

General Planning & Design Considerations for Independent Living Housing



Version 2 - Revision 1
Issue Date: January 18, 2021

Contents

Site Planning.....	4
Landscaping.....	4
Utilities	4
Exterior Lighting.....	5
Exterior Site Furniture.....	5
Security & Fire.....	5
Porte Cochere	5
Vestibule	6
Main Lobby	6
Elevators	6
Stairs and Ramps.....	7
Resident Coordinator Office	7
Lounge, Multipurpose, Activity, Community Room.....	7
Public Toilets	8
Corridors & Main Hallway.....	8
Apartment Units	9
Laundry Facilities.....	10
Trash Room	10
Janitors Closet.....	11
Additional Storage	11
Mechanical Equipment Room(s).....	11

INTRODUCTION

These General Considerations for Planning & Design are provided as a resource for developer, design, & construction professionals who are engaged in the planning and design of [Home of My Own of WNY](#) Independent Living Housing. Our team believes it is important that our partners understand our mission, vision, and values related to this project.

It is not our intent to limit the ingenuity or originality of the design & construction professionals but to convey our minimum, preferences, desires, and expectations. Developers, design, and construction professionals are encouraged to bring forward ideas and suggestions that improve the quality and use of the property. If specific site conditions, codes, rules, regulations, or laws warrant a major deviation from these considerations, [Home of My Own of WNY](#) should be notified prior to proceeding with proposed design work.

Our Mission

To create apartment communities tailored to independent individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who desire to live in a safe, social, and integrated community with lifelong sustainability.

Our Vision

Our apartments are an inclusive, community-focused model. Readily available opportunities for socialization in and within close walking distance of their homes creates organic, meaningful interactions and opportunities that inspire the pathways to friendship and independence. Our community-centered location will provide easy accessibility to public transportation, employment opportunities, and leisure that will provide for life-long sustainability.

Our Values

Supported housing options need to be diverse if a person's rights are to be met. Individuals have the right to live as independently as is possible, in an environment that is appropriate to them. They need housing in community-centered spaces and opportunities that promote inclusion. Individuals should not be deprived of any civil or legal rights because of a diagnosis of a developmental disability. They deserve respect and dignity.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLANNING & DESIGN

Site Planning

1. The location for the new independent living housing should be decided only after careful review and understanding of the [Home of My Own of WNY](#) mission, vision, values, and guidance from the organization.
2. Buildings, driveways, retention ponds, should be sited to minimize the loss of landscape and use as little land area as possible.
3. Roadways, sidewalks, curb cuts, stairs, and access ways should connect the building with the other parts of the surrounding community as appropriate.
4. Pedestrian circulation should be considered in relation to surrounding community and adjacent facilities. Walkability is an important design requirement as many of our residents will rely on walking, public transportation, and biking.
5. Roadways, sidewalks curb cuts, and access ways should consider resident bicycle use.
6. Sidewalks and accessway should consider ice and snow controls beyond shoveling i.e., heated main sidewalk, etc.
7. Parking lot size should be determined based on low expected resident vehicle ownership, visitor use, and future introduction of autonomous self-driving electric vehicles. This should include electrical vehicle charging capability.
8. Patios and other areas for resident congregation should be included in the design and encourage social gathering and residents leaving their apartments. This includes outdoor socialization areas that can accommodate cook outs, parties, relaxation, etc. These areas could be incorporated into a building design. I.e., roof tops, balconies, or at grade.
9. Transformers, backflow preventers, dumpster enclosures, and other service structures should be in non-prominent locations and screened as needed to avoid being visually distracting.
10. Design should meet ADA requirements for both internal and external access. Consideration should also be made for accessibility to other areas of the surrounding community outside the limits of the site.

Landscaping

1. Consideration should be given to plant materials that are easily maintained and attractive.
2. Grass lawns and open areas should be sodded or seeded with a turf that is consistent with resident three (3) season use for light sports, activities, and pets.
3. Consideration should be given to the location of a resident community vegetable and flower garden(s).
4. Consideration should be given to the location of bike racks for resident use.
5. For all landscaped and grassed areas consideration should be made for an irrigation system.

Utilities

1. All utilities should be connected to existing public utility services (i.e., no septic, wells, etc.)
2. Gas and electric utilities should be metered for each apartment.

