

Patricia Barron Worden, Ph.D.

Testimony for Conservation Commission Re:
Request for Determination of Applicability:
1165R Massachusetts Avenue

(Please include this material in formal testimony regarding the 1165R Massachusetts Avenue 40B Project)

To Chairperson Chapnick and Members of the Commission,

As you are, no doubt aware, it has been noted in the recent study of the Mill Brook Corridor that it is “of vital importance for environmental, economic, recreational, flood control, and transportation issues for Arlington’s Mill Brook corridor which stretches from the reservoir to the Mystic Lakes. Arlington Master Plan, was adopted in 2015 with numerous recommendations for future action, including a renewed look at the Mill Brook Corridor and all past studies.”

The report cited seven categories of issues which should be addressed to maximize the rehabilitation of the Brook and its economic potential for Arlington these are: “environment/ecosystem management, flood control, recreation, economic development, transportation, historical context, and place-making. Many of these actions require substantial collaboration with private property owners and/or multiple Town departments, and therefore cannot be completed on a set timeline.”

The importance of the Conservation Commission to proper stabilization, rehabilitation, and protection of Mill Brook and appropriate commercial development is of vital importance.

Accordingly it is of great concern that an attempted end run around Arlington zoning and proper land/wetland protection planning of this major Industrially zoned land area at 1165R Massachusetts Avenue is being attempted to achieve dense residential 40B development.

I hope the Commission can reach conclusions which will bar this 40B project. Certainly the semantics and considerations involved in the narrow parameters of the Request for Determination of Applicability at 1165R Massachusetts Avenue are challenging. But regarding the Ryder Brook situation it seems inappropriate to make any determination regarding M.G.L. c. 131, sec. 40 during a very dry summer.

Also great caution should be taken regarding the 40B project proponent’s attempted use of self-serving arguments concerning the matter of 104 Stony Brook, LLC, 2018 WL 6040701 (2018). Any case involving sparsely-populated Weston (one of the wealthiest towns on a per capita basis in Massachusetts) is totally irrelevant to a dense, middle class community like Arlington.

I should point out that your decision could be precedent-setting regarding developer/landowner/residential real estate speculation in this most important Mill Brook region.

Patricia Barron Worden, Ph.D.

Former member and Chair Arlington Housing Authority

Former Charter member, Human Rights Commission

Town Meeting member, pct 8

Member, Housing Plan Implementation Committee