



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
Department of Planning & Community Development
730 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, Massachusetts 02476

Public Hearing Memorandum

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Arlington Redevelopment Board and public with technical information and a planning analysis to assist with the regulatory decision-making process.

To: Arlington Redevelopment Board

From: Jennifer Raitt, Secretary Ex Officio

Subject: Environmental Design Review, 10 Sunnyside Ave, Arlington, MA
Docket #3586

Date: November 13, 2018

I. Docket Summary

This is an application by Chris Cormier for 10 Sunnyside Ave, LLC to construct a mixed-use building at 10 Sunnyside Avenue. The proposed building is located in the B4 Vehicular Business District per Section 5.5. The Board will review and approve the proposed construction under Section 3.4, Environmental Design Review, because the building is mixed-use, and the requested parking reduction, under Section 6.1.5, Parking Reduction in Business, Industrial and Multi-Family Residential Zones. The proposed uses include 2,481 square feet of commercial space, and twenty-six residential units comprised of 4 one-bedroom units, 18 two-bedroom units, and 4 three-bedroom units. The proposed project also triggers the inclusionary zoning bylaw; therefore, 4 units of the 26 total units must be made affordable per Section 8.2 of the Zoning Bylaw.

Materials submitted for consideration of this application:

Application for EDR Special Permit, Narrative, Site Plan, Floor Plans, Elevations, and Lighting Plan details dated October 23, 2018.

II. Application of Special Permit Criteria (Arlington Zoning Bylaw, Section 3.3)

1. Section 3.3.3.A.

The use requested is listed as a Special Permit in the use regulations for the applicable district or is so designated elsewhere in this Bylaw.

Mixed-use is allowed by Special Permit in the B4 Vehicular Business District. The Zoning Bylaw, in Section 5.5.1, indicates that as the automotive-oriented businesses have closed, the Town encourages the conversion of property to other retail, service, office, or residential use, particularly as part of a mixed-use development. The Board can find that these conditions exist for the proposed project site and the mixed-use development should be encouraged.

2. Section 3.3.3.B.

The requested use is essential or desirable to the public convenience or welfare.

The Master Plan promotes mixed-use as a means to revitalize business districts, by bringing customers and street life to commercial areas. This project will add 26 residential units, of which 4 units will be affordable to eligible households making up to 80% of the area median income, and one commercial space. There is a clear need for additional market-rate and affordable housing units in the community; this project helps address that demand. Although the specific affordable units are not identified in the application materials, the affordable units must be dispersed throughout the building and shall be comparable to market-rate units in terms of location, quality and character, room size, number of rooms, number of bedrooms, and external appearance.

Additionally, the commercial space could be a great convenience for the surrounding residential neighborhood or as a complement to the Lahey Health complex and the multiple fitness studios in the immediate area. Furthermore, there is a supermarket approximately 800 feet from the property and additional neighborhood businesses within an approximately half-mile walk. For additional convenience, a Route 87 bus stop is located at the corner of Broadway and Sunnyside, and travels between Arlington Center and Lechmere Station in Cambridge.

The Board can find that this condition is met.

3. Section 3.3.3.C.

The requested use will not create undue traffic congestion or unduly impair pedestrian safety.

The proposed project includes 39 underground parking spaces for the residential and commercial uses. This condition is an improvement over the existing conditions along Sunnyside Avenue where vehicles are often parked on the street or straddling the sidewalk and street while waiting for service at one of the automotive-oriented businesses along this stretch of Sunnyside. The proposed project also improves pedestrian safety by establishing a formal sidewalk in an area where there is no delineated and separated sidewalk.

4. **Section 3.3.3.D.**

The requested use will not overload any public water, drainage or sewer system or any other municipal system to such an extent that the requested use or any developed use in the immediate area or in any other area of the Town will be unduly subjected to hazards affecting health, safety, or the general welfare.

While the proposed mixed-use building will have a different demand on public utilities than the existing automotive-oriented business, the proposed project will not overload the necessary public utilities. The Board can find that this condition is met.

5. **Section 3.3.3.E.**

Any special regulations for the use as may be provided in the Bylaw are fulfilled.

