

6/9/2023

Responses to Town Comments on 10 Sunnyside Application have been provided by the development team in-line below.

TOWN OF ARLINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING and
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

TOWN HALL, 730 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE
ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02476
TELEPHONE 781-316-3090
MEMORANDUM

To: Zoning Board of Appeals

From: Kelly Lynema, Assistant Director, Department of Planning and Community Development

cc: Applicant, 10 Sunnyside Avenue

Date: April 23, 2023

RE: 1021-1027 Massachusetts Avenue Comments from Town Boards, Commissions, and Departments

To aid the Arlington Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) in their review of the Arlington Land Realty, LLC Application for a Comprehensive Permit to develop Thorndike Place, the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) invited Town departments, boards, and commissions to provide comments and questions on the application materials.

At the ZBA's request, the DPCD solicited comments from the following: Affordable Housing Trust (Trust), Arlington Fire Department (AFD), Arlington Police Department (APD), Clean Energy Future Committee, Conservation Commission, Department of Public Works, Environmental Planner/Conservation Agent, Health Department/Board of Health, Redevelopment Board (ARB), Senior Transportation Planner, Town Engineer, Town Manager, Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), Tree Committee, Tree Warden. Comments were received from all except AFD and APD. The Conservation Commission noted that the property is not under their jurisdiction, therefore they have no comments to provide. Comments from the Senior Transportation Planner and Affordable Housing Trust are forthcoming.

Below and attached to this memo are the collected comments. A summary of responses is indicated by topic below:

1. Design: The applicant is proposing a five-story building with commercial space and parking on the ground level, and four floors of apartments above. Members of the ARB noted their support for this type of project in Arlington, both for its provision of necessary affordable housing and for revitalizing a former automotive site. The ARB felt

that the massing was well-considered; the provision of the roof deck amenity above the parking garage in particular serves to break down the scale of the building.

The Board added that the overall size and scale are appropriate for the B4 zoning district and this particular location near Broadway.

Façade

- Consider repeating the windows on the front of the building along the front of the garage, or some other way of punching out the screening of the garage area to provide additional fenestration on the ground floor.

Response: Refer to ground floor renderings and material precedents submitted to the board on 6/9/2023.

- The rear of the building lacks sufficient articulation. The ARB encouraged the architect to provide relief through façade differentiation, some applied element, change in materials (e.g., vertical paneling vs. monolithic elements), or carrying through the use of color such as applied on the front of the building.

Response: Refer to material diagrams, building rear rendering view from Broadway, and facade close-up rendering submitted to the board on 6/9/2023.

- While the ARB appreciates that the building is light in color, they are interested in the use of color in a few areas (e.g., the stair), and would be interested in seeing that type of relief applied elsewhere to break down some of the more monolithic elements. The applicant may want to consider introducing color changes where cladding changes from horizontal to vertical and adjust the depth of the cornice to add a shadow line and add depth to the building.

Response: The team notes and acknowledges the ARB's facade articulation input which will be incorporated into the design through development of details. Refer to material diagram submitted that illustrates design approach, submitted to the board on 6/9/2023.

- The ARB is concerned about the appearance of some of the screening on the garage between the brick bays and on the second floor guard rail, which reads like chain link on the renderings. The applicant is encouraged to consider a screening element that has more opacity and visibility to the interior space.

Response: The screening is intended to be architectural screening with an articulated design expression to provide texture, pattern, visibility, and security. Refer to renderings and precedent images submitted to the board on 6/9/2023.

Commercial Space

- The ARB noted that 600 square feet is very small for a commercial space; if the space can't viably be leased as a commercial space or made larger to provide a more viable commercial space, the ARB recommended dedicating it as a programmable common area for residents. The ARB noted that 1,000 square feet is likely the minimum floor plate necessary to create a usable and rentable commercial space in this location.

Response: The space will be occupied by HCA or its property management as an office space.

- Another alternative would be relocating the common area to the first floor and moving meeting rooms and office spaces to the second floor and enlarge the commercial office space.

Response: See note above; HCA or property management will occupy first floor office space.

- If there is a tenant identified for the commercial space, the ARB noted that additional clarification on a sign band and/or recommended sign types should be requested.

