

From: "Zoning Board of Appeals" <ZBA@town.arlington.ma.us>
To: "Vincent Lee" <VLee@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: cklein@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 11/15/2022 10:35 AM
Subject: Fwd: 1021-1025 Mass Ave comment

Please post, thank you.

Richard J. Vallarelli

Zoning Board Administrator
Building Inspector
Town of Arlington, Massachusetts

From: James Fleming <jflemingwpi13@gmail.com>
To: zba@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: Sat, 12 Nov 2022 22:01:56 -0500
Subject: 1021-1025 Mass Ave comment

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Hello!

Please consider this a public comment on 1021-1025 Mass Ave.

I think the applicant should put the building at the street (i.e. 0 setback), to be in line with the other buildings in Brattle Square. Such a placement would harmonize it with the other buildings there, making the entire square feel more contiguous.

Additionally, the open space provided in the front of the building as originally proposed will be uncomfortable to use by the residents of the building; it should be self-evident that using a front yard that directly faces the public realm on a main transportation corridor makes residents feel very exposed. Having lived in an apartment building on Mass Ave with open space in front, nobody used the front yard. Putting the building on the street, and moving any open space to the back, would make it much more likely to be used.

A nice-to-have side effect of putting the building on the street is there should be less contention about cutting down trees. It is simultaneously true that 1) trees are good for the environment, 2) the trees that exist on the lot are invasive species, and 3) it is private property, the owner has property rights, and those trees do not shade the public realm. I assert there is no answer that harmonizes all those objectives if the question of trees being cut down comes up. Moving the building to the street may partially or completely sidestep this contention.

I hope the applicant considers moving the building closer to the street, or that the ZBA encourages them to that effect. I think it would improve the project and do a better job harmonizing the competing interests of everyone involved in this discussion.

- James Fleming, 58 Oxford St