As a condition of any decision for the proposed mixed-use building, the applicant will need to fulfill the requirements of the Affordable Housing bylaw, including making 4 units that are representative of the mix of units in the building available to eligible households making up to 80% of the area median income. There are no other special regulations for the use that must be fulfilled. The Board can find that this condition is met.

6. **Section 3.3.3.F.**

The requested use will not impair the integrity or character of the district or adjoining districts, nor be detrimental to the health or welfare.

The use does not impair the integrity or character of the neighborhood. The proposed structure will improve the streetscape and is consistent with the Design Standards for the Town of Arlington. The proposed design of the structure is consistent with the standards for building setbacks, building height, the public realm interface, parking and access, façade and materials, and signage and wayfinding. In particular, the building includes step back above the second story in order to minimize the mass of the building and the building is set back from the sidewalk and street furniture is proposed to allow any ground floor activities to extend outside. Bicycle parking is available at the sidewalk, and vehicular parking is located behind the building and underground. There is variation in the front façade, allowing the wall to be articulated by varying bays and materials. There is differentiation between the first and second story allowing for a clear sign band. The Board can find that this condition is met.

7. **Section 3.3.3.G.**

The requested use will not, by its addition to a neighborhood, cause an excess of the use that could be detrimental to the character of said neighborhood.

The use will not be in excess or detrimental to the character of the neighborhood. The Board can find that this condition is met.

III. Environmental Design Review Standards (Arlington Zoning Bylaw, Section 3.4)

1. EDR-1 Preservation of Landscape

The landscape shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practicable, by minimizing tree and soil removal, and any grade changes shall be in keeping with the general appearance of neighboring developed areas.

The property is almost entirely impervious and there is no natural landscape to preserve. As part of the project, landscaping beds will be added along the sidewalk and along the side yards of the property. The new landscaping will improve the condition of the property. The Board can find that this condition is met.

2. EDR-2 Relation of the Building to the Environment

Proposed development shall be related harmoniously to the terrain and to the use, scale, and architecture of the existing buildings in the vicinity that have functional or visible relationship to the proposed buildings. The Arlington Redevelopment Board may require a modification in massing so as to reduce the effect of shadows on the abutting property in an R0, R1 or R2 district or on public open space.

The B4 Vehicular Oriented Business Districts in Arlington are often in transition as the automotive businesses close and the properties are redeveloped. On the Broadway block between Sunnyside Avenue and Silk Street are two relatively new buildings, so although those buildings are located in a different zoning district (B2A), the proposed redevelopment of 10 Sunnyside Avenue will continue the scale of buildings at this gateway to Arlington and will incorporate elements that improve new building design. Further east along Sunnyside Avenue are lower density residential uses, so as redevelopment continues to occur on this particular block of Sunnyside Avenue, the scale and mass of buildings will have to appropriately transition. The Board can find that this condition is met.

3. EDR-3 Open Space

All open space (landscaped and usable) shall be so designed as to add to the visual amenities of the vicinity by maximizing its visibility for persons passing by the site or overlooking it from nearby properties. The location and configuration of usable open space shall be so designed as to encourage social interaction, maximize its utility and facilitate maintenance.

As noted above, the proposed project will add areas of landscaping to an existing impervious site. Along the sidewalk at the front of the building, approximately 42 square feet of usable open space and approximately 2,100 square feet of landscaped open space will be added to the project site, which will be a visual amenity. This open space will provide areas for people to sit and relax outside of the building. The

proposed project meets the requirements for landscaped open space and usable open space. The Board can find that this condition is met.

4. EDR-4 Circulation

With respect to vehicular and pedestrian and bicycle circulation, including entrances, ramps, walkways, drives, and parking, special attention shall be given to location and number of access points to the public streets (especially in relation to existing traffic controls and mass transit facilities), width of interior drives and access points, general interior circulation, separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, access to community facilities, and arrangement of vehicle parking and bicycle parking areas, including bicycle parking spaces required by Section 6.1.12 that are safe and convenient and, insofar as practicable, do not detract from the use and enjoyment of proposed buildings and structures and the neighboring properties.

The proposed project will improve circulation. The existing automotive-oriented business has multiple curb cuts to support the maneuvering of vehicles in and out of auto repair bays. By focusing vehicular traffic to the east side of the property, the proposed project will consolidate vehicular traffic to a single curb cut. This consolidation will help improve pedestrian access across the site as well as the creation of a sidewalk, particularly to access the bus stop at the corner of Broadway and Sunnyside Avenue.

