



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, 108 Summer Street, Arlington, MA
Docket #3604

Date: August 6, 2019

I. Docket Summary

This is an application by DeAnne Dupont for Food Link Inc., at 108 Summer Street, Arlington, MA, 02476, for Special Permit Docket #3604 in accordance with the provisions of MGL Chapter 40A § 11, and the Town of Arlington Zoning Bylaw Section 3.4, Environmental Design Review. The applicant proposes to renovate the existing building, construct an addition, and other site improvements at 108 Summer Street within the B2 Neighborhood Business District. A parking reduction per Section 6.1.5 is also requested.

Food Link plans to consolidate its operations to the building at 108 Summer Street, a former auto parts supply store and offices. Food Link will occupy more than half of the building with its operations space, including all of the first floor and half of the second floor. The other half of the second floor plus the basement will be tenant office spaces.

The small addition allows the loading dock to be expanded and enclosed to create an airlock to prevent heat loss during the winter and provide a comfortable interior space for loading and unloading salvaged food. An exterior stair will be added to the side of the loading dock, as well as a deck over the areaway which will provide covered short term bicycle parking. The site will remain largely as it is, with 4 parking spaces on the western side and 4 on the eastern side.

The façade improvements and site improvements will create an appealing visual appearance on Summer Street.

Materials submitted for consideration of this application:

- Application for EDR Special Permit,
- Narrative dated July 10, 2019, including
 - Project Summary,
 - Design Standards for Environmental Review Impact Statement,
 - Special Permit Criteria Summary, and
 - Traffic, Parking and Circulation Narrative, and
 - Attachments; and
- Plan Set dated July 10, 2019, including
 - Location Plan, Survey, and Project Summary,
 - Existing Site Plan and Floor Plans,
 - Proposed Floor Plans,
 - Proposed Site Plan and Zoning Diagrams,
 - Transportation Demand Management Plan,
 - Neighborhood Transportation Map,
 - Circulation Diagram,
 - Existing and Proposed Elevations
 - Canopy Plan, Building Section and Details,
 - Signage and Lighting Details,
 - Existing Conditions Photos, and
 - Renderings.

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.

The proposal, an office building with more than 3,000 square feet, is allowed in the B2 Neighborhood Business District via Special Permit. The location on Summer Street triggers the Environmental Design Review Special Permit from the Redevelopment Board. The Board can find that this condition is met.

2. Section 3.3.3.B.

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

Food Link has outgrown and needs to move from its current location on Broadway. Its mission to create a more sustainable and equitable community and to alleviate hunger is essential to the public welfare. Locating Food Link's headquarters to 108 Summer Street allows the organization to fulfill its mission more successfully in a

larger and modernized space. The façade improvements will improve the streetscape along Summer Street. 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.

108 Summer Street has two informal parking lots which previously served retail and office space. With the proposal, Food Link has developed a formal and consistent way to utilize the parking that is available onsite. The eastern parking lot will be used by Food Link staff and volunteers and the tenants in the building. The eastern parking lot will also be able to handle small deliveries. The western parking lot will be utilized for larger trucks making deliveries and more flexible parking to accommodate larger trucks. Food Link completed a parking analysis at their existing facility to develop their parking plan and delivery plan for 108 Summer Street, which is included in the application materials. It is unlikely that additional on-street parking would be needed for the proposed project, and in the case when additional parking is needed, Food Link has an agreement with a nearby business to accommodate 4 additional vehicles. There is existing on-street parking along Summer Street as well.

An existing MBTA Route 67 stop is located in front of 108 Summer Street, so Food Link has taken care to ensure that access to the bus stop is not hindered due to activities within the public right-of-way. The Board can find that this condition is met.

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.

The auto body supply store and other offices have operated at this location on Summer Street for many years without overloading any public utilities. Food Link does not have a high demand need for water or sewer. 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.

