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January 8, 2023

Re: Testimony Opposing 40B Project at 1021-1025 Massachusetts Avenue

This January Testimony is in addition to that which I submitted in October and December. Please include it in my ZBA testimony opposing the 40B Development at 1021 -1025 Massachusetts Avenue.

To: Zoning Board of Appeals

Dear Chairman Klein and Members of the Board,

A Procedurally Unacceptable Process

The process for approval of this 40B project has been tainted from the beginning. The public was kept in the dark except for those Town Committees that the Select Board (SB) needed to secure feedback from to feed to MassHousing for their approval– those were the Arlington Redevelopment Board and the Conservation Commission. They did not notify the Arlington Historical Commission that there is a listed historical property which was planned to be destroyed by the developer. The Conservation Commission held quiet working groups with the developer. The SB Chair had plenty of opportunity to inform and request feedback from the community during MassHousing’s allowed period for public comment because that period was during Town Meeting at which some SB members are always present. The SB Chair made many public statements during Town Meeting but never once requested input from Town Meeting Members and their constituents on this 40B project. Nor did he provide information about the project to the 252 TMMs and their large television audience. As a result MassHousing was kept unaware of any possible constructive suggestions or negative opinions of Arlington residents. After TM completed its many weeks and hours of Town Meeting the SB sent a letter to MassHousing endorsing the 40B project without a single approval of members of the general public except members of the ARB. That is very important because if approved by you, the ZBA, for a Comprehensive Permit then that would be precedent-setting. It would enable future 40B projects to ignore the recent Town and State efforts to reduce damage to the Town’s climate and sustainability control measures as described in my October 18,2022 written testimony:

<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/62965/638030961852330000>

The outstanding disturbing fact is that the SB chose to recommend this 40B project despite its planned damage to climate and energy control, made clear in its specifications. Unacceptable aspects include the large loss of embodied energy in the destruction of two buildings, the unhealthy air pollution caused by demolition, the energy and environmental costs of new construction of this huge building project, its irresponsible fossil fuel heating system, and its maintenance. if the SB members support projects such as this they are contributing, even if relatively-speaking only slightly, to future humanitarian crises including possible destruction and death from public health scourges of air pollution resulting from wildfires; increase in insect-borne tropical diseases; desertification and water loss; agricultural disruption and famine which is drought-related; damage from burning of fossil fuels; hurricanes and

floods which are increasingly violent; inundation of coastal areas causing mass migration of people and animals; extinctions; and direct deaths from extreme heat. Do they know or do they care?

In their desire to oblige the developers by promoting this project what importance did the SB members give to the welfare of the community, to support of climate and energy goals, and to provision of housing for those of very low income for whom there is zero affordable housing in this proposed 40B project?

As mentioned above, the SB did not even inform the Arlington Historical Commission that the developer planned to demolish a historic house and that he had lied about it in his application.

Making matters worse was the false and misleading information in the SB's endorsement letter. For example, it was indicated that the site was in a B2 District and so the project would be compatible with that. But that is not true. The site of the proposed 40B is actually in the B1 District which is not designed for huge apartment buildings and is incompatible with that small area and its historic low-rise buildings.

Clearly the ZBA is the only Town Board standing which can prevent the award of a Comprehensive permit for this disastrous 40B project. Obviously, this is very challenging for you since you are all, I believe, appointees of the SB. All we can ask is that you put the welfare of the community as of prime importance in your decision. I ask you to vote NO on the 40B project at 1021-1025 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE Thank you

Patricia B. Worden, Ph.D.

Town Meeting Member

Former Chair, Arlington Housing Authority, Arlington School Committee

Former Charter Member, Arlington Human Rights Commission

DECEMBER TESTIMONY:

<https://bit.ly/Dec18-40B-proposal-102Mass>