



DATA SHEET FOR RECREATION PLAN REVIEW
Review of Revised Active Recreation Area Plan

PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING OF December 9, 2025
Planning Commission Meeting of December 15, 2025

Plan Title: The Old Post at 55 Loockerman Plaza (S-25-07 Revised)

Plan Type: REVISED Site Development Plan: Revised Active Recreation Area Plan

Location: Northwest corner of Loockerman Plaza and Innovation Way in Dover, DE

Tax Parcel: ED-05-077.05-04-53.00-000

Previous Owner: City of Dover
Current Owner: Old Post, LLC

Property Area: 1.267 Acres +/-

Proposed Use: Mixed-Use Commercial and Multi-family Housing (Apartments – 42 dwelling units) and associated parking

Zoning: C-2 (Central Commercial Zone)
H (Historic District Zone)
SWPOZ (Source Water Protection Overlay Zone): Tier 3- Excellent Recharge Area – portion of site

I. Project Summary

The Revised Old Post project will be reviewed as a Site Development Plan and for Architectural Review Certification by the Planning Commission. The Plan proposes redevelopment of the 1.267-acre site formerly occupied by the Dover Post Office. The project involves the demolition of the rear warehouse portion of the existing building, reconstruction of the rear portion of the building into four-story apartment structure (building addition of 43,092 SF), and adaptive reuse of part of the front 4,560 SF portion of the building for restaurant, commercial retail or business space. The Revision includes proposed increases in apartment unit count from 36 to 42 units and architectural changes consisting of a second-floor addition to the front wings.

II. Active Recreation Area Plan Summary:

As part of the Plan review process for this project, the applicant is required to provide open space and Active Recreation Area in accordance with the *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 5, Section 10.

Dover Code of Ordinances, Appendix B – Zoning, Article 5 – Supplementary Regulations, Section 10 – Open Space, Recreation and Other Public Facilities (select excerpts).

Article 5 Section 10

Section 10. - Open space, recreation, and other public facilities.

The City of Dover shall require the reservation of open space, recreation, and other public facilities in accordance with the provisions of this section as a condition of approval for all one-family dwelling, two-family dwelling and multiple-family dwelling residential developments requiring conditional use approval, site development plan approval, or land subdivision approval by the City of Dover Planning Commission.

10.1 Recreation areas.

10.11 Purpose. The purpose of this section is to ensure that active recreation areas are provided as an integral design element within residential developments and that such facilities are of an adequate scale in relation to the size of the residential development and which provide residents with a variety of active recreational pursuits.

10.12 Dedication required. The commission shall require the dedication or reservation of recreation areas, and the subsequent construction of recreation facilities of a character, extent and location suitable to the needs created by a development for recreation facilities as defined and in accordance with the design guidelines set forth.

10.13 Definition. The following are illustrative of the types of recreation areas and subsequent facilities that shall be deemed to serve active recreational needs and therefore to count toward satisfaction of the recreation area requirements of this section: tennis courts, handball courts, racquetball courts, swimming pools, saunas and exercise rooms, meeting or activity rooms within clubhouses, baseball and soccer fields, basketball courts, volleyball courts, swings, slides and play apparatus, and developed walking, jogging or biking trails.

Because the project is located within the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area, it qualifies for an exemption under Article 5, §10.515 *Residential developments located within the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area as defined in Appendix C*. Under this provision, the applicant must provide 75 square feet of active recreation per dwelling unit with a minimum of 2,500 square feet provided on site. See code excerpt:

Article 5 §10.5 *Exemption to recreation area and open space dedication.*

10.51 Exemptions for small developments.

10.515 *Residential developments located within the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area as defined in Appendix C*. These developments shall be exempt from the area requirements set forth in section 10.16, but shall be required to provide 75 square feet of active recreation area per dwelling unit with a minimum of 2,500 square feet provided on site. If the commission determines that the construction of the entirety of the required active recreation area is not practical or desirable, the commission shall require a cash in lieu donation for the active recreation area determined as not practical or desirable. Cash in lieu shall be calculated in accordance with subsection 10.173 of this article.

The Site Plan set includes information on the proposed Active Recreation amenities along with a Narrative Letter. A separate Active Recreation Plan sheet was not provided for the project. The Site Plan sheet and Landscape Plan sheets identify a proposed East Zen Garden area between the building addition and Innovation Way with a fenced area of 2,424 SF including benches and a yoga area; and a West Zen Garden with an area of 1,646 SF between the building and the parking area including benches. The building plans provided show a gym on the second floor of 506 SF. As currently shown on the floor plan, this area of the building is not accessible to persons with disabilities due to a series of steps to move from the rear addition into the front portion of the existing building. However, the Narrative Letter indicates that the steps will be replaced with a ramp system for access.

This Revised Active Recreation component must be reviewed by the Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee for a recommendation prior to consideration of the Site Plan by Planning Commission. Previously, the initial version of the Old Post project was presented to the Parks, Recreation and Community Enhancement Committee on March 11, 2025 for recommendations. The Site Plan S-25-07 The Old Post was then granted conditional approval by the Planning Commission on March 17, 2025. This Application Revised S-25-07 will be subject to the same process with a public hearing before the Planning Commission.