No special regulations are applicable to the proposal. 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 renovations will create an attractive building that will improve the streetscape. The façade design improvements are consistent with the Design Standards for the Town of Arlington. The proposed design of the structure is consistent with the standards for building height, the public realm interface, façade and materials, and signage and wayfinding. In particular, the proposed changes will result in an attractive and safe facility and a productive and low impact use of the site. Façade improvements will provide some relief outside of the building which is also an un-sheltered bus stop. 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 existing site condition is primarily impervious and it will remain as such with improvements. An area of asphalt on the eastern side of the site will be replaced with pervious brick pavers. On the western side of the site, a terrace will be constructed where currently scrub vegetation and garbage collects on the slope toward the Minuteman Bikeway. The construction of the terrace will help stabilize the slope and minimize the collect of trash in this area. Other natural areas on the site will be maintained regularly. 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.

This proposal does not detract from the district's small-scale business character and the adjacent residential uses. The addition of the new façade materials to the building soften the industrial and cold appearance of the existing building and helps transition the building between the small commercial district at the intersection of Summer

Street and Mill Street and the residential uses. The use of canopies over the parking areas and at the front entrance provides relief and shelter along Summer Street and at an existing unsheltered bus stop. The canopies and enclosing the loading dock also help shield the loading and unloading activities on the western side of the site from the residential neighborhood, but also create connections between the parking areas, sidewalk, and the building.

At the rear of the project site, the relationship between the project site and Minuteman Bikeway will not be changed dramatically. Improvements to the site will reduce any incidents of erosion along the sloped edge of the project site. Food Link has also sought to engage the MBTA to create better connections between the bikeway and the project site and other nearby areas.

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 improve through regular maintenance the natural open space on the existing primarily impervious site. The addition of the terraced patio will be a gathering space for Food Link volunteers and the employees of tenants in the building as well as function as a stabilizing feature as the property slopes toward the Minuteman Bikeway. 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 application materials indicate that 8 parking spaces will be provided on the site, with four spaces located to the east of the building and the other four spaces located to the west. The applicant has requested a parking reduction under Section 6.1.5:

Parking Requirement			
		<u>Zoning Requirement</u>	<u>Total Parking Required</u>
Office Space	7,075 sf	1 space per 500 sf of gross floor area	15
Section 6.1.5 Reduction			Up to 25% of the requirement, or 4 spaces
Total Parking Provided			8 spaces

The project site can realistically accommodate 8 spaces with the required access and maneuvering space. The proposed project will formalize and reorient the parking in order to create a more orderly parking arrangement on an odd shaped lot.

On the eastern side of the property, four spaces will be oriented along the property line. Two of the spaces will be reserved for tenants in the building. The third space will be reserved for Food Link, and the fourth space will be reserved for visitors. The Food Link space will be utilized by volunteers primarily making small deliveries from personal vehicles.

The western parking lot will be for Food Link's exclusive use. Four spaces are arranged parallel to the property line. The lot will accommodate larger vehicles and larger deliveries. Food Link's two vans will be parked in this lot when the vans are not picking up or making deliveries. The two vans will also be parked here overnight. The spaces closest to the loading dock will also double as space for larger trucks to make large deliveries directly onto the loading dock. The largest vehicle that typically makes these deliveries are box trucks up to 40 feet in length, and the application materials include a graphic that illustrates how these large vehicles will approach the site and enter the loading dock. Larger trucks must approach the site from the east and that will be communicated with the vendors that Food Link works with. These large deliveries will be scheduled by staff to ensure that the western lot is free from vehicles that may impede maneuvering. The two existing curb cuts will be maintained.

The proposed project is also in compliance with the recently adopted bicycle parking amendments. For the proposed use, 0.30 long-term spaces are required by 1,000 square feet, or 3 long-term bicycle parking spaces are required. Six long-term bicycle parking spaces are provided in the secure bicycle cage on the western edge of the property. Four short-term bicycle parking spaces are required (0.05 spaces per 1,000 square feet), and four spaces are provided along Summer Street.

The application materials describe the justification for the parking reduction under Section 6.1.5. A parking analysis was completed at their current location on Broadway supports the request for a reduction, although there was one instance where the number of vehicles onsite exceeded the number of spaces provided. Food Link has arrangements with an adjacent business to utilize 4 spaces on the weekend when the number of volunteers could be the highest. A second agreement is being pursued. Food Link will have a shower onsite, a shared bicycle for staff and volunteer use, bicycle parking, and tenants will be charged for additional parking beyond the spaces provided. Additionally, a bus stop on the MBTA Route 67 is located at the property and there is some on-street parking on Summer Street. With these accommodations there should be no reason for staff, volunteers, or visitors to the property will need to park on any other street.