Response: The ARB's recommendation is noted and acknowledged should there be a future tenant.

- Additional differentiation between the lobby entrance and the entry to the commercial space should be provided, whether through lighting, sign treatment, or façade differentiation.

Response: Please refer to the ground floor Sunnyside entry rendering, submitted on 6/9/2023, which demonstrates facade differentiation. The proposed textured brick pattern includes the residential entry. This allows a clear contrast and differentiation between the residential side of the ground floor and the office space, where a storefront facade is proposed to allow visual connection to the pedestrian realm.

General Design Comments

- The ARB recommended adding lighting to the perimeter of the parking garage, as Sunnyside Ave is currently not well lit, noting that additional lighting would make this project a more family-friendly development.

Response: Refer to the conceptual lighting plan submitted to the board on 6/9/2023.

- The ARB noted multiple areas dedicated to back of house, and questioned whether some could be removed or added back to the apartments for more living area.

Response: These spaces are held for further coordination for the electrical rooms, janitorial closets, or trash chute, and HVAC risers. Any residual space will be re-absorbed into units where possible.

2. Affordable Housing: Comments from the Affordable Housing Trust are anticipated the week of 4/24/2023.

3. Conservation and Environmental Amenities: As noted above, the Conservation Commission commented that the property is not under their jurisdiction. The Tree Warden responded that he did not have any comments on the application. The Tree Committee noted the plans for some native trees to be planted along the sidewalk, and encouraged the applicant to specify shade trees for these locations and provide quantities sufficient to help mitigate the urban heat island effect in the project area.

The ARB noted that this street floods quickly and has a high water table. While this site is at a higher elevation than other areas of Sunnyside Avenue, the ARB asked whether the high water table was a factor considered in the design of the project.

Response:

While the site is located outside of the floodplain overlay district, the design raised the building as much as possible while keeping the entrances accessible.

The first floor design elevation is above ground water elevation as observed in the preliminary geotech report. Further soil testing will be performed during design development to identify the water table elevation.

The site is located outside of the floodplain overlay district and wetland district per Sections 5.7 and 5.8 of the Arlington Zoning Bylaw.

Additionally, ARB noted the following:

- The Zoning Bylaw requires one public shade tree shall be provided every 25 linear feet of lot frontage along a public way. This should be required per Section 6.3.

Response: The plantings design will include shade trees along the frontage; the spacing between the trees is related to site constraints. Refer to landscape plan submitted to the board on 6/9/2023.

- While the proposal has very little open space, the development's proximity to the Alewife Greenway, Waldo Park, and the second floor roof deck compensate for the lack of open space.

4. Parking, Circulation, Access, and Connections: The TAC and the ARB provided a review

of traffic, parking, and circulation and provided the following comments. Please also refer to the attached memorandum from TAC and the Town Engineer. As noted above, comments from the DPCD Sr. Transportation Planner, who begins employment with the Town on 4/24/2023, are forthcoming.

TAC provided recommendations for bus stop accessibility improvements at Broadway and Sunnyside. TAC also noted numerical discrepancies between the TIS and the site plan, provided clarification on span of service for bus route 87, and recommended factoring this project into corridor improvements.

The Town Engineer provided feedback on sidewalks and sewer via notes on the attached site plans and as summarized below:

Sidewalks

- A 5' minimum sidewalk width between the tree well and the building is required.

Response: Please refer to the landscape plan submitted to the board on 6/9/2023. The design team has made the evaluation and recommendation that a 4' sidewalk width at the tree pits is code compliant, matches the existing conditions at the adjacent building, and provides the best tree pit solution without further encroaching on the existing narrow right-of-way on Sunnyside street. The tree pits' 3'-width dimension is a town minimum requirement and considered by the design team to be the minimum dimension for optimize tree health.

- Ensure that street tree plantings are in accordance with Town regulations and approved by the Tree Warden.

Response: Please refer to the landscape plan and plant submitted to the board on 6/9/2023.

- The applicant should consider reducing impervious surface at the sidewalk by providing a continuous grass strip along the curb line.

