



TOWN OF ARLINGTON

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

To: Arlington Select Board

From: Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development

Date: September 10, 2020

RE: Review of Host Community Agreement Applications

The Department of Planning and Community Development completed its review of the two Host Community Agreement Applications for completeness and offers the following comments and questions.

Our Department's review focused on the proposed locations and the preliminary materials provided regarding building and facade upgrades and traffic and circulation issues. We focused on these two items due to our experience reviewing Apothca's Environmental Design Review special permit for a co-located marijuana retail establishment and medical marijuana treatment center. Our primary question is regarding how each applicant proposes to manage and direct customers at each of the proposed locations. The preliminary materials did not provide adequate information to gauge how each applicant will address these issues both from the prospect of managing customers who are queueing near or inside their proposed facility and how traffic will be managed beyond the proposed locations. This will also require early consultation with the Arlington Police Department.

While many of these matters would be reviewed in detail during the Arlington Redevelopment Board Environmental Design Review process, each applicant needs to better demonstrate both an understanding of potential demand and the related impact on public rights of way, both sidewalks and streets.

We evaluated each application and provide the following observations:

Calyx Peak at 251 Summer Street:

We note that Calyx Peak has the unique opportunity to design and construct a new building that would improve this stretch of Summer Street, as well as create a parking lot that provides maximum efficiency in layout and parking management. Due to the primarily residential nature of the neighborhood surrounding this location, we anticipate that Calyx Peak will conduct extensive outreach to its neighbors to ensure that concerns can be addressed prior to the special permit process. In particular, screening, architecture, parking layout, and solid waste removal should be discussed with the neighbors.

The Human Connection:

We note that 369 Massachusetts Avenue is not a viable location for a retail establishment as the use is not allowed in the B2 District. Therefore, the potential location is at 23-35 Massachusetts Avenue; however, the application does not indicate in which building the establishment will open. The applicant should clarify the locations since there are implications on the viability of one of the locations due to the 2,000-foot density buffer measured from Eskar on Broadway (property line to property line). Additionally, the applicant should review the locations of public and private schools and recreational facilities in Cambridge and any adopted buffers in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance relevant to this location. Finally, due to the wide variety of uses present in the complex of buildings at 23-35 Massachusetts Avenue, the applicant will need to provide detailed information about the availability of space in the large parking lot to accommodate queuing and any dedicated parking.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments and questions regarding the applications. We are available to answer any questions as you proceed with review and deliberations of these applications.