

Alexander Tee
2 Ryder Street
Arlington, MA 02476

Christian Klein, Chairperson
Arlington Zoning Board of Appeals
51 Grove Street
Arlington, MA 02476

Dear Chairperson Klein,

On April 1st, representatives from our Ryder Street and Beck Road neighborhood had a productive and positive meeting with the developer regarding existing traffic behaviors and the importance of implementing traffic smoothing measures. Priorities discussed included slowing the velocity of vehicles transiting Ryder St and providing more control over their movement. The inclusion of a speed table, full stop and narrowed 10' wide travel lanes are well received and represent a step towards a more inclusive design.

The intent of this letter is to clarify what remaining items we believe are necessary to ensure that this development fulfills its obligations to the community from a traffic point-of-view:

1. Parking: The acknowledged parking deficit is of great concern for our neighborhood. While we find the datapoint of Legacy Place's 30% vacancy rates to be intriguing, it represents just one datapoint and may not represent what will happen at 1165 Mass Ave. This development differs in several ways as it is located 1.7mi further down Mass Ave, is a mixed-use development, and must pass through a neighborhood to access a primary thoroughfare. Additionally, anticipating what traffic patterns are going to look like post-Covid is anybody's guess.

The reality is that if the developer's assumptions don't hold true, then there is no recourse or Plan B for the development to fall back on. As a private street, we cannot enforce or regulate parking in any way. If the development has insufficient parking available, or if the residents prefer not to pay the monthly parking fee, then it will be our street that feels the burden, displacing our residents.

Before approving this application as is, we need assurances, beyond language in a lease that is not realistically enforceable over time.

2. System Impact: As the first meaningful development in our neighborhood in decades, the suggested improvements by the 1165 development will heavily influence further improvements on either end of our street. We ask that the design consider the neighborhood as a whole and be responsive to current or subsequent improvements as follows:

- **Ryder / Forest Intersection:** This 5-way intersection has several design flaws that elevate risk for pedestrians. The width of the entrance enables vehicles to use it as an on-ramp carrying excessive speed from Forest onto Ryder. The current configuration of the sidewalk is inaccessible due to the placement of a telephone pole in the middle of the sidewalk. The lack of a crosswalk across Forest forces students to cross the street at the more dangerous Mass Ave intersection.
- **Bike Path Entrance:** The lack of wayfinding signage coupled with a maze of parked/idling landscaping trucks provides no guidance for pedestrians and bikes on where to safely walk/ride on Ryder St. The steep downhill from the bike path can be slip hazard and encourages cyclists and runners to carry speed onto Ryder with no warning of vehicles exiting the DPW lot who often depart without stopping.

We recognize that the 1165 development is not responsible for these issues, but we want to ensure that their proposed design embrace an awareness of current deficiencies and plan ahead enable future development to integrate with this plan.

We request help from the ZBA to meet with Arlington's town manager to review these needs and establish a strategic plan for the neighborhood as a whole in order to ensure that the 1165 improvements are the first step in the transformation of our neighborhood from an industrial hub, laying the groundwork for subsequent development.

3. Additional Detail: While conceptually there was much to celebrate in the April 1st design shared by the developer, there were some outstanding questions that necessitated additional levels of detail:

- **South Ryder Lane Configuration:** The April 1st design showed 2-way traffic using 10ft travel lanes, one in each direction. Based on current geometry this would either suggest eliminating parking along the east side of Ryder or widening the road beyond its current width to a full 29ft. We are requesting clarity over whether the road will remain as a 2-way, 1-lane road with the associated non-standard traffic flow bottlenecks.
- **Traffic Management Plan:** We were encouraged to hear that traffic would be monitored post-construction but request additional detail on how that would be governed. Specifically, what is to be measured (volume, modalities, speed, direction) at what frequency and which locations. How will this data be shared and when will it be determined if an intervention is needed?
- **Pedestrian & Bicycles:** The current design still represents a vehicle first mentality even though our street is heavily trafficked by pedestrians and cyclists. In future revisions, we request explicit detail into the signage and wayfinding that will be installed, so that we can identify specific scenarios where a more vulnerable road user's safety may be compromised. (E.g.

- telephone pole obstructing sidewalk on South Ryder. Asking cyclists to bike against traffic on west driveway).

We appreciate the collaborative nature of the conversation to date and look forward to maturing the design in a manner that responds to the needs of the broader community.

Sincerely,
Alex