3. A backup generator able to maintain emergency lighting within common areas, one light within each apartment unit, security systems, WIFI/other communications, and available outlets in each apartment or common area for medical equipment use should be considered.
4. Interior building utility/utility chases should be so designed for ease of access to facilitate maintenance and upgrades.

Exterior Lighting

1. Exterior lighting should be provided for building entrances, walks, stairs, roadways, parking, bike rack locations, etc. to ensure resident safety and security.
2. LED should be strongly considered for exterior and interior lighting.

Exterior Site Furniture

1. Benches and other amenities should be considered exterior to the building to encourage resident socialization.
2. Bike racks should be considered, rack parking for 50% of building residents.
3. Bike racks should be placed on concrete pads and secured to prevent them from being moved from the designated areas.
4. Bike racks should be covered by a canopy or other structure to allow prolonged use.

Security & Fire

1. The design of the building and grounds must reflect the importance of resident security.
2. Security considerations should include but not limited to; access control with a limited point of entry into the building, exterior door locking systems that restrict access for non-residents, interior apartment door locking systems, and alarm systems for service and egress only doors.
3. Building and apartment access control systems should have the ability to be monitored and controlled remotely.
4. Interior and exterior video surveillance should be provided to cover all public spaces and all doors.
5. Considerations should be made for fire alarm systems in apartments to provide coverage by four different methods listed within NFPA 72: textual, tactile, visual, and audible.
6. Considerations for the rapid detection and extinguishment of a fire in each apartment unit & common areas should be part of the design.
7. Considerations for sprinkler system installation that meets NFPA 13, ICC, and/or other local AHJ requirements.
8. Considerations should be made for the installation of large Knox box for local fire department facility access.
9. Emergency vehicle access should be coordinated with the local fire department.

Porte Cochere

1. A covered entrance large enough for vehicles (including small passenger vans/busses) to pass through should be considered at the main building entrance.

Vestibule

1. A vestibule should be considered at the building main entrance doors. The vestibule should be sized so that doors have sufficient clearance from one another to provide accessibility for the disabled.
2. A walk-off mat or grate should be considered in main entrance vestibules.
3. At a minimum, one pair of double doors, each leaf a minimum of thirty-six inches wide, should be considered at main entrances to facilitate resident move-in/out.
4. Consideration should be given to providing automatic opening doors.
5. Card access or proximity reader systems should be considered at each door to prevent unauthorized access to the building.
6. Resident visitor “buzz in” system should be considered at vestibule to allow residents to provide visitor access.

Main Lobby

1. A Resident Coordinator office should be located so that it is visible and/or easily accessible from the lobby.
2. A space for a reception/security desk should be considered at the main lobby adjacent the main entrance. Electrical connections should be provided near the desk location.
3. Resident mailboxes for each apartment unit should be considered at the main lobby near the Resident Coordinator office.
4. Floor finishes should be durable, slip-resistant, easily cleaned materials that can withstand water and dirt tracked into the building by residents and visitors.
5. Wall construction and finishes should be of durable materials capable of resisting impact and gouging.
6. Ceilings should be acoustical in nature and limit noise.

Elevators

1. A minimum of one elevator per building is required. The number of apartment units alone/AHJ requirements alone should not drive the number of elevators. The resident population using elevators may have mobility and other issues.
2. Consider locating elevators near stairs to encourage stair use. In addition to health benefits for residents this will minimize elevator energy use.
3. The elevator(s) should be located to facilitate move-in/out and should be service type with additional weight capacity and oversized car.
4. The elevator(s) should be of such a size to house an emergency EMS stretcher.
5. Elevator cab finishes should be of durable, damage-resistant materials.
6. Consider access control card system for elevators resident use.

Stairs and Ramps

1. Consideration should be made for resident mobility issues related to slower movement, resident stature (i.e., height), and other needs.
2. Ramps are preferable to stairs for small changes in elevation.
3. Stair and ramp finishes should be durable, slip-resistant, easily cleaned materials.
4. Electrical receptacles should be provided stair locations to accommodate cleaning equipment.

Resident Coordinator Office

1. The Resident Coordinator office should be near the main building entrance and entrance lobby.
2. The Resident Coordinator office should be designed to encourage residents approaching the resident coordinator when the office is occupied.
3. The office layout should consider multiple uses by 1 or more individuals including outside vendors.
4. Electrical and communication device considerations should include at minimum; convenience outlets, telephone outlet, security system viewing, cable tv, data outlet(s), high speed wireless technology, security, fire system, and other controls.
5. FFE in the office include all those appropriate for general office use.

