

**Arlington Redevelopment Board**  
**Monday, October 7, 2024, at 7:30 PM**  
**Community Center, Main Hall**  
**27 Maple Street, Arlington, MA 02476**  
**Meeting Minutes**

This meeting was recorded by ACMi.

**PRESENT:** Rachel Zsembery (Chair), Eugene Benson, Shaina Korman-Houston, Kin Lau, Stephen Revilak

**STAFF:** Claire Ricker, Director of Planning and Community Development; Sarah Suarez, Assistant Director of Planning and Community Development

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The Chair called the meeting of the Board to order.

The Chair opened with **Agenda Item 1 – Review Meeting Minutes.**

September 9, 2024, minutes – The Board members made one edit to the minutes. The Chair requested a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Lau so moved, Mr. Benson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to **Agenda Item 2 – Public Hearing: Docket #3810, 149 Pleasant Street.**

Ms. Ricker said that the architect for 149 Pleasant Street contacted DPCD to ask that the hearing be continued to November 4, 2024.

The Chair asked for a motion to continue the hearing for Docket #3810, 149 Pleasant Street, to November 4, 2024. Mr. Lau so moved, Mr. Benson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor.

Mr. Benson noted that the property is not in good condition, and vegetation has grown onto the sidewalk, making it difficult to walk along the sidewalk. He asked Ms. Ricker to communicate the issue to the applicant and ask them to deal with the overgrown vegetation.

The Chair moved to **Agenda Item 3 – Public Hearing: Docket #3798, 821 Massachusetts Avenue.**

Ms. Ricker said that the 2009 Special Permit for this property, Docket 3348, needs to be reopened and amended at the same time that Docket 3798 is being considered. As a result, Docket 3798 needs to be continued to October 21, 2024, so that both dockets can both be heard at the same meeting.

The Chair asked for a motion to continue the hearing for Docket #3798, 821 Massachusetts Avenue, to November 4, 2024. Mr. Lau so moved, Mr. Benson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to **Agenda Item 4 – Public Hearing: Docket #3819, 2 Reservoir Road.**

Ms. Ricker explained that this is an application by David and Linnea Berggren, proposing to renovate the existing non-conforming single-family residence located at 2 Reservoir Road in the R1 Single Family Residential District, by constructing an addition to the first floor and adding a dormer to the second floor. The application is before the Redevelopment Board due to its location abutting the Minuteman Bikeway. Ms. Ricker said that there was a question about whether the conservation area can be considered usable open space. In the opinion of both Ms. Ricker and Mike Ciampa, Director of the Inspectional Services Department, that area can be considered usable open space, so the application meets the requirements for usable open space.

Ms. Berggren said that they have received approval from the Conservation Commission. The existing house is one-and-a-half stories, with two bedrooms upstairs and one bathroom downstairs. The project is consistent with complete restoration to the existing structure, with the addition of a second-floor rear dormer to create an upstairs bathroom,

and a first-floor rear addition to expand the living space. The first-floor addition replaces the rear entry porch and sidewalk. They plan to preserve the existing architectural features, keeping the character of the front porch. The first-floor addition has been set back on the sides from the existing dimensions of the house. To minimize the climate impact, they have reduced the size of the existing driveway, so that the total change to the lot's hardscape will be less than 316 square feet. They also plan to add additional drainage on the property.

Mr. Revilak asked for clarification of the size of the addition; Ms. Berggren said that it would be 426 square feet. He noted that an increase of 350 or more square feet of impervious surface would trigger requirements under the stormwater bylaw, but since they are reducing the size of the driveway for a net change of less than 316 square feet, the project will not trigger those requirements.

Mr. Benson noted that this sort of renovation would not normally come before the Board. It is only doing so because the property abuts the Bikeway, and the Board is required to consider the appearance of the façade facing the Bikeway. He could not determine from the drawings presented what that façade will actually look like. Architect David Mullen said that the material will be wooden shingles, which is in keeping with the original house. The color has not been finalized, but it will probably mostly be gray or gray-green. The window frames will likely be black, and the trim will probably be off-white. The roof will be asphalt shingles. Mr. Benson noted that the application included multiple errors with regard to the requirements of the zoning bylaw, but he does not think that they are relevant to the decision in this case.

Ms. Korman-Houston asked if the property has access to the Bikeway. Ms. Berggren said that it does, and it will continue to do so. Mr. Mullen noted that the access is used by the public; people walk over a corner of the property to reach the Bikeway.

Mr. Lau noted that it is difficult to meet the requirements of the specialized stretch code, so he encouraged Mr. Mullin to consider adding rigid insulation on the outside before putting the siding on. He also noted that half-inch sheathing on the roof does not meet the code; they will need to use 5/8" sheathing. The Chair clarified that the applicants would need to review everything with the Inspectional Services Department to ensure that it meets the requirements of the specialized stretch code.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment.

