



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

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 ensure compliance with M.G.L c.40A, § 3A

To: Arlington Redevelopment Board
From: Claire V. Ricker, AICP Secretary Ex-Officio
Subject: Site Plan Review, 9-11 Robbins Rd Docket #3869
Date: January 8, 2026

I. Docket Summary

This is an application by 9 Robbins Road, LLC, 12 Dickson Ave, Arlington, MA 02474, to open Site Plan Review Docket #3867 in accordance with the provisions of the Town of Arlington Zoning Bylaw Section 5.8.3, Site Plan Review.

The applicant proposes to demolish an existing two-family dwelling with detached garage and construct two three-story residential buildings with two units each on the property located at 9-11 Robbins Rd, Arlington, MA, in the Residential Two-Family District (R2) District and Neighborhood Multi-Family (NMF) Housing Overlay District. Six (6) residential parking spaces are proposed.

The following items were provided by the Applicant since the last hearing, on December 1, 2025:

- Architectural Plans and Drawings, dated 1/2/26
- Color Renderings, dated 1/2/26
- Landscape Plan, dated 12/30/25
- Memorandum regarding second driveway, dated 12/15/25

At their meeting on December 1, 2025, the ARB identified the following issues for the applicant to address:

- **Reconsider bicycle parking; an accessory structure will need to either have a 6-foot setback on each side or be smaller than 7 feet tall and 80 square feet. Open bicycle parking is also a possibility.**

The applicant proposes an 80 square foot accessory structure within the 6' setback that provides storage for 4 bicycles. The applicant will need to confirm that the height of the structure will be less than 7 feet.

- **Ensure that the corner of the building does not extend into the corner visibility setback.**

The corner of the building has been adjusted so that it does not encroach within the traffic visibility setback in compliance with requirements of Section 5.3.12.A of the Zoning Bylaw.

- **Reconsider the porches, both for architectural scale and for their relationship to the setbacks and the foundation walls, including considering the average setbacks of other properties on the street.**

The gable roof pitch over each front porch has been increased to enhance the overall aesthetic of the buildings. The porch on Higgins Street has been dimensioned and has a floor area of 28 SF.

- **Ensure that the requirement for a 2.5-foot vegetated buffer along the driveways in the side and rear yards is met.**

The applicant proposes a 2.5 foot vegetated buffer along the length of both driveways,

- **Provide a memo explaining how the project meets the criteria for a second driveway.**

The applicant's attorney, Mary Winstanley O'Connor, has provided a letter outlining how the project meets the criteria for a allowing a second driveway.

- **Discuss with the Tree Warden the tree species of the two street trees to be planted.**

No additional information was provided.

- **Coordinate the civil plans with the architecture and landscaping plans.**

No updated civil plans were provided. A revised landscaping plan was submitted. The applicant should correct the 11'-front yard setback along Higgins Street to 15'. Also, staff recommend the applicant use all native species for ornamentals and replace proposed cultivars with the straight species plants.

- **Reconsider the current aesthetics of the buildings to bring the scale down and address the eave and overhang issues.**

The applicant has revised the plans to address aesthetic concerns raised by the ARB including adding eaves to the front of the building along Robbins Rd and increase the roof pitch over the front entry porches of each building. The applicant also added wider corner boards on both buildings.

- **Reconsider the material and articulation of the railings of the third-story balconies.**

The applicant has removed the railings on the third-story balconies and now proposed to extend the façade to provide privacy screenings.

- **Consider a belly band or traditional window headers on all of the facades to reduce the scale.**

The applicant has added a belly band between the 2nd and 3rd floors of each of the buildings to help reduce the scale of the building. In addition, the applicant proposes window headers above each of the windows as suggested by the ARB.

- **Provide a visualization of the project from other angles.**

The applicant has provided color renderings of the buildings from multiple angles.

- **Address snow removal.**

No additional information was provided.

- **Consider more articulation on the Higgins St side of Building A.**

The applicant proposes more articulation around the windows, porch and roof line along Higgins Street.

II. Findings

The following findings are for the Board's consideration:

1. The nature and use of the property is consistent with the purpose and intent of Section 5.8, Multi-Family Overlay Districts.
2. The project is consistent with Site Plan Review/Environmental Design Review standards per Sections 5.8 and 3.4 of the Zoning Bylaw.
3. The Board finds a second driveway is appropriate in compliance with Section 6.1.10.A(2)a), i through vi, of the Zoning Bylaw.
4. Up to 33% of on-site parking spaces, or 2 spaces, may be sized for compact cars per Section 5.8.4.F(1)(a) of the Zoning Bylaw.

III. Recommended 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.
3. Applicant will obtain the necessary building permits and work with the Town Engineer to ensure compliance with all applicable codes.