accommodate new housing while preserving at least 50 municipal parking spaces, separate from any parking required for residents of the housing units.

Submissions should address four central questions:

1. How can buildings, parking, service areas, pedestrian routes, vehicle routes and public space be arranged on the site in a way that is practical, attractive, and well connected to the surrounding community?
2. How can the proposal provide affordable housing with an appropriate mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units while respecting the current 2.5-story zoning limit for residential structures?
3. How can the project advance sustainable, resilient, and high-performance design, including all-electric or zero-emissions systems for space heating and hot water?
4. How can the design strengthen Woodstock's character, support local businesses, improve walkability, and create a public benefit beyond housing?

Professional Advisor

XXX has been appointed to serve as the Professional Advisor for this design competition . As advisor s/he will be responsible for ensuring that the competition is conducted in a fair and equitable manner, and will be responsible for coordination of the competition's rules and procedures. S/he will also serve as the primary intermediary between the design competitors, the Town of Woodstock, and the jury.

Required Deliverables

Each submission should provide a single PDF not to exceed 10 pages. Submissions should be uploaded at WEBADDRESS. The submission document should include a ***Concept Statement***, which is a brief written statement, no more than 500 words, describing the central idea of the proposal and how it addresses the Town's goals of creating affordable housing, preserving meaningful municipal parking capacity, improving the public realm, supporting local businesses, advancing sustainable design, and enhancing the character and walkability of Woodstock. In addition, the submission must include the required drawings and diagrams, and may include the supplemental drawings, each of which is described below.

Required drawings. In addition to the Concept Statement, all contestants should submit the following drawings:

1. **Site Plan.** A site plan showing the proposed location of buildings, the arrangement of 50 municipal parking spaces, residential parking, vehicle entrances and exits, pedestrian routes, service areas, outdoor spaces, landscape areas, and connections to surrounding streets, sidewalks, the cemetery, wetlands, and nearby commercial areas.
2. **Housing Concept Plan.** A conceptual housing plan showing the approximate number of units, unit mix, building height, massing, entries, circulation, outdoor space, and relationship to parking and public areas. The Town has not established a required minimum or maximum number of housing units for this conceptual exercise. Contestants should propose a number of units that they believe can be accommodated on the site while meeting the parking, public realm, sustainability, zoning, and community character goals described in this brief. But submissions should assume a mix of approximately 20% studio units, 60% one-bedroom units, and 20% two-bedroom units, unless the contestant presents a compelling alternative. Contestants can assume that occupants will earn no more than 80% of AMI.
3. **Renderings & Perspective Views.** At least two perspective views, including one view from the existing Rock City Road approach and one view showing the relationship among housing, parking, landscape, and public space. Renderings may be hand-drawn, digitally modeled, or otherwise graphically represented.

Suggested Supplemental Visual Materials. Contestants may also provide additional visual or diagrammatic material outlining other significant aspects of the design. These may include:

1. **Sustainability and High-Performance Design Strategy.** A short description and supporting diagram identifying the proposal's sustainable, resilient, and high-performance design strategies. These may include passive house principles, all-electric or zero-carbon heating systems, solar orientation, low-carbon materials, stormwater management, shade trees, energy-efficient building envelopes, and healthy indoor environments.
2. **Context and Character Drawings.** Drawings showing how the proposed buildings relate to the surroundings and to the broader character of Woodstock. These might be building elevation drawings or façade studies showing the proposed architectural character of the housing. The drawing should indicate the general approach to building scale, roof form, materials, fenestration, entrances, balconies or porches if proposed, and the treatment of the ground floor.
3. **Public Realm and Community Benefit Plan.** A diagram, plan, or narrative description showing how the proposal improves the site as a community asset. Possible public

benefits may include a small plaza, improved pedestrian connections to the town center, landscaped open space, stormwater gardens, public access near the wetlands where appropriate, seating, lighting, public art, or other civic features.

Format. Drawings must be submitted in digital form as digital form as flattened pdfs, high resolution jpegs, or pngs and constrained to 10MB per drawing. In addition, 6 copies of the required drawings and other supplemental visual representations of the competitor's choice should also be printed and submitted [give address] in 11x17 inch format for distribution to the panel of judges.

Evaluation Criteria

The jury will evaluate submissions based on the following criteria:

1. Strength of the overall concept and clarity of presentation.
2. Quality of the site plan, including the relationship among housing, municipal parking, residential parking, pedestrian routes, vehicle traffic, service areas, landscape, and public space.
3. Quality and plausibility of the affordable housing concept, including unit mix, scale, massing, entries, circulation, outdoor space, and relationship to parking and public areas.
4. Contribution to the public realm and potential to create a community benefit beyond housing and parking.
5. Fit with Woodstock's character, including relationship to nearby buildings, the historic cemetery, the wetlands, and the central business district.
6. Strength of sustainable, resilient, and high-performance design strategies.
7. Practicality and feasibility at a conceptual level.