- Ethan [last name], 22 Nourse St – He lives across the street from the property. Everyone on the street is very supportive and appreciates the fact that they are maintaining the architectural integrity of the house.

Seeing no one else who wished to speak, the Chair closed public comment.

Mr. Revilak proposed that the following conditions suggested in the staff EDR memo for Docket 3819 be deleted or altered in the Board's final approval:

- Condition 6 – delete the first sentence.
- Condition 8 – delete the condition entirely.
- Condition 10 – delete the condition entirely.

Mr. Benson said that the first sentence of Condition 5 should also be deleted. He also proposed adding the following sentence, taken from Section 3.1.D, to this and all other Board decisions: "This Special Permit under Environmental Design Review is conditioned upon compliance with the conditions set forth in this permit and the State Building Code and, where applicable, the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board regulations."

The Chair asked for a motion to approve Docket 3819, for 2 Reservoir Road, with the removal of the first sentence of suggested special condition 5, the first sentence of suggested special condition 6, and suggested special conditions 8 and 10, and with the addition of a special condition consistent with Zoning Bylaw Section 3.1.2. Ms. Korman-Houston so moved, Mr. Benson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor.

Due to the time listed on the agenda for Agenda Item 5, the Public Hearing for Docket 3717, the Chair opted to take some agenda items out of order.

The Chair moved to **Agenda Item 6 – Debrief of Joint Meeting with Select Board.**

Ms. Ricker said that the joint meeting with the Select Board was fruitful and included many important topics, but the Board wanted the opportunity to share final thoughts or follow-up items about the meeting.

Mr. Lau said that the discussion was good, but he has participated in such joint meetings before, and the necessary follow-up doesn't always happen. He would like to know how the Board will follow up and make sure the issues raised are actually dealt with.

The Chair noted that the Board just received the meeting minutes for review, and they may not have all had time to review them. She proposed reviewing the minutes together at a future meeting, at which the Board would go through each agenda item and discuss plans for following up on each issue.

Ms. Korman-Houston agreed that it will be important to plan how to follow up. She is particularly interested in the issue of overnight parking. She was surprised at how little-used the pilot program has been and would like to discuss how to facilitate usage of the overnight parking permits in ways that would facilitate development.

Mr. Benson agreed with the idea of discussing the specific agenda items at a future meeting and determining if there are particular actions the Board wants to take or ask the Select Board to take.

Mr. Revilak was pleased to see how receptive the Select Board seemed to updating the Arlington Heights Business District zoning. He also thought that it was a good start to the conversation about parking.

The Chair moved to **Agenda Item 8 – New Business.**

Ms. Ricker said that the RFP for the Arlington Master Plan Update (AMPUp) consultant closed on September 23, and they received six proposals: MAPC, Weston & Sampson, JM Goldson, Barrett Planning Group, Stantec, and Innes Associates. The AMPUp Advisory Committee will meet on Thursday, October 9, to discuss the submittals. The Committee will likely choose a selection subcommittee to review the proposals in detail and conduct interviews. The subcommittee will consist of the two Board representatives, three other committee members, Ms. Ricker, and another DPCD staff member.

Ms. Ricker also reported that a public meeting about the Arlington Heights Business District rezoning will be held on Tuesday, October 29, at Peirce Elementary School.

Mr. Benson noted that some time ago, the Board asked the developer of 882 Mass Ave to change the exterior vents on the building and provide a lighting plan to the Board, and he asked the status of those issues. Ms. Ricker said the developer has selected new vent covers, and they are in the process of ordering the new covers and replacing the old ones. Ms. Suarez said that the developer is working on a lighting plan, and she will provide that to the Board as soon as it is available. Mr. Benson noted that the Board also received an email about the lack of transparency in the first-floor front window. The Board can provide relief on that issue if warranted, but the developer has not gone to the Board to ask for relief. The Chair said that the issue of window transparency is related to the issue of signage that was raised at the joint meeting with the Select Board, because the window film is considered signage, even if it is not advertising the business.

