

From: James O'Donnell
Sent: Monday, August 11, 2025 10:59 AM
To: Jennifer Joslyn-Siemiatkoski
Subject: Public comment for 126 Broadway

Redevelopment Board
Town of Arlington
Arlington, MA

Dear Members of the Redevelopment Board,

I am writing to express strong support for the proposed housing development project—transforming a two-unit house into a 14-unit residential complex. This initiative aligns with Arlington's and the Commonwealth's broader goals of increasing housing supply, expanding affordability, and adhering to MBTA Communities zoning requirements.

1. Addressing an urgent need for affordable housing in Arlington

Arlington continues to grapple with a regional housing crisis marked by high costs. Particularly for rentals, there is a lack of 1 bedroom and 2 bedroom options. Restricting Arlington's development to prioritize only the same 1 and 2-unit homes that dot the town already will do nothing to alleviate the affordability problem, and this new development will add units to Arlington's housing stock.

2. Compliance with MBTA Communities law and local approvals

Arlington is bound by state law and its own town votes to create more affordable housing under the MBTA Communities initiative. The proposed 14-unit project fits squarely into the town's approved framework.

3. Addressing common concerns: parking, street safety, congestion

I understand that some neighbors have raised concerns about parking availability, street safety, and congestion. I live nearby and walk in this area regularly, and there is nothing about this proposed project that would uniquely increase risks in these areas compared to other developments allowed under our zoning. Importantly, the inclusion of bike parking is a positive feature that will encourage car-free transportation. The developer alone cannot change Arlington's overnight parking restrictions or crosswalk safety infrastructure, but I agree that the nearby intersections would benefit from more clearly marked crosswalks—a change the town should consider regardless of this project's approval.

4. Strategic and thoughtful policy implementation

Arlington's MBTA Communities Overlay Districts were crafted with care to align increased density with community character and existing infrastructure. Provisions like overlay zones support smart growth while preserving neighborhood scale and walkable corridors.

This development proposal not only contributes much-needed housing in a tight market but also furthers Arlington's commitment to state law compliance and inclusive growth. The project embodies sustainable, equitable development.

I wholeheartedly support this 14-unit development and strongly urge the Redevelopment Board to provide a favorable recommendation. It represents a responsible, forward-thinking response to Arlington's housing and planning priorities.

Sincerely,
James O'Donnell