Response: Please refer to the landscape plan submitted to the board on 6/9/2023. The design maximizes planting surface while providing impervious surface for functional access and bike parking between the tree pits and plantings.

- Consider providing some sort of pedestrian warning or notification where the sidewalk crosses the garage entrance.

Response: A warning or notification will be included in the design. A tactile warning pad will be provided where the pedestrian walkway will cross the garage entrance. Please refer to landscape plan and garage rendering submitted to the board on 6/8/2023.

- There may be a conflict between the proposed street trees and overhead wires.

Response: The site plan has been updated to provide underground wires to avoid this conflict. The overhead wires feed power to the site. They will be taken down prior to building construction and buried underground to connect to a transformer. This effort will require additional coordination with the utility company.

- There may be some redundancy between the proposed hydrant on the plan right of the proposed building and adjacent services; a hydrant located across the street from the building and a fire connection located on the façade of the building less than 20 feet away from the proposed hydrant.

Response: The design team has reached out to the Fire Chief Deputy Melly and he has expressed a preference for a hydrant on the same side of the street and within close proximity to the FDC on the building. Therefore the design team is proposing to provide a new hydrant on the property pending further coordination from the towns Water Department.

Sewer/Infrastructure

- Sewer line cleanout should be 10 feet from the building.

Response: Acknowledged. A cleanout will be proposed 10 feet from the building.

- Identify manholes on the site plan.

Response: Acknowledged. Manholes will be identified on the site plan.

- Identify sump elevation.

Response: Acknowledged. Sumps will be identified on the stormwater management plan.

- Identify the outlet for the foundation drain and elevations of the foundation drain.

Response: Acknowledged the plans have been updated to provide the foundation drain outlet invert. Will require further coordination with geotech.

- Call out DMH #4 and CB#3 on the site plan.

Response: The plans have been updated with callouts for proposed DMH and CB structures.

- At least one inspection port will be needed for the infiltration area.

Response: Acknowledged. Inspection ports will be provided in the infiltration system.

Garage

- The ARB recommended specifying a quieter rolling grill used for the garage door

to avoid disruptive noise during garage door operation.

Response: Noted. The design team will specify a quiet rolling grill.

Vehicular Parking

- The ARB noted that the application materials provide two different required parking amounts to be waived, and both figures are incorrect. For 43 units, under Section 8.2.4 there should be 43 minus 4 spaces required, as the applicant is entitled to a 10% reduction in parking for affordable housing. Under this calculation, the HCA would be requesting a 16 space parking reduction.

Response: HCA submitted to the board benchmarking data from its other properties demonstrating suitability of unit to parking space ratio at the May 16th hearing.

Bicycle Parking

- The ARB noted that the proposal includes much less bicycle parking than required and feels that this is a mistake, as the location is ideal for cyclists. The ARB recommended reducing the parking by one or two spaces in order to meet the bicycle parking requirements and provide additional space for stroller parking.

Response: Refer to bike parking plans submitted to the board on May 16, 2023 demonstrating optimized bicycle parking to meet guidelines while keeping the parking spaces as proposed.

Traffic Impact Analysis

- The ARB noted that there was not a mode adjustment in the Traffic Impact Study due to the proximity of transit access in the area, and questioned whether this was an oversight or a conscious decision by the project team.

Response: The reason the mode share was not adjusted due to the proximity of the transit service was to lend to a more conservative analysis of the roadway impacts. Adjusting the mode share would increase the number of transit riders, reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles, therefore indicating less of an impact to traffic. Our current analysis indicates minimal impact to traffic. Refer to traffic study submitted to the board on May 16, 2023.

5. Utilities: Please refer to the attached comments and recommendations from the Town Engineer.

6. Stormwater: Please refer to the attached comments and recommendations from the Town Engineer.

7. Public Health: The Board of Health provided specific comments on trash storage and disposal, the project's HVAC system, and noise impact on future tenants from surrounding businesses. Please refer to the attached comments and recommendations for future details.

One ARB member noted that there was a release on the site reported to the Department of Environmental Protection around 20 years ago; while this was likely cleaned up in the intervening years, it is important that the HCA understand the status of the issue.

