

Peaceable Kingdom I Planned Unit Development
Subdivision Amendment Application
July 24, 2024

The goal of Peaceable Kingdom is to create traditional housing units around a central common or village green with houses built in non-repetitive building types and in the Federal and Greek Revival styles popular from 1800 to 1850.

Peaceable Kingdom is named after a series of paintings done by Quaker sign painter and minister Edward Hicks in Pennsylvania during the years 1816 to 1849, roughly the years of the Federal and Greek Revival architectural styles in United States. There are 62 versions of the painting in museums and private collections and may be the most widely recognized icons of American folk art today. The subject matter represents William Penn signing a treaty with Native Americans in the background with wild and domestic animals and small children all living together in peace in the foreground.

Richmond's Peaceable Kingdom -

Since the six-unit Peaceable Kingdom Planned Unit Development was approved several years ago four units have been built and sold and a fifth unit is about 90% complete, leaving one approved lot that has not been developed. This amendment is proposing 3 more units. While these units have been planned for years they could not be proposed at the time because the one-acre zoning in the area limited the number of units to what was approved.

The planning commission has proposed new zoning for the residential areas of the village that allows for 5 units per acre as is required by a state law that took effect in July 2023. This proposal complies with the proposed zoning changes and also with the year-old state law. While the zoning changes may not be fully approved by the Selectboard before the DRB hearing on this proposed amendment, the state law has been in effect for over a year and it supersedes the local zoning regulations.

The proposal expands the common land and adds three new building lots, all with frontage on the central common area. All the lots are accessed from Peaceable Street or from a driveway off Peaceable Street.

Peaceable Kingdom is comprised of two parcels that were combined. First, a 5.24 acres portion of the old Barney Farm was purchased from Betty Preston and her son Bill Preston. The Barney farm was farmed by Betty's parents Cleland and Loantha Barney and by his brother Maitland. They farmed the village land working only with a team of horses (and no tractors) until the state imposed rules that farms had to have stainless-steel bulk tanks, a costly capital improvement that drove them and hundreds of other farmers out of business.

The other property added to Peaceable Kingdom was the former Carpenter residence sitting on .48 acres. This was formerly a Queen Ann style house that was heavily renovated into the Greek Revival two-unit residence that it is today.

Combined, these two properties total 5.72 acres of relatively flat land in the village, on municipal water and sewer, located next to 190 acres of conserved land open to the public. The units are located around central common land totaling 1.38 acres (24% of the total development), 8 residential units (six single family and one two-unit) on lots ranging from .11 acre to .50 acre, plus one 2.64-acre lot. Given the need for housing, the in-town location of this site and the high carrying cost of keeping this 2.64 acre lot open it is likely that there will be future subdivision amendments for more lots, but at this time we do not have plans for this lot. It is important that this land not be encumbered to prevent future residences or other uses allowed under zoning regulations and the terms of the Declaration of the planned unit development.

Because of the proximity to the Round Church and the homes surrounding the Round Church Park, the homes in Peaceable Kingdom have been designed to be compatible with the existing Federal and Greek Revival architecture that surrounds the green.

Master Development Plan for Peaceable Kingdom

To understand the future development plans for Peaceable Kingdom I will first explain the history of the development. Jean and I purchased the 5.24 acre parcel from Betty and Bill Preston around January 2012. For several years we worked on various development plans for the area including single-family, duplex and multi-family designs. Some I had drawn up by Matt Dyer while he was working for Hillview Design. In the end I did not like any of the designs I had come up with.

I thought we had a breakthrough when we visited the restored Shaker Village at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, and spent the night there. I was heavily influenced by the improved feel of the place created by both the architecture and the removal of automobiles from the central part of the village. We returned home and got approval for multiple small houses connected by a covered walkway leading to a barn containing garages for each unit with storage above, with the parking on the side of the barn facing away from the houses. The barn was modeled after the Shaker Barn at Shelburne Museum that had been moved to the museum from the Shaker Village in Canterbury, New Hampshire.

My sons Lincoln, Jackson and Max and I built the house that is yellow on the south side of Peaceable Street owned by Gerry and Rose Feenan. Our shorthand for this property is PK4 and it is unit 4 on the master plan. The porch on PK4 is at two levels because at the time of construction the lower portion was designed to be the beginning of the covered walkway connecting to the other units and then to the garage/storage barn. In the end we abandoned the covered walkway design because we found out people do not want to be separated from their automobiles, even by a hundred feet.

