



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, 833 Massachusetts Ave, Arlington, MA
Docket #3348

Date: August 6, 2019

I. Docket Summary

This is an application by Gary McCoy, Poyant Signs, for CVS, at 833 Massachusetts Avenue, to re-open Special Permit Docket #3348. This is in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 40A Section 11, and the Town of Arlington Zoning Bylaw Section 3.4 Environmental Design Review. The applicant proposes to install new signage consistent with CVS rebranding. The re-opening of the Special Permit is to allow the Board to review and approve the signage, under Section 6.2, Signs.

Materials submitted for consideration of this application:

1. Environmental Design Review Special Permit Application dated June 27, 2019.

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 retail pharmacy is allowed in the B-4 Vehicular Oriented Business District. 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.

The retail pharmacy has operated in this location for many years. 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.

There are no exterior alterations other than signage. 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.

This retail pharmacy has operated in this location for many years without overloading any 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.

All such regulations are fulfilled.

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 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)

A. 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.

There are no changes to the landscape as there are no proposed exterior alterations. The Board can find that this condition is met.

B. 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.

There are no changes to the exterior of the building other than the installation of new signage replacing the existing signage. The Board can find that this condition is met.

C. 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.

There are no changes to open space. The Board can find that this condition is met.

D. 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 existing circulation does not change; however, the addition of a Do Not Enter sign will help ensure that circulation occurs as it is intended. The Board can find that this condition is met.

E. 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 will be no changes to the exterior of the building or surface water run-off as a result of this proposal. The Board can find that this condition is met.

F. 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.

There will be no changes to the utility service as a result of this proposal. The Board can find that this condition is met.

G. 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 existing CVS signage includes a slash, and appears as CVS/pharmacy. The proposed rebranding eliminates the slash and includes a heart in front of the words CVS pharmacy. The heart rebranding retains the typical red color associated with CVS.

The scope of work for the new signage includes removing the large signage above the main entrance of the building and other plaques, and replacing it with updated signage. A new Do Not Enter sign will be installed. All other directional signage will be retained.

The signage on the Massachusetts Avenue frontage is currently 75.18 square feet and will be replaced with signage that measures approximately 33.08 square feet. The reason for the reduction is the size of the letters. The existing letters are approximately 36 inches and the proposed letters are 22.5 inches. Additionally, the new signage will include channel LED illumination.

The main signage facing the parking lot is currently 33.41 square feet and will be replaced with signage that measures approximately 33.08 square feet. The existing letters are approximately 24 inches and the proposed letters are 22.5 inches. Additionally, the new signage will include channel LED illumination.

Three plaques on the property will be updated. A plaque at the main entrance will be replaced. This plaque conveys information regarding the opening hours, the store manager, and the pharmacy manager. The plaque will remain but the CVS/pharmacy will be replaced with the heart branding. The receiving entrance plaque will be replaced with a 3 square foot plaque. A directional sign will be replaced at the drive-thru pharmacy that indicates both lanes offer full service. It is approximately 4.17 square feet.

A new Do Not Enter sign will be installed at the end of the main drive aisle in the parking lot. At the rear of the site, the circulation is one way in order to access the drive-thru pharmacy. The Do Not Enter sign will reinforce the circulation pattern. The sign will be installed about 3 feet above grade and is approximately 2.25 square feet. All other directional signage remains as is on the property.

The reduction in the size of the main signage, the lighting upgrade, and the addition of the Do Not Enter sign are improvements to the property. The Board can find that this condition is met.

H. 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.

No changes are proposed. The Board can find that this condition is met.

I. 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.

No changes are proposed. The Board can find that this condition is met.

J. 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 CVS building is not located on any local or State historic property listing. However, the adjacent Atwood House is identified as a significant building per Title VI, Article 6 of the Town Bylaw. The signage rebranding does not impact the Atwood House and the Special Permit Decision retains jurisdiction over future plans for the structure as does the Historical Commission. The Board can find that this condition is met.

K. 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.

No changes are proposed. The Board can find that this condition is met.

L. 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.

No changes are proposed. The Board can find that this condition is met.

IV. Conditions

1. The final plans and specifications for signage shall be subject to final approval by the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).

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 conditions of the original Special Permit decision are still in force. 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.