

August 3, 2021

Ms. Jennifer Raitt
Director of Planning and Community Development
Town of Arlington
730 Massachusetts Avenue Annex
Arlington, MA 02476

Re: Responses to Peer Review Comments
Thorndike Place Development Changes
Arlington, Massachusetts

Dear Ms. Raitt:

Vanasse & Associates, Inc. (VAI) is pleased to submit responses to the June 28, 2021 letter from BETA Group, Inc. (BETA), the Town of Arlington's Peer Review consultant for the above-referenced development. For ease of review, we have listed the initial comments followed by our initial responses in italics. It should be noted that only comments that required a response are listed in this letter.

BETA Peer Review Letter – June 28, 2021

Comment No. 1: *“BETA concurs that the proposed Project Plan will represent a reduction in Project trips when compared to the previous Project Plan.*

“It is noted that the Applicant’s traffic evaluation conservatively evaluated Land Use Code 252 – Senior Adult Housing – Attached. As per ITE, this land use assumes internal services are not provided with residents typically living a more active independent lifestyle. The discussion presented by the Applicant on June 10, 2021 suggests the facility may function more consistent with LUC 253 – Congregate Care Facility. This land use provides internal services for residents that typically do not drive. As a result, trips are typically generated by employees/staff, visitors, or group transportation. BETA notes that LUC 253 generates fewer trips and less parking demand than Senior Adult Housing – Attached.”

Response: We are encouraged that BETA agrees with our conclusion that the revised project will have a reduction in Project trips when compared with the previous development plan.

Comment No. 2: *“The Assessment incorporated Mode Share as reported by the US Census Journey to Work. BETA finds this methodology to be unreasonable for the senior housing land use. That said, discounting the effect of the Mode Share exercise continues to result in a decrease in trip generation when compared with the previous project plan.”*

Response: It is not clear how BETA arrives at this conclusion of discounting the use of the Census data for mode share for the development, as no justification was provided for dismissing the use of any mode split data. It is noted that the development is an Independent Living complex, and most residents are expected to be fully mobile and

active adults and able to use other forms of transportation including public transit, pedestrian, and bicycles. Other services such as the Arlington Council on Aging transport van and the proposed jitney service are likely to reduce the reliance on personal vehicles. In VAI's updated analysis to the Arlington Zoning Board of Appeals dated August 2, 2021, a mode split adjustment to auto use representing half of the non-auto use mode share from the Census data was utilized. This still represents a conservative treatment of project trips, but one that is expected to be more realistic given the numerous opportunities for transportation in the area.

Comment No. 3: *"BETA evaluated the ITE Parking Generation Manual, 5th Edition, for LUC 252 – Senior Adult Housing – Attached, which estimates a typical demand of approximately 75 parking spaces for 124 units. The Town of Arlington Zoning Bylaw requires a minimum of 50 parking spaces for a 124 unit "Assisted Living Residence." This suggests the proposed parking supply is adequate."*

Response: We concur with BETA's conclusion that the proposed parking supply is adequate. ITE notes a demand of 75.68 (76) spaces for the 124 units and the Project will provide 96 spaces, allowing 20 surplus spaces over the ITE methodology. It should be noted that the ITE data includes all users of the development, including residents, visitors, and staff.

In addition to the non-numbered comments above, BETA requested additional points of clarification related to the site plans in comments numbered 1-7 in its Review Letter. Please refer to updated site plans provided by The BSC Group (BSC). Responses to these comments are provided below.

Comment No. (1): *"Clarify the number of accessible spaces required for the property, noting that the intended use will be Senior Living."*

Response: The garage level will include eight (8) accessible spaces and the surface parking will include two (2) accessible parking spaces, located next to the main entrance door.

Comment No. (2): *"The proposed garage utilizes a parking "pod" of one compact space and two standard spaces between parking garage columns. Clarify whether parking maneuvers and space sizing is adequate noting the intended residents."*

Response: It should be noted that there is no standard for adequacy of parking spaces for senior residents. However, the garage has been designed with a wider than standard drive aisle of 24'8" and compact spaces are 8'x18' rather than the typical 8'x16' dimensions. Lighting in the garage will be high visibility LED lighting to improve visual acuity for residents.

Comment No. (3): *"Clarify aisle and parking widths on the east side of the parking garage."*

Response: As identified on plans prepared by the Project Architect, the aisle widths throughout the parking garage are 24'8", which is slightly in excess of the required aisle width under the zoning bylaw (24'). The parking "pod" layout design likewise is carried out through the parking garage, with 24 compact spaces (8'x18'), 52 standard (8.5' x 18') and 8 handicap access spaces, within the garage.



Comment No. (4): *“The Applicant expects organized senior transportation. Clarify that the senior transportation vehicle can adequately circulate around the parking area.”*

Response: The Applicant anticipates residents will make use of both senior transportation as well as the on-site jitney service. See AutoTurn analysis conducted by BSC for these vehicles, shown on plans labeled Sheet SK-01 through Sheet SK-04.

Comment No. (5): *“Senior housing typically generates more emergency response calls than traditional housing. Clarify that emergency vehicles can circulate around the parking area.”*

Response: See AutoTurn analysis conducted by BSC for these vehicles, shown on plans labeled Sheet SK-01 through sheet SK-04.

Comment No. (6): *“Parallel parking on the west side of the main driveway will be required to circulate in front of the main entry or make a maneuver within the garage area to exit the site. Clarify that adequate maneuverability is provided within the circle at the main entry.”*

Response: The parallel parking has been revised to be 90 degree (head-in) parking. The revised design allows for a vehicle to enter and exit the Property without navigating around the main entry circle, reducing internal traffic.

Comment No. (7): *“Interior (middle) duplex units will share a common driveway that can provide two parking spaces per unit (tandem). It is expected that one vehicle could be parked in the carport and one vehicle can be parked in the driveway. Outside units provide one parking space behind the structure, accessible by either the paved emergency access drive (east side) or primary access drive (west side). Ensure that resident parking does not restrict either access driveway.”*

Response: The parking spaces (2) behind the westernmost duplex unit is off the access drive. The driveway to this unit has been designed to allow for vehicles to enter and exit from the main access drive. The easternmost duplex unit will have one parking space, located off the emergency access drive. Entry and exit into the parking area is provided from the emergency drive. While the emergency access drive is 20 feet wide, it will not be used by other vehicles other than the unit owner of the eastern duplex and, in the event of a fire in which access to the rear of the building is required, by a fire truck. “No Parking” markings have been provided on the Layout Plan Sheet C-103 prepared by BSC.

Sincerely,

VANASSE & ASSOCIATES, INC.



Scott W. Thornton, P.E.
Principal

cc: File

