



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

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## **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, 880 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA  
Docket #2818

**Date:** April 22, 2020

### **I. Docket Summary**

This is an application by Back Bay Signs for TD Banknorth NA, at 880 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA, 02476, to re-open Special Permit Docket #2818 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 install new signage in a B4 Vehicular Oriented Business District. 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:

- EDR Special Permit cover sheet and narrative,
- TD Site Recommendation Book

### **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.**

A bank is an allowed use in the B4 Zoning 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.**

A bank has operated in this location for many years, and is appropriately located in a business district. 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 proposed 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.**

A bank has operated in this location for 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.**

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 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.

There are no changes to the landscape as there are no proposed exterior alterations. 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.

There are no changes to the exterior of the building other than the new signage. 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.

There are no changes to 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 existing circulation does not change. 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 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.

**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.

There will be no changes to the utility service as a result of this proposal. 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 TD Bank North building is located in the B4 Zoning District and Business Sign District. The applicant is seeking to change existing signage. Directional signs are allowed in the B4 Business Sign District. The E05 directional sign is the only such sign in the parking lot.

The bylaw allows for “non-illuminated signs which provide incidental information including, but not limited to credit card acceptance, business hours, open/closed, no soliciting, directions to services and facilities, or menus, provided these signs do not

exceed an aggregate of six square feet in sign area.” (6.2.1 C. E. 3. A.) The bank would like to replace the sign (E05 in the plan) which is currently a double-sided directional sign with a new non-illuminated directional sign that is 1’8½” high and 2’0” wide with an overall 4’6” height. The directional sign is located at an exit from the parking lot onto Lockeland Avenue. The existing directional sign provides visibility for people exiting the driveway on a side street. The applicant is requesting to install a sign that is much taller than what is allowed in Section 6.2, Signs, of the Zoning Bylaw.

The existing sign is currently 6” taller than what is allowed per the bylaw. The proposed sign will be 1’6” higher (an additional foot) than what is allowed for this type of signage. The size of this sign appears in excess of what is necessary for a directional sign at the edge of a driveway on a side street. The Department does not believe 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.**

No changes 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.**

No changes are proposed. 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 building is not listed on the *Inventory of Historically or Architecturally Significant Properties in the Town of Arlington*. 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.**

No changes are proposed. 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.**

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

**IV. Conditions**

1. 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. 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.