The proposed project contains 39 parking spaces located at-grade at the rear of the property and underground. The parking requirement for the residential uses totals 40 parking spaces, and while the commercial space would typically require 9 parking spaces, the first 3,000 square feet of non-residential space in mixed-use projects is exempt from the parking requirements per Section 6.1.10.C. Additionally, with the incentive reduction for complying with the affordable housing requirements, the parking requirement can be reduced by 10 percent (Section 8.2.4.A). Therefore, the proposed project is required to provide 36 parking spaces and the project is in compliance with the parking requirement.

10 Sunnyside Ave Parking Requirement			
	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Zoning Requirement</u>	<u>Total Parking Required</u>
1 bedroom	4	1.15	4.60
2 bedroom	18	1.5	27.00
3 bedroom	4	2.0	8.00
Retail	2,461 sf	1/300 sf*	0.00
Total Parking			40
10% Reduction for Affordable Housing			4
Total Parking Required			36
* First 3,000 sf of non-residential space in mixed-use projects is exempt.			

Interior bicycle storage is provided with each parking space. Additionally, two bicycle racks will be installed at the front of the building.

5. EDR-5 Surface Water Drainage

Special attention shall be given to proper site surface drainage so that removal of surface waters will not adversely affect neighboring properties or the public storm drainage system. Available Best Management Practices for the site should be employed, and include site planning to minimize impervious surface and reduce clearing and re-grading. Best Management Practices may include erosion control and stormwater treatment by means of swales, filters, plantings, roof gardens, native vegetation, and leaching catch basins. Stormwater should be treated at least minimally on the development site; that which cannot be handled on site shall be removed from all roofs, canopies, paved and pooling areas and carried away in an underground drainage system. Surface water in all paved areas shall be collected in intervals so that it will not obstruct the flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic and will not create puddles in the paved areas.

In accordance with Section 3.3.4., the Board may require from any applicant, after consultation with the Director of Public Works, security satisfactory to the Board to insure the maintenance of all stormwater facilities such as catch basins, leaching catch basins, detention basins, swales, etc. within the site. The Board may use funds provided by such security to conduct maintenance that the applicant fails to do.

The Board may adjust in its sole discretion the amount and type of financial security such that it is satisfied that the amount is sufficient to provide for any future maintenance needs.

The application materials note that onsite drainage will be incorporated. This is an improvement over the existing conditions. However, there is no indication of how this will be accomplished onsite. Additional material must be submitted for review and approval by the Town Engineer.

6. EDR-6 Utilities Service

Electric, telephone, cable TV, and other such lines of equipment shall be underground. The proposed method of sanitary sewage disposal and solid waste disposal from all buildings shall be indicated.

All new utilities will be underground. The Board can find that this condition is met.

7. EDR-7 Advertising Features

The size, location, design, color, texture, lighting and materials of all permanent signs and outdoor advertising structures or features shall not detract from the use

and enjoyment of proposed buildings and structures and the surrounding properties.

The proposed building will have signage above the residential entrance and the commercial space, and directional signage above the garage door. The signage for the future tenant of the commercial space would be designed and submitted for review at a future date, but should be consistent with the look and feel of the signage for the residential entrance.

The residential entrance signage appears to be in compliance with the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw. However, the use of the word “Residential” does not seem to be appropriate or welcoming for the building. It may be more appropriate to revise the proposal to read “10 Sunnyside Avenue”, utilizing the numerals to indicate the street address and replacing “Residential” with “Sunnyside Avenue.” It would accomplish the same goal of identifying the street address of the building as well as dictating with the residential entrance is located, especially if the commercial tenant has its own signage, and would be more attractive.

No dimensional information is provided for the sign above the lower garage entrance. However, while it provides useful information regarding the entrance to the lower garage, it may not be necessary, or should be minimized further to not be a detractor from the attractive façade of the building.

8. EDR-8 Special Features

Exposed storage areas, exposed machinery installations, service areas, truck loading areas, utility buildings and structures, and similar accessory areas and structures shall be subject to such setbacks, screen plantings or other screening methods as shall reasonably be required to prevent their being incongruous with the existing or contemplated environment and the surrounding properties.