PK4 is so heavily influenced by the Bretheren's Shop at the Hancock Shaker Village in Massachusetts and the West Family Wash House at Pleasant Hill that it is nearly a copy of these utilitarian designs. The paint color is close to the color used by the Shakers but it did not come from there. Jean and I drove all around Vermont looking for the right color and found the yellow on a beautiful old house in East Dorset. The town clerk put me in touch with the owner of the house who said it had originally been the Deming Tavern and the paint color was determined to be the original color. I had a quart made at the paint store where that color was made in Manchester, Vermont, and we matched it at a closer paint store.

Thanks to the financial backing of Jim Feinson and North Country Federal Credit Union we managed to purchase the Carpenter House located at the corner of Thompson Road and Cochran Road and began a multi-year renovation that transformed the single family Victorian home into a two-family Greek Revival home. Jackson, Lincoln and I along with Ben Feinson completely removed all the interior walls and floors, and the roof structure. In the end we only saved the exterior walls and even that had every window opening moved and rebuilt. It was the kind of massive makeover that I will never do again.

The two-unit structure is now owned by two separate owners where each owner owns their half of the building. They are not condominiums as they own the outside of their half and it is closer to a townhouse. The design was influenced by the second of the three major architectural influences on Peaceable Kingdom, Nantucket architecture. Jean's family had a summer place on Nantucket and for twenty years I was lucky to spend about a week a year visiting the island in summer. Nantucket is nearly unique in its approach to historic preservation. Unlike almost everywhere else, Nantucket requires adherence to one codified architectural style developed largely by the Quakers. Like the Shakers the homes are relatively simple and unadorned, masking the extreme wealth that now dominates the island. The architectural period that was developed when Nantucket was a center for whaling is still the dominate style today. Units PK1 and PK2 would not be out of place on an in-town lot in Nantucket today.

The next home that was built is PK5 built for Sharon and Gene Hallman. Its design was inspired by the continuous architecture found on many farms around New England. This style is explored in the book Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn and while examples exist in Chittenden County, I think of it being most prevalent along the Connecticut River in both Vermont and New Hampshire. It is a design for cold climates where animals could be taken care of in the winter without the farmer having to go out in the cold to get to the barn.

The design for the house currently under construction, PK7, was inspired by some of the Shaker residential structures in various Shaker villages, many two-story New England homes during the 1800 to 1850 period and early meeting houses like the Rockingham Meetinghouse located in Rockingham, Vermont.

The goal with the remaining lots is to continue to explore building types from the 1800 to 1850 period in New England architecture. We have complete plans for a one-room schoolhouse home for PK3, the lot on the north side of the entrance to Peaceable

Kingdom. This design is inspired by the converted one-room schoolhouse west of Middlebury, Vermont, I think on Route 125.

I have many ideas for PK6, the lot at the head of the green, and the one with the best view of the Round Church. Depending on the design the access to this parcel could be from either side of the lot.

The home on PK8 has not been designed but because of the elevation of the underdrain main line the basement might look like the one at the town center where the basement is elevated. This style is prevalent in Nantucket.

The lot with 2.64 acres will for now store tools and materials needed for construction of homes, although it likely will become sites for more homes at some point in the future.

Specific details of the plan:

Change of Name -

Because I plan to develop our land at 552 Bridge Street and wish to continue to use the name Peaceable Kingdom I am requesting for permitting purposes that this area around Peaceable Street becomes Peaceable Kingdom I (Roman numeral I) and future areas will have the designation of Peaceable Kingdom II, etc. For general purposes any and all Peaceable Kingdom areas will simply be known as part of Peaceable Kingdom.

Street and Driveways -

Peaceable Street is 18 feet wide except where it meets Thompson Road where it is wider. The two shared driveways off Peaceable Street are proposed to be 14 feet wide. One has been in existence for a few years and works well. Roads are gravel with no curbing both to appear as they would in early 1800s and to reduce HOA costs.

Sidewalks -

Sidewalks are not proposed in Peaceable Kingdom because there is almost no traffic in the development and the gravel roads have worked well as sidewalks. We are trying for a look that is like what would have been found between 1800 and 1850. Another reason is to save costs to the Homeowners Association members. Sidewalks are expensive to maintain during the winter and I doubt the association members would even pay to plow the snow off them as it would double the plowing costs because it would require different equipment from a street plow. My experience has been that HOA members do not really like HOAs and for that reason I have tried to keep the Peaceable Kingdom HOA expenses as low as possible.