8. Sustainability: The CEFC will vote on 4/28 to approve the following statement from the CEFC Chair: The HCA project's plan to pursue Passive House standards aligns with the Town's Net Zero Action Plan. Pursuit of Passive House would also fulfill the requirement of the State's new Specialized Stretch Code, which the Select Board has recommended that Town Meeting adopt this spring. The addition of solar PV to the HCA project further supports the Town's goals of maximizing local renewable energy production. Furthermore, the Stretch Code—automatically effective for Arlington's commercial buildings as of July 1, 2023—requires that 20% of parking spaces have wiring to support electric vehicle charging. HCA could clarify what electrical capacity there might be for future EV charging station expansion at 10 Sunnyside. Finally, HCA could clarify the fuel sources for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC), water heating, and appliances. These systems ideally should be all electric to align with the Town's net zero goals or, if the systems are not all electric, pre-wiring should be provided for future electrification of these systems per the Specialized Stretch Code.

Overall, the provision of a 100% affordable housing development along a bus line and within walking/biking distance of multiple amenities is supported by the boards, commissions, and departments. The project fits well with the Master Plan goals of encouraging mixed-use development along Arlington's main commercial corridors and providing a variety of housing options for a range of incomes, ages, and needs.

As noted by several commenters, the service, time, and consideration of the ZBA is sincerely appreciated. Boards and departments were pleased to be asked to provide comments on what was seen as a positive addition to Arlington's housing supply. I am happy to coordinate with boards, commissions, and Town staff should the ZBA wish to ask additional questions pertaining to their respective areas of expertise.

Response:

- 1. EV Charging Stations: Refer to the EV parking plan submitted to the board on 6/9/2023. To meet PHIUS certification requirements, the project needs two (2) EV-ready charging stations. The design team is proposing four (4) EV-ready stations. To meet the town's requirements for EV-capable spaces, the project team is proposing (5) EV-capable spaces.*
- 2. Fuel Sources: The design team intends to electrify the building to the greatest extent possible. HVAC and appliances will be all-electric. Because the hot water is centralized, the basis of design is a gas-fired water centralized water heating with storage tanks that*

is pre-wired and ready for a future all-electric conversion to Heat Pump Water Heater; the team is actively investigating the feasibility of installing the Heat Pump Water Heater on Day One.

Attachments:

- TAC Comments on 10 Sunnyside Comprehensive Permit Application, dated April 10, 2023
 - Town Engineer comments as provided on site plans
 - 10 Sunnyside Avenue Board of Health Comments, dated April 13, 2023
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TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE.
Arlington Planning Department, 730 Mass Ave,
Arlington MA

Date: April 10, 2023

To: The Department of Planning and Community Development

From: The Transportation Advisory Committee

Subject: Comments on 10 Sunnyside Ave Comprehensive Permit Application (40B)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Make the bus stops at Broadway / Sunnyside handicap accessible. This will include installation of landing pads and a curb cut ramp to facilitate potential future installation of a marked crosswalk on the south side of Broadway, across from Sunnyside. (The nearest existing curb cut is the driveway to the cemetery, more than 200 feet away.)

Response: The cost of landing pads and curb cuts exceed HCA's available resources and budget. Based on the funding sources, HCA is unable to spend the resources outside of the project site. HCA believes the recommendation to be a useful idea and is happy to help coordinate with the town.

2. Share the study with Somerville. DCR/Somerville recently received a State earmark to study improvements to the Broadway / Route 16 intersection.

Response: HCA will share the study with Somerville and coordinate with the town.

COMMENTS:

3. From the standpoint of transit access, this is not a bad location for multi-family housing.
4. Section 1.2 of the TIS, it notes that there is a requirement for 9 parking spaces for 40

units, but does not mention parking for the commercial space, or if the commercial space will require handicap accessible parking. The TIS says there are 22 spaces and the site plan shows 21 spaces. *Response: 21 spaces is correct*

5. Section 3.3 of the TIS, two comments on transit

a. Span of service for bus 87 is less than that for the MBTA as a whole. Bus 87 does not have late evening or Sunday service in Arlington.

b. The Clarendon Hill busway is approximately 1000' (5 minute walk) from the project site. It offers several additional bus routes, including late evening and Sunday service

6. Both Somerville and Arlington are looking at the Broadway corridor; this project should be factored into proposed corridor improvements.