Lounge, Multipurpose, Activity, Community Room

1. This room(s) can be configured and equipped in many ways for many different uses. Our vision is to provide spaces for our residents that highly encourage social interaction, allow ample space to conduct group activities, provide a home away from home feel, and allow a multitude of programmatic use. Please contact [Home of My Own of WNY](#) for more information related to our vision for these spaces. Examples of activities that should be considered for these spaces include:
 - a. Resident Socialization / “hanging out”
 - b. Gym and Fitness Classes
 - c. Crafting Classes
 - d. Cooking Classes
 - e. Community and Group Meal Preparation
 - f. Educational/Self Help Classes
 - g. Holiday Parties
 - h. Resident Happy Hours/Gatherings
2. General considerations for these areas should include:
 - a. Locating these areas adjacent to high traffic locations to encourage use and socialization.
 - b. Creating a “home” space versus “commercial” space for gathering and kitchen area(s). This includes using building and FFE materials that create a warm environment.
 - c. The use of gas fireplace(s) in gathering spaces.
 - d. Maximizing natural light and exterior views.
 - e. Resident safety i.e., not reaching over hot surface, slips, falls, etc.
 - f. Ample storage in or adjacent to activity areas for class type fitness, yoga, and other equipment.

- g. Floor finishes should be durable, slip-resistant, easily cleaned materials.
 - h. Wall construction and finishes should be of durable materials capable of resisting impact and gouging.
 - i. Ceilings should be acoustical in nature and limit noise.
 - j. Resident mobility issues related to slower movement, stature, and other needs. Ramps are preferable to stairs for small changes in elevation.
3. Technology considerations for these areas should include:
 - a. Ample convenience outlets for phone and device charging
 - b. Security system camera monitoring
 - c. Cable tv electrical and cable outlets
 - d. TV ancillary device hook ups such as HDMI, USB, game consoles, etc.
 - e. High speed wireless technology that meets large number of user needs
 - f. FFE that accommodates neat and orderly storage of game consoles, remotes, projectors, add on, etc.
4. Common kitchen area considerations include:
 - a. Solid surface countertops.
 - b. Solid base cabinet construction.
 - c. Overhead base cabinet height variation.
 - d. A large island space for cooking classes and multiple resident participation and viewing. Additional ample counter space for cooking classes, demonstrations, etc.
 - e. Double commercial grade sink with disposal.
 - f. Residential type electric or induction stove top and oven.
 - g. Fume hood for stove and oven.
 - h. Large capacity microwave.
 - i. Refrigerator with ice maker capacity.
 - j. Dishwasher.
 - k. Ample storage for pots, pans, small appliances, dinnerware, and other equipment.

Public Toilets

1. Public toilets should be in proximity to the main building entrance and lounge, multi-purpose, activity, and community rooms. It is expected residents would use the facilities frequently.
2. Grab bars and other accommodations should be considered in public toilet facilities.
3. Floor drains should be considered in public toilet facilities. The floor drains serve two main functions: to handle the occasional overflow of a fixture and to facilitate floor washing.

Corridors & Main Hallway

1. Visual affect and the creation of a “warm home” type environment should be considered for long corridors and hallways. Corridors & hallways should not be narrower than 6’-0” in any location.
2. Consideration should be given to the selected flooring’s sound absorbing characteristics.
3. Floor finishes should be durable, slip-resistant, easily cleaned materials.

4. Carpet tiles are preferred over roll carpet for maintainability. Carpet should be commercial grade, solution dyed, tufted and/or woven with non-porous backing to prevent mold and mildew is required.
5. Wall construction and finishes should be of durable construction capable of resisting impact and gouging.
6. Ceilings should be acoustical in nature and limit noise.