Landscaping -

The answer to this is basically the same as for sidewalks. All homes are on lots owned by the homeowners and that is where landscaping takes place. The common area is designed as an open lawn, much like Thomas Jefferson designed for the Academic Village he created at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville Virginia. This reduces the cost of maintenance for members of the HOA and reduces the chances of

homeowners losing their view of the Round Church. The only maintenance cost for landscaping is to pay an equal share for the mowing service that mows the lawn.

Fencing -

Fencing is allowed, with limits set out in the Declaration, on individual lots, but not on the Common Area where they would become expenses of the HOA.

Exterior Lighting -

Exterior Lighting is allowed, with limits set out in the Declaration and in zoning, on individual lots, but not on the Common Area where they would become expenses of the HOA. It is the goal to keep light from the exterior of one lot from lighting up neighboring lots.

Wetland and Wetland Buffers -

The wetland was delineated in 2023 and buildings and roads/driveways are kept 50 feet away from the wetlands.

Total Number of Units -

The total number of units will be significantly less than what is allowed under the 5 units per acre in the legislation from the state. The only addition to the eight units on seven lots proposed is in the unlikely situation whereby the Wells property is added to Peaceable Kingdom at some point in the future. If that should happen some of that lot could be added to the trapezoidal area of land north of Lot 8 to create another lot. Also, the large Wells house could possibly become two units. This would create a total of five units on each side of the Common Area plus one at the head of the Common Area for a total of 11 units. This does not include what will happen to the 2.64 acre Lot 8. Under the Declaration this can be developed as part of Peaceable Kingdom or removed and developed. Either way the area retains the right to use Peaceable Street and all utilities and utility easements under the Declaration.

Water Supply Source Protection Area District -

Much, if not all of the land in Peaceable Kingdom I is within the Water Source Protection Area. Nothing we have proposed is a problem under that ordinance.

Storm Water Regulations -

I have hired an engineer to determine what I need to do to meet any stormwater regulations. This is a much longer process than I had thought it would be. My previous approval allows me to build the house that is 90% complete without going through the Storm Water permitting process. I would like to transfer that house and have the Storm Water permitting, if required, done before any other homes are constructed.

Sequencing -

I do not foresee more than one home being built in a year. It is possible that there could be two per year.

Restrictive Covenants -

Restrictive covenants are found in the Declaration.

Waiver Request –

1. Request permission to have the roads built without paving and curbing to match what we were allowed to do in the first half of development and to create a look that matches the buildings we have built and will build.
2. Request permission to not build sidewalks and to use the road and driveways to walk on.
3. Request permission to have the Common Area remain a large open lawn and to allow the owners of the houses to install landscaping on their properties as they see fit in accordance with conditions in the Declaration.
4. Request permission to transfer the nearly completed house on PK7 since it was approved in a subdivision approval in a previous application, with the stipulation that no future homes may be permitted until storm water approvals, if needed, have been obtained.
5. Any other waiver that I might need to transfer PK7 as soon as it is finished, including waiving the requirement for separate preliminary and final plan hearings.

Adjoining Property Owners to the Common Area and to Proposed New Lots:

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| 1. | Ed and Susan Wells
44 Cochran Road, Richmond, VT 05477 | Parcel Code C00044 |
| 2. | Jay and Laura Moltz
23 Huntington Road, Richmond, VT 05477 | Parcel Code HU0023 |
| 3. | Gerald and Rose Feenan
22 Peaceable Street, Richmond VT 05477 | Parcel Code PE0022 |
| 4. | Gene and Sharon Hallman
24 Peaceable Street, Richmond, VT 05477 | Parcel Code PE0024 |
| 5. | Samantha Fox and Daniel Mullen
25 Thompson Road, Unit 1, Richmond, VT | Parcel Code TR0025, Unit 1 |
| 6. | Kathleen Mulligan
25 Thompson Road, Unit 2, Richmond, VT | Parcel Code TR0025, Unit 2 |
| 7. | Darcy Preston
85 Thompson Road, Richmond, VT 05477 | Parcel Code TR0085 |