Overall, the arrangement of parking on the site and the loading and unloading of product will occur in a consistent and controlled manner by Food Link employees and volunteers. Having a specific plan in place will ensure that the use does not detract from the use and enjoyment of the proposed project and neighboring properties. The Board can find that this condition is met.

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.

There are no current stormwater controls on the site. The proposal includes adding downspouts to the roof canopies, which will collect water from the roofs and redirect it to dry wells under the parking areas. Approximately 632 square feet of asphalt will be removed from the site and replaced with permeable surfaces, allowing stormwater to be reabsorbed on site. In combination, the downspouts collecting water from the canopies and the permeable surfaces will divert water from 1,814 square feet of impervious surfaces to be reabsorbed on the site. Other gutters and downspouts will be replaced or reinstalled where they are currently missing. Because this water typically sheet flows toward the rear of the project site and down slope to the Minuteman Bikeway, diverting water away from the slope will reduce evidence of erosion at the rear of the property. The Board can find that this condition is met.

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.

Food Link plans to update utility service to the building in order to eliminate the natural gas connection. Electric service will be upgraded from existing poles along Summer Street, a ground source heat pump will be installed, and solar panels will be installed on the roof. Water and sewer services will be maintained. 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.

Food Link proposes modest signage on the front of the building. The total wall sign square footage is 18.3 square feet. It will be illuminated from an LED light in the canopy above, which will direct the light downward. The letters will be individually mounted aluminum letters. The "Food Link" portion of the sign is 18 inches, and the "Rescue Food, Nourish Our Community" portion is 6 inches. Food Link will be painted to match the company's logo.

The address number "108" will be located in three locations and a directory sign will be on the window light adjacent to the main entrance. The directory sign will be black vinyl letters mounted to the interior of the window. In addition to noting where Food Link is located in the building, the basement tenant space and the second floor tenant space would be listed. A condition of a decision requires future tenants to return to the ARB should more significant signage be desired.

The proposed signage is consistent with the proposed building and the surrounding properties. The Board can find that this condition is met.

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.

The loading area is visible from Summer Street, although is designed to be an attractive element of the building with wood cladding. As noted in the application materials, the loading and unloading of food is central to Food Link's mission that it is ideal to have the area visible. Planters are proposed along Summer Street in order to provide some relief and screening from the activities that occur at the loading dock.

Compressors for the cold storage area will be located on the western canopy. The compressor is 19-inches tall, so there is limited visibility from the street, but is documented on the elevations.

There will be no adverse impacts on light, air and water resources, or on noise and temperature levels. The applicant should clarify how solid waste and recycling will be accommodated on the site as it is not noted in the application materials. 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.

Safety will be improved within the building and around the project site. Better functioning and operable windows will be installed. The internal stairs will be enclosed with a fire-rated assembly. Motion sensor lights will be installed under the canopies and railings will be installed around the ramp, stairs, and terrace to provide general safety on the project site. 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 on the *Inventory of Historically or Architecturally Significant Properties in the Town of Arlington* nor are they under the jurisdiction of the Arlington Historical Commission. 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 are no proposed changes (new structures, hard surface, ground coverage, or machinery) that will impact the microclimate. The addition of a light-colored roof will reduce the heat island effect at this property improving the microclimate. 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.

A LEED Checklist is included showing Gold Certification. The overall project goals are to achieve affordable sustainable solutions, which can be seen in reusing the existing building and adding insulation, choosing to eliminate gas service and improving the electric service to accommodate ground source heat pump, and installing solar panels to offset the demand from the electric grid for this project. The Board can find that this condition is met.

IV. Conditions

1. The final design, sign, exterior material, landscaping, and lighting plans shall be subject to the approval of the Arlington Redevelopment Board, including future tenant signage. 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 the 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. Upon the issuance of the building permit the Applicant shall file with the Inspectional Services Department and the Police Department the names and telephone numbers of contact personnel who may be reached 24 hours each day during the construction period.
9. The Applicant shall return to the Arlington Redevelopment Board should the usage of the basement level change as a result of agreements with the MBTA to provide access from the Minuteman Bikeway to the site.