Apartment Units

1. Apartment units should be one (1) bedroom with a private bedroom, private full bath, full kitchen dining area, and living area.
2. Apartments unit finishes should create a home environment while being easily maintained by the resident and building maintenance.
3. Considerations for apartment living space include open design with connecting kitchen/dinning island or counter work area.
4. Ample in apartment storage for resident should be considered for each apartment unit. Consider bedroom closets, entry coat closet, bathroom linen closet location, and kitchen pantry location.
5. Consider current or future option in design for connecting two apartment units with a pocket type or other door that would allow a shared living space.
6. Consideration for high-speed wireless technology and communication should be made. Considerations should include:
 - a. Thermostats
 - b. Ring type doorbells
 - c. Interior apartment security type WIFI based cameras installed by the resident.
 - d. Appliances
 - e. Resident phones, tv, games, devices, etc.
7. All room outlets (electrical, voice, data, CATV) should be coordinated with proposed furniture layouts.
8. Multiple electrical convenience outlets providing adequate amp supply per room or as needed and recommended by the design engineers should be provided. Outlets should be located on walls such that no location on a wall is greater than six feet from an outlet without crossing an opening.
9. Each apartment should have an individual electrical service panel.
10. Each apartment should have individual heating and cooling.
11. Considerations should be made for apartment fire alarm systems to provide coverage by four different methods listed within NFPA 72: textual, tactile, visual, and audible.
12. Considerations for the rapid detection and extinguishment of a fire in each apartment unit should be part of the design. Consider sprinkler system installation that meets NFPA 13, ICC, and/or other local AHJ requirements.
13. Kitchen considerations include:
 - a. Solid surface or similar counter tops resistant to heat, cut, and other damage.
 - b. Solid base cabinet construction.
 - c. Overhead base cabinet height variation.
 - d. Floor finishes should be durable, slip-resistant, easily cleaned materials that are resistant to water permeation.
 - e. Double sink with disposal.

- f. Induction stove tops.
 - g. Oven.
 - h. Microwave (not over the stove)
 - i. Refrigerator with ice maker capability.
 - j. Dishwasher.
 - k. Ample storage for pots, pans, small appliances, dinnerware, and other equipment.
14. Bathroom considerations
- a. Doors that connect the bathroom to the apartment common area and the bedroom.
 - b. Solid vanity cabinets with solid surface countertop.
 - c. Ample storage for personal grooming, linens, etc.
 - d. Floor finishes should be durable, slip-resistant, easily cleaned materials that are resistant to water permeation.
 - e. Bathrooms should be provided with exhaust ventilation. The exhaust fan should have a motion sensor or a moisture sensor to eliminate buildup of humidity and reduce the possibility of mold.
 - f. Make up air. If direct make up air is not introduced into the space, then door undercuts should be used to provide make up air to the room.
 - g. Grab bars should be considered at toilet and bathtub areas.
 - h. Bathtub units should be of the acrylic type with full walls.
 - i. Toilets and plumbing should be designed to prevent clogging. Above average toilet plugging should be a consideration in design, quality or life, and ROI or item. Consider macerating or similar systems.

Laundry Facilities

1. Laundry facilities should be provided on each floor for resident use.
2. Laundry room size and number of appliances should be designed to accommodate all residents per floor. Laundry appliance use will be free to residents.
3. Laundry rooms should contain a double tub wash sink and faucet.
4. Laundry rooms should contain ample counter space for folding.
5. Laundry rooms should contain ample shelving.
6. Floor drains should be considered in laundry rooms.
7. Floor finishes should be durable, slip-resistant, easily cleaned materials that can withstand water and dirt tracked into the room by residents.
8. Wall construction and finishes should be of durable materials capable of resisting impact and gouging.
9. Ceilings should be acoustical in nature and limit noise.

Trash Room

1. A trash room to accommodate 1 week's trash and recycling expected for each resident should be provided on the main floor.
2. Consider exterior door of proper width to accommodate removal of trash containers by service or AHJ.

Janitors Closet

1. A janitor's closet should be provided on each floor.
2. Janitor's closets should have a utility sink installed.
3. Janitor's closet should have a floor drain.
4. Janitor's closet should have a faucet to fill mop buckets, etc.
5. Janitor's closet should have ample storage for vacuum, mop bucket, cleaning chemicals, etc.

Additional Storage

1. Additional storage areas should be provided that will accommodate resident bike, sport equipment, seasonal decoration, and similar storage.
2. Resident storage cages should be considered in these areas.

Mechanical Equipment Room(s)

1. Soundproof construction should be provided to achieve a minimum STC Rating of 52 at mechanical equipment rooms.
2. Special attention to sound reduction should be given for mechanical equipment rooms that are adjacent, above, or below resident living spaces.
3. Consideration should be given to thermal insulation at mechanical equipment rooms containing heat generating equipment that are adjacent, above, or below resident living spaces.

END