Below is a Google street view picture, facing east, of the Broadway/Sunnyside bus stop. This lightly used stop has several deficiencies: no nearby pedestrian crossing, no landing pad, and often not cleared of snow in the winter.



Town of Arlington
Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Board of Health
27 Maple Street
Arlington, MA 0247

MEMORANDUM

To: Zoning Board of Appeals
From: Pdraig Martin, Lead Health Compliance Officer
Date: April 13, 2023
RE: 10 Sunnyside Avenue

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the materials provided for the 10 Sunnyside Avenue development project in East Arlington. After a thorough review, the Board of Health has the following comments.

Trash Storage and Disposal:

The submitted plans show a designated trash room of approximately 293 square feet on the first floor of the structure, with no other space allocated for trash storage. In accordance with 105 CMR 410.000: MINIMUM STANDARDS OF FITNESS FOR HUMAN HABITATION (STATE SANITARY CODE, CHAPTER II), the property owner must provide adequate receptacles for garbage and rubbish accumulation, ensure accessibility for building occupants, and prevent objectionable odors from entering any dwelling units. Considering the proposed 43 dwelling units and commercial space, the Board is concerned that the single designated space on the main floor may be insufficient for trash storage and disposal.

Response: The client will work thoroughly with the property management company to ensure effective trash disposal within the trash room and for trash collection. A trash chute and compactor is in consideration for the building.

HVAC System:

HVAC System: The project documents do not provide information on the type and location of the HVAC system to be installed at the site. In recent years, our department has received several complaints related to noise generated by certain HVAC systems. To ensure compliance with the Town's Noise Abatement Bylaw and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's 310 CMR 7.00: Air Pollution Control regulation, the Board requests information on the proposed HVAC system's location and specifications.

Response: Acknowledged. The design team will follow regulations and provide specifications when the system is selected.

Noise Impact from Surrounding Businesses:

Noise Impact from Surrounding Businesses: The proposed mixed-use building will be situated in a B4 zoned area and will be immediately adjacent to B2A zoned property. This location may expose occupants of the residential units to noise from surrounding businesses. The project proposal does not indicate if there are any considerations or mitigation measures in place to reduce sound transmission to the dwelling units. The Board recommends addressing potential noise impacts and incorporating appropriate mitigation strategies into the project plans.

Response: The design will adhere to code regulations for acoustics; an acoustic consultant will be engaged to do an interior acoustic evaluation and exterior environmental noise study. The results of the evaluation and study will inform how the building will be detailed to mitigate noise.

The following items are comments and questions from the board during the Hearing #1 discussion on 5/2/2022:

- Consider a second means of egress on the roof deck to permit more people. Confirm with building inspector that one means of egress for maximum occupancy of 49 people is acceptable. How will the maximum number of occupancy be regulated-this question may come up.
Response: The design team will confirm the intended max occupancy of 49 with the Fire Department; develop the design and meet with ISD. Property management will have policies for access to the community room and the roof deck.
- Review mail and parcel area for size, capacity.
Response: Refer to enlarged plan submitted to the board on 6/9/2023.
- Provide height of building from average grade and at the roof lines.
Response: Refer to the height information submitted to the board on 6/9/2023. The average grade of the site is 15.60 el; the height of the building at the roof line based on the average grade is 56.15 el (56'-2")
- Provide a shadow Study
Response: Refer to shadow study submitted to the board on 6/9/2023.
- How will EV dock stations fit in the plans? [20% requirement]
Response: Refer to EV plan submitted to the board on 6/9/2023.
- How will the transformer be screened?
Response: The design team will develop a landscaped approach to screening the transformer.

- Will PV panels be flat or raised ?

Response: PV panels will be ballasted roof-mount system approximately 18" tall; they will not be visible from the street.

- Recommendation to contact Broadway Safe Streets Alliance, installation of a crosswalk on Broadway near the building.

Response: The owner will contact Broadway Safe Streets Alliance to facilitate site improvement.