The Chair moved to **Agenda Item 5 – Public Hearing: Docket #3717, 80 Broadway.**

Ms. Ricker said that this is a request by the applicant to reopen Special Permit Docket 3717 for the construction of a mixed-use building containing retail and commercial office space and nine residential housing units at 80 Broadway in the B4 Vehicular Oriented Business District. The Applicant proposes to change the proposed common area outdoor deck space on the fifth floor to private outdoor space for the fifth-floor unit. The applicant proposes to establish common area outdoor deck space on the second floor for the remainder of the residential units and the commercial space. The Applicant further proposes to identify a second affordable unit in the project to be deed-restricted and added to the Subsidized Housing Inventory of the Town. Thus, this project will add nine residential apartment units, of which two units will be affordable to eligible households making up to 70% of the area median income, and two commercial spaces. Ms. Ricker noted that the October 2023 Special Town Meeting removed the requirement for usable open space in mixed-use projects. The changes that the applicant proposes are in compliance with the current open space requirements. The Permit is being reopened because it was originally approved by the Board on December 19, 2022,

based on the open space requirements in effect at the time, so the Board would need to approve any changes to what was approved at the time.

Robert Costello is the principal member of 80 Broadway LLC, as well as an Arlington resident. He said that the building is largely built, and that the process has gone smoothly. Because of the cost of the project, the intention has always been to sell the top floor and rent out the rest of the residential units. Because of egress requirements and other issues with the design, they realized that it would be difficult to provide common access to the fifth-floor roof deck. They decided to make the fifth-floor roof deck accessible only from the fifth-floor unit, and turn the planned private deck space on the second floor into common open space for the use of all the other residents and the commercial space. In exchange for being allowed to make that change, they intend to add an additional one-bedroom affordable unit.

Mr. Revilak asked if adding an additional affordable unit will result in higher rents for the market-rate units. Mr. Costello said that the market will dictate the rents of the other units. In order to recoup some of the costs of creating an additional affordable unit, they intend to apply for a grant from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Mr. Benson asked if the first floor will be changed at all, and Mr. Costello replied that it will not. Mr. Benson also noted that the units as built are not exactly the square footage originally approved by the Board. Mr. Costello said that some of the difference was due to a mistake on the architect's part. Mr. Benson noted the affordable units must be at least 700 square feet, and only three units currently meet that standard, but some fall short by only a few square feet. Mr. Costello said that they will have two affordable units that are at least 700 square feet. Mr. Benson said that he would like to see what the actual measurements will be.

Mr. Benson asked if any of the parking spaces have changed at all, and Mr. Costello replied that they had not.

Ms. Korman-Houston asked if the exterior of the building would be changed from the original proposal, and Mr. Costello replied that it would not.

Ms. Korman-Houston asked if any the new proposal included any dedicated usable open space for the commercial space. Mr. Costello said that it does not. The second-floor deck space will be for the use of both the residential and commercial units. Mr. Benson noted that there are two entrances to the second-floor deck space, one from a hallway and the other from a residential unit. Mr. Costello said that there was an error in the revised plan in that it showed a separate second-floor deck space for the adjacent residential unit. The intention was to use the entire second-floor deck as common space. Mr. Costello said that they might remove the entrance from the residential unit and put a window in its place, because a resident might not want a door leading directly from a common space into their unit. Ms. Korman-Houston asked if they foresee privacy or security concerns about the windows in that residential unit looking directly out onto the common space. Mr. Costello said that they do not foresee security concerns due to the presence of cameras, but the resident might want to add reflective tinting film to the windows to make it impossible for people on the deck to see into the unit.

Mr. Lau expressed concern about the privacy of the second-floor residential unit facing the common deck. Mr. Costello said that they will address the issue, but he noted that it would also have been an issue with the fifth-floor unit in the plans as originally approved. Mr. Lau also noted that elevators that open directly into residential units can cause problems with noise and smells.

The Chair asked if the developers would prefer to have a portion of the second-floor roof deck as dedicated private space for the adjacent residential unit, rather than having the entire second-floor roof deck as common space. Mr. Costello replied that it would be better for the resident(s) of that unit to have private rather than common space immediately outside their unit. Because they are proposing making the entire fifth-floor roof deck private, it seemed fair to make all the second-floor roof deck common space in exchange, but he would prefer to use the portion directly abutting the second-floor residential unit as private space for that unit and use the rest of it as common space. Given the change in the Zoning Bylaw removing any requirement for usable open space, the Chair said that she would have no problem with dividing the second-floor roof deck into one area of private space for the use of the abutting residential unit, and another area of common space. The other Board members agreed.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment. Seeing no one who wished to speak, she closed the floor.

The Chair asked for a motion to approve the modifications to Docket 3717, 80 Broadway, provided that the two affordable units meet the minimum square footage required by the state. Ms. Korman-Houston so moved, Mr. Benson seconded, and the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to **Agenda Item 7 – Open Forum.**

Seeing no one who wished to speak, the Chair closed Open Forum.

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lau so moved, and Mr. Benson seconded. The Board voted and approved unanimously.

Meeting **Adjourned at 9:00 pm.**