The following table provides information from the submitted Revised Plans and drawings for The Old Post project showing the Active Recreation Area plan. This focuses on the amenities specifically being developed with this project:

	Required	Provided on Plan
Active Recreation Area (Article 5 §10.515)	75 SF per dwelling unit or 2,500 SF, greater thereof 42 DU = 3,150 SF Requires 3,150 SF	2,424 SF East Zen Garden with Yoga Area, Walking Path, and benches 1,646 SF West Zen Garden with benches 506 SF Gym Total: 4,576 SF
Active Recreation Amenities (Article 5 §10.15)	Accessible	The Zen Gardens do not identify the walking path surface. The benches are placed near sidewalks or paths. The gym on the second floor will be accessible if the ramp system is implemented in place of steps.
Active Recreation Amenities (Article 5 §10.15)	Age Oriented to development	Amenities can be used by a variety of age groups.
	Parking	The entire site has 65 parking spaces on site to serve the residents with other parking nearby. Bicycle rack at southwest corner of building and indoor bike storage area also.
	Setbacks: 30 feet from residential lots and 25 feet from right-of-way for street	Amenities do not include game courts that are subject to this requirement.
	Landscaping	The Landscape Plan shows trees and shrubs in both East and West Zen Garden areas.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following are comments and recommendations from Staff of the Department of Planning & Inspections and the Parks & Recreation Department following review of the Active Recreation Area proposed for The Old Post project as Revised.

1. The Revised project plan is required to provide 3,150 SF of Active Recreation Area. The Plan shows a 2,424 SF East Zen Garden, a 1,646 SF West Zen Garden, and a second-floor gym that measures approximately 506 SF. The Plan meets the area requirements.
2. With the updated details provided about the Active Recreation amenities for the site, staff recommends approval of the Active Recreation Plan subject to the following clarifications or conditions for the details of the recreational amenities:
 - a. Identify surface of Yoga Area and ensure connection to accessible pathway.
 - b. Identify surface materials of the Walking Pathway and its width.
 - c. Ensure placement of the benches are accessible from the walking pathway and allow for someone to move off the pathway to rest.
 - d. Ensure the placement of light posts does not impede any sidewalk. Check light post positions along the parking area.
 - e. Ensure that the gym space is accessible from the rear addition and through any doors. Due to the difference in floor-to-floor heights a ramp system or other format will be necessary rather than just steps. This will need to comply with applicable Building Codes and Fire Codes.
3. Staff recommends a greater mix of tree plantings as currently as all tree plantings in the Zen Garden areas are proposed as Columnar Oak trees (QR). If disease or pests impact this tree type there is the potential to lose all trees since they are of the same variety.
4. The applicant should submit an Active Recreation Plan sheet or augment the current plan set to clearly provide the Active Recreation area calculations and details on the proposed Zen Garden areas and gym and indoor bicycle storage area.
5. Staff notes that this location in the Downtown is in a walkable area where the sidewalk system leads to open space areas like Mirror Lake Park, Silver Lake Park, the Legislative Mall area, and The Green and to the Capital City/St. Jones Greenway trail system.
6. The applicant is reminded of the requirements for construction phasing of the recreation area associated with the development of the residential units. With all residential units in one building, the recreation amenities will have to be completed in conjunction with the building's construction and prior to issuance of a Final Certificate of Occupancy.

Article 5 §10.6 Construction Phasing. The recreation and open space areas shall be completed in a proportion equal to or greater than the proportion of residential dwelling units completed, except that one hundred (100) percent of the recreation and open space areas shall be completed prior to issuing building permits for the final twenty (20) percent of the dwelling units proposed. Building permits shall not be issued for dwelling units unless the requirements of this section are met.

7. There shall be provisions which ensure that the common open space land (including active recreation area) shall continue as such and be properly managed and maintained. The developer shall either retain ownership and responsibility for maintenance of such open land; or provide for and establish one (1) or more organizations for the ownership and maintenance of all common open space i.e. a Homeowners Association. The organization shall be responsible for maintenance, insurance and taxes on the common open space.

IV. ADVISORY COMMENTS

1. In the event that major changes and revisions to the Revised Site Plan occur in the finalization of the Site Plan, contact the Department of Planning and Inspections. Examples include reorientation of building, relocation of site components, and increases in floor area. These changes may require resubmittal for review by the Development Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, or other agencies and commissions making recommendations in regard to the plan.
2. The Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee shall submit to the Planning Commission a report detailing the recommendations as to the Recreation Area Plan.

Attachments:

- Revised S-25-07 Plan Set (print date 12/3/2025)
- Narrative Letter on Recreation Plan
- Select Floor Plans: First Floor and Second Floor
- Cover Page from Architectural Graphics Set (from Historic District Commission Presentation)

Note: This Revised Review Report was initially prepared by Staff of the Rossi Group (under a Planning Services contract with the City of Dover). The Report was completed with additional review and editing by the City's Planning Office.