None are proposed. The Board can find that this condition is met.

9. EDR-9 Safety

With respect to personal safety, all open and enclosed spaces shall be designed to facilitate building evacuation and maximize accessibility by fire, police and other emergency personnel and equipment. Insofar as practicable, all exterior spaces and interior public and semi-public spaces shall be so designed to minimize the fear and probability of personal harm or injury by increasing the potential surveillance by neighboring residents and passersby of any accident or attempted criminal act.

Lighting is provided around the building to support safety. The building has multiple means of egress from the building. The single driveway will improve pedestrian safety. The Board can find that this condition is met.

10. EDR-10 Heritage

With respect to Arlington's heritage, removal or disruption of historic, traditional or significant uses, structures or architectural elements shall be minimized insofar as practical whether these exist on the site or on adjacent properties.

The existing structure is not listed nor is it under the jurisdiction of the Arlington Historical Commission. There are no other significant uses relative to Arlington's heritage in the vicinity. The Board can find that this condition is met.

11. EDR-11 Microclimate

With respect to the localized climatic characteristics of a given area, any development which proposes new structures, new hard surface, ground coverage or the installation of machinery which emits heat, vapor or fumes shall endeavor to minimize insofar as practicable, any adverse impacts on light, air and water resources or on noise and temperature levels of the immediate environment.

There will be no adverse impacts on light, air and water resources, or on noise and temperature levels. HVAC units will be properly located to not create noise impacts on the adjacent uses. The Board can find that this condition is met.

12. EDR-12 Sustainable Building and Site Design

Projects are encouraged to incorporate best practices related to sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, and indoor environmental quality. Applicants must submit a current Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) checklist, appropriate to the type of development, annotated with narrative description that indicates how the LEED performance objectives will be incorporated into the project.

The building has been designed to meet multiple LEED performance standards. The Board can find that this condition is met.

IV. Conditions

A. General

1. The final design, sign, exterior material, landscaping, and lighting plans shall be subject to the approval of the Arlington Redevelopment Board or administratively approved by the Department of Planning and Community Development. Any substantial or material deviation during construction from the approved plans and specifications is subject to the written approval of the Arlington Redevelopment Board

2. Any substantial or material deviation during construction from the approved plans and specifications is subject to the written approval of the Arlington Redevelopment Board.
3. The Board maintains continuing jurisdiction over this permit and may, after a duly advertised public hearing, attach other conditions or modify these conditions as it deems appropriate in order to protect the public interest and welfare.
4. Snow removal from all parts of the site, as well as from any abutting public sidewalks, shall be the responsibility of the owner and shall be accomplished in accordance with Town Bylaws.
5. Trash shall be picked up only on Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:00 am and 6:00 pm. All exterior trash and storage areas on the property, if any, shall be properly screened and maintained in accordance with Article 30 of Town Bylaws.
6. The Applicant shall provide a statement from the Town Engineer that all proposed utility services have adequate capacity to serve the development. The applicant shall provide evidence that a final plan for drainage and surface water removal has been reviewed and approved by the Town Engineer.
7. Upon installation of landscaping materials and other site improvements, the Applicant shall remain responsible for such materials and improvement and shall replace and repair as necessary to remain in compliance with the approved site plan.
8. All utilities serving or traversing the site (including electric, telephone, cable, and other such lines and equipment) shall be underground.
9. Upon the issuance of the building permit the Applicant shall file with the Building Inspector and the Department of Community Safety the names and telephone numbers of contact personnel who may be reached 24 hours each day during the construction period.
10. Building signage will be filed with and reviewed and approved by the Department of Planning and Community Development and Inspectional Services.

B. Special Conditions

1. The owner will work with the Department of Planning and Community Development to comply with all requirements of Section 8.2, Affordable Housing Requirements.

2. An Affordable Housing Deed Restriction shall be executed with the Town prior to issuance of an Occupancy Permit for the four affordable units.
3. No condominium conversion of said affordable rental units shall be permitted without the express permission of this Board. In the case of a proposed condominium conversion, Applicant shall work with the Department of Planning and Community Development to ensure that the units continue to meet the requirements of Section 8.2.