



Outlook

Comments on docket #3822 – 20 Pond Lane

From Paul Creedon <pacreedon@gmail.com>

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To ZBA <ZBA@town.arlington.ma.us>; Paige Clunie <paclunie@gmail.com>



 3 attachments (10 MB)

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Dear Arlington Zoning Board of Appeals Members,

We write to express our strong opposition to docket #3822 – 20 Pond Lane, appearing before the board on October 22, 2024. We reside at 9-11 Pond Lane, unit 11 with our two young children. We have lived at this residence since September 2019.

Pedestrian Safety & Impact on Traffic

We are concerned that commercial activity at 20 Pond Lane will make our neighborhood less safe by increasing traffic and blocking pedestrian access to Spy Pond, the Minuteman bike path, the Boys and Girls Club, and Spy Pond Field. The stretch of Pond Lane that runs from Massachusetts Ave to Spy Pond has no legal street parking. However, private and commercial vehicles often park on the sidewalk, blocking pedestrian access.

When we first moved to the neighborhood, a commercial cleaning company operated from the garage at 20 Pond Lane. Each morning, several vans would idle in the driveway and on the sidewalk as they loaded supplies. The impact on pedestrians was minor at 6 AM, but we were forced to walk on the road as we walked our dog. The concern is that a future commercial business would introduce similar sidewalk obstructions later in the day, forcing pedestrians onto the busy road.

Unfortunately, Arlington's Parking Enforcement Officers are not empowered to regulate parking on residential streets. As residents, our only recourse is to contact the Arlington Police non-emergency number. Consequently, traffic regulations are not enforced in residential areas. Out of convenience, delivery drivers, landscapers, and other commercial operators may park on the sidewalk and in front of "no parking" signs without consequence.

To this point, at approximately 8 AM on Tuesday, October 15, 2024, three large moving trucks arrived on Pond Lane to move items out of the residential units at 20 Pond Lane. The trucks blocked traffic as they attempted to navigate the narrow road. Ultimately, the trucks parked along the street, blocking the sidewalk as students made their way to school. As you can see from the attached pictures, the sidewalk was fully blocked. Cyclists were forced into oncoming traffic. These traffic violations were caused by the

moving company, not the petitioner. However, this demonstrates the impact that increased commercial activity will have on our neighborhood.

Approving this application will lead to increased commercial traffic and make our neighborhood less safe for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

Impact of "Light" Commercial Activity

From our reading of the application, the petitioner intends to sell this property once they receive Zoning Board of Appeal approval to allow for "storage of commercial vehicles and equipment, office use, and proposed light construction work to be performed inside of the garage." We are concerned that the new owners may interpret this definition to fit their needs. This would have several negative impacts on the neighborhood:

1. Noise: As far as we are aware, "light construction" is not defined in the application or within Arlington's Zoning Bylaw. The new property owner could interpret this definition to include any number of construction activities. Could the garage be used for metal working, machine assembly, or commercial woodworking? These activities would negatively impact our neighborhood by introducing the constant sound of construction and pollution.
2. Environmental Impact: What would prevent a future owner from storing harmful chemicals onsite? What safeguards are in place to prevent harmful exhaust from entering our neighborhood?

As the residents living across the street from 20 Pond Lane, we—not the petitioner—are the ones who will have to live with the consequence of whatever future commercial ventures purchase the property. We strongly urge the Zoning Board of Appeal to reject this application.

Best regards,
Paul Creedon & Paige Clunie
11 Pond Lane