

THE COMMONS AT
Niskayuna
An Enriched Living Community



The site for The Commons of Niskayuna, a one-hundred unit assisted living facility, is a gently sloping two and one-half acre parcel in a 100-year old residential subdivision between two of the major thoroughfares of this community in up-state New York. Responding to this circumstance, the plan for the project develops about major garden frontages on either of the streets, related to the common areas of the substantial porches and loggias which mediate between these interior and exterior environments.

The three story gambrelled forms, parading a complex of two story houses banded by porches and surrounding gardens relate directly to the neighbors traditional houses which abut the oldest area of downtown Niskayuna.



Although the Owner did not accept a true "cluster" concept for the units, i.e. services with a few related units, the overall scheme yields a highly residential environment through the use of very small "neighborhoods" (5 people), short corridors with exterior views at the end of the corridors, and the traditional linked commons yield what the client believes are increased operational efficiencies.

Using "attic" units that function as well as standard units the building achieves a small, more residential appearance while keeping the lower cost of a highly efficient three-story scheme.



The utilization of a front garden setting, the weave of the building into an older neighborhood, small "neighborhoods" in the building, short corridors with the elimination of long views by turning the building in on itself, and flexible adjustment of individual units, combine to make this building fluid for the changing and complicated needs of the future senior resident and further positioned this project as one which addresses the new generation of seniors.

The Commons of Niskayuna was awarded the NAHB National Council on Senior's Housing Gold Seal Award for Assisted Living/Special Needs in 1997.

Designs for Living