



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

Public Hearing Memorandum - Update

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, Docket #3665
645 Massachusetts Avenue

Date: September 22, 2021

This memo is provided as an update to the previous memo provided on August 30, 2021. The materials provided for the continued public hearing are not responsive to the ARB's comments. The Applicant provided the following materials:

- Cover letter to the Redevelopment Board, dated September 18, 2021; and
- Sign Package, including elevations and renderings, prepared by Philadelphia Sign, revised September 9, 2021.

The Board requested that the Applicant install clear-glazed windows along the streetfront façade that align with the commercial district and use; move the proposed blade sign; maintain the existing sidewalk seating and planters from the prior tenant; address the rear access point for accessibility; and incorporate the required bike parking. The Board also asked the Applicant to provide a better description of their services and how they differ from similar business uses in Arlington Center.

Regarding the windows along the Massachusetts Avenue and David Lamson Way facades, the renderings and elevations in the sign package show that the gridded windows will be replaced with commercial windows. It appears from the renderings that the glazing has also been addressed. Specifications on window type and glazing have not been provided.

With regard to signage, the Board can find that the request to move the proposed blade has been addressed.

Regarding sidewalk seating and planters, the applicant has revised the renderings to show seating and planters along the Massachusetts Avenue façade. The applicant will need to provide updated site and/or floor plans indicating the locations of these items.

Regarding bicycle parking, the applicant states that submission materials have been updated to show short term bicycle parking in front of the site. A bicycle rack is shown on the rendering on DRC Page 8 of the updated sign package. The applicant should update site and/or floor plans accordingly, indicate the amount of short-term bicycle parking provided. While the applicant indicates that long-term parking will be integrated into the project, the applicant will need to provide updated floor plans identifying the location, quantity, and type of long-term bicycle parking. Bike rack specifications for short- and long-term parking are needed to determine compliance with Section 6.1.12.E.

Regarding providing an accessible entrance at the rear of the building, the applicant concluded that the existing conditions prohibit their ability to improve accessibility through the rear entrance. The closest HP placard parking space to the main entry and ATM is in front of the Coldwell Banker property at 635 Massachusetts Avenue.

The applicant should provide a more detailed update regarding any of the above items at the continued hearing.

Representatives from Chase Bank will be in attendance at the September 27, 2021 hearing to present information on the services they intend to provide at this location, as well as to answer questions regarding any market studies that were completed as part of the bank's decision to establish a branch at this location.

Finally, staff were asked to calculate the total linear feet of banks within Arlington Center. For economic development purposes, the Town defines the Arlington Center as 375 to 1056 Massachusetts Avenue; 283 to 327 Broadway; Medford, Mill, Mystic Streets; Schouler Court; Summer Street. Within these limits are a total of 264 commercial units¹.

There are a total of nine banks or ATMs in Arlington Center, or 3.4% of total commercial units. The table below provides the bank name, type, address, parcel frontage, and building width. Parcels on corner lots are indicated with an asterisk; for corner lots, the total parcel and building frontage along both streets are listed first, followed by the frontage specific to Massachusetts Avenue in parentheses.

¹ According to Arlington Town Assessor Data. This figure does not include the 180 individual rental units and commercial condos within commercial properties like 22 Mill, 29 Mill, etc.

Bank name	Type	Address	Parcel frontage (ft)	Street-facing building width (ft)
Chase Bank	ATM	323 Broadway	n/a ²	23
Leader Bank	Bank Branch	449 Mass Ave*	n/a ³	70 (26)
Cambridge Savings Bank	Bank Branch and Drive-up	626 Mass Ave*	285 (115)	187 (133)
Bank of America	Bank Branch	655 Mass Ave	51	48
Citizens Bank	Bank Branch and Drive-up	699 Mass Ave*	278 (151)	139 (82)
Brookline Bank	Bank Branch and Drive-up	856 Mass Ave*	204 (91)	135 (67)
Leader Bank	Residential Lending	864 Mass Ave*	218 (107)	154 (103)
TD Bank North	Bank Branch and Drive-up	880 Mass Ave*	408 (179)	182 (80)
Watertown Savings Bank	Bank Branch and Drive-up	980 Mass Ave*	268 (110)	155 (69)
TOTAL			1,712 (804)	1,093 (631)
* Corner lot				

Linear calculations have been estimated using the Town's GIS data. Should precise numbers be required, individual site plans would need to be requested from each property.

² Tenant in a structure with multiple units on one lot

³ Tenant in a structure with multiple units on one lot