Materials provided

The following materials will be available to registered contestants:

- Document 1 contains the Fisher report, which provides a range of important information about the site, including the site location map. It also includes the Woodstock Housing Committee's parking study.
- Document 2 provides a zoning summary.
- Document 3, Woodstock's submission to the Pro-housing Community Program of New York State, provides additional information about zoning. Although the Mountain View parking lot is currently zoned R1, contestants may assume HC zoning for purposes of this conceptual exercise, as described in the Fisher report. Contestants may identify limited departures from HC zoning where they believe such departures would substantially improve the proposal, but they should clearly explain the departure and the reason for it. Contestants should not exceed the 2.5-story height limit for residential structures.

- Document 4 provides the Phase I environmental site assessment report created by Fisher Associates.
- Document 5 provides various photographs of the Mountain View lot.

Additional information on the parcel can be found on the Ulster County Parcel Viewer by searching for SBL number 27.54-3-6.

Anonymous Submission, Jury Review, and Prizes

The competition is open to individuals and teams, including architecture students, architects, planners, landscape architects, other design professionals, and interested members of the public. For prize purposes, a “student submission” is one submitted by an individual currently enrolled in a degree-granting undergraduate or graduate program, or by a team in which all team members are currently enrolled students. All other submissions will be considered non-student submissions.

To ensure a fair review process, submissions will be evaluated anonymously. Contestants must register at WEBADDRESS. As part of the registration process, contestants will complete a contact information form that will be accessible only to the Professional Advisor and his/her administrator. Each registered contestant or team will be assigned a unique submission code. This code must appear on the cover page and on each sheet of the submission PDF. There is no fee to register or submit a proposal.

Contestants should not include names, school affiliations, firm names, logos, email addresses, or other identifying information anywhere in the submission materials. Submissions that include identifying information may be disqualified or, at the discretion of the Professional Advisor, returned to the contestant for correction before the submission deadline.

Jury members will receive only the anonymous submissions and will not be informed of the identities of contestants, school affiliations, professional status, or student/non-student category until after the jury has completed its review and ranked the submissions.

Prizes. There is a 2,500 dollar prize for the overall winning submission and a \$1,500 dollar prize for the top student submission. If the overall winning submission is a student submission, it will receive the 2,500 dollar prize. At the discretion of the jury, up to two honorable mention prizes of 500 dollars each can be awarded for non-student submissions, and up to two honorable mention prizes of up to 500 dollars each can be awarded for student submissions. If there are no eligible submissions in either the student or non-student category, the corresponding prize or recognition will not be awarded.

The Professional Advisor will determine student or non-student prize eligibility after the jury has completed its ranking, based solely on the information provided in the confidential registration materials.

Questions and Addenda

Questions may be submitted to the Professional Advisor at woodstockcontestadmin@gmail.com by the question deadline listed in the competition schedule. Responses to questions of general relevance will be posted for all registered contestants. Any clarifications or changes to the competition requirements will be issued as written addenda and will become part of the competition materials.

Jury Composition and Review

Submissions will be reviewed by a jury composed of individuals with relevant design, housing, planning, sustainability, business, and community expertise. The jury may include architects, urban designers, affordable housing practitioners, landscape architects, sustainability or high-performance building experts, local business representatives, community representatives, and municipal or planning representatives. The names and affiliations of jury members will be announced before the submission deadline.

Competition Schedule

Registration opens: [DATE]

Deadline for submitting questions: [DATE]

Responses to questions posted: [DATE]

Submission deadline: [DATE and TIME]

Jury review: [DATE RANGE]

Announcement of results: [DATE]

Public display or presentation of selected submissions: [DATE]

Use of Submissions

Contestants will retain ownership of their submissions. By submitting, contestants grant the Town permission to display, publish, reproduce, and discuss their submissions, with appropriate credit after the anonymous jury review has concluded, for purposes related to public discussion, planning, community engagement, and evaluation of possible uses of the Mountain View parking lot. Submission does not create a contract for design services or guarantee that any proposal will be implemented.

***We need to clarify our rights to use all or part of the ideas in a submission. What if we want to use part of the design? How do we protect our right to use what we want? Parts or wholes?

Conceptual Nature of Submissions

This competition is intended to generate conceptual ideas for public discussion and planning, not to create a contract for future work. Submissions are therefore not expected to include

construction documents, zoning applications, engineering plans, financial proposals, or final development plans.