



## **TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Arlington Planning Department, 730 Mass Ave,  
Arlington MA, c/o Laura Wiener

**To:** Arlington Redevelopment Board

**From:** Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

**Subject:** 19R Park Avenue Traffic Impact Study

**Date:** November 21, 2016

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A working group of the Arlington Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) reviewed the 19R Park Avenue (Downing Square Development) Traffic Impact Study, dated November 2016. The developer of the proposed project is the Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA). The TAC working group (which included myself, Laura Wiener, Jeff Maxtutis and Victor Rivas) offers the following comments on the likely transportation impacts of the proposed development.

- The Traffic Impact Study deals only with the impact of the project on area roadways. The Town of Arlington should require developers to submit full transportation studies for their projects, which document not only traffic impacts but also accommodations for transit use, bicycles, pedestrians and ridesharing. Provisions for these latter modes of transportation can serve to reduce vehicular impacts on roadways from proposed development.
- The Traffic Study follows generally accepted methodology for analyzing impacts on area roadways. It may actually overstate the volume of traffic generated by the proposed development because it does not take credit for likely non-vehicular use that could be expected because of the project's location near bus service and adjacent to the Minuteman Bikeway. Although the expected vehicle trip distribution for the project appears reasonable, the report should document the source.
- The analysis of the operation of the proposed driveway on Lowell Street does not appear to take into account current and projected queuing on the eastbound Lowell Street approach to Downing Square. Currently during peak periods, queues often extend past the project driveway, which is about 65 feet west of the stop bar at the intersection. As a result, vehicles exiting the project driveway and westbound vehicles from Downing Square turning left into the driveway could be blocked. The latter could cause queuing on Lowell Street possibly back into Downing Square. The study should examine the engineering feasibility and traffic impacts of providing a driveway onto Park Avenue as either an alternative or as an addition to the proposed Lowell Street driveway. One-way as well as a two-way operation should be considered.

- The HCA and Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development are in negotiations to develop a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan for the project. The TDM plan will encourage the use of transit, bicycle, pedestrian and ridesharing modes as alternatives to single occupancy vehicle use. The transportation study should document the final TDM plan.
- The study states there will be 27 parking spaces and the site plan has a note stating there are 23 spaces but the site plan only shows 20 marked spaces. The number of parking spaces should be clarified. Since there is limited on street parking near the site, the planned number of spaces should be shown to be sufficient for resident and visitor demand.
- The study should document the location of bus stops near the site and the number of routes and frequency of service for those stops. This should include Lexpress Bus as well as MBTA service.
- The site plan indicates outdoor parking for 22 bicycles and the draft TDM plan indicates there will be indoor bike parking. The site plan also indicates the provision of a connection to the Minuteman Bikeway, including a bridge over the small stream next to the Bikeway. The transportation study should document all planned accommodations to support bicycle use.
- The connection to the Minuteman Bikeway could also be used by pedestrians who could access Park Avenue via the existing stairway from the Bikeway or the path between the Bikeway and the Gold's Gym parking lot. This would provide a more direct connection to the bus stops and businesses on Massachusetts Avenue than using the proposed driveway to Lowell Street. The study should document these pedestrian accommodations as well as any on-site sidewalk along the driveway to Lowell Street.
- It is not clear that the driveway and internal roadways provide adequate access and circulation for fire trucks. Site plan approval by the fire department should be documented in writing. Also, the maximum grade of the proposed driveway should be documented.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Muise – TAC Chair

Copy: Adam Chapdelaine, Arlington Town Manager

**Transportation Advisory Committee Members:**

Wayne Chouinard, Seth Federspiel, John Hurd, Melissa Laube, Jeff Maxtutis, Marjorie Moores, Howard Muise, Officer Corey Rateau, Scott Smith, and Laura Wiener

**Web site; [www.arlingtonma.gov/tac](http://www.arlingtonma.gov/tac)**