



January 20, 2023

Mr. Christian Klein, Chairman
Arlington Board of Appeals
23 Maple Street
Arlington, MA 02476

Re: 1021-1025 Massachusetts Avenue
Response to Architectural Peer Review

Dear Mr. Klein,

At the request of Maggiore Development, we have reviewed the January 7, 2023 letter from Davis Square Architects assessing our design for their project at 1021 Massachusetts Avenue. Having met with the development team and reviewed the recommendations in detail, we offer the following clarifications and responses to the issues raised in that letter, following the format of the original document.

5. a. Orientation of building in relation to parking areas, open space, and on-site amenities
 - The outdoor area to the north of the building is intended as an amenity for the use of the residents of the building and their guests.
 - The public portion of the second level outdoor space will be separated and screened from the private patios at the same level by a combination of landscaped areas and six foot high privacy fencing.
- b. Function, use and adequacy of open space and landscaped areas
 - North Yard
 - According to KZLA, the designer of the rear area, the walkway grades in the landscaped area meet the requirements of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board
 - As suggested to address Conservation Commission matters, the walkways in the rear area are stone dust. The walk along the west side of the building is bituminous concrete. These materials will provide a durable walking surface and allow for snow removal.
 - The intent is to develop the north outdoor area as a space for the passive enjoyment of the outdoors by the residents. The area above the storm water retention system is designed as an open meadow, with wildflowers and grasses meant to grow tall. Active play in this area will interfere with the quiet enjoyment of the outdoor area. The projected population of school aged children at this building is six for all age groups. Wellington Park and Robbins Farm Park, both

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within a few minutes' walk of the site, offer active and passive recreation areas for children of all ages.

- We will add a gate in the north privacy fence to accommodate maintenance and emergency access. The gate will be normally locked, operable from the inside by key, and operable via a Knox Box key from the exterior in the event of an emergency.
- The screen fence will be vinyl
- The north yard is intended for use by the residents of the building and their guests.
- The salvaged logs add visual interest to the landscaped area and provide habitat for insects and small animals.
- The path through the north yard is lit by bollards. The balance of the space is deliberately left unlit.
- The retaining walls will be constructed of small format, modular concrete wall blocks, VersaLock or similar system. The color and texture will be selected from the manufacturer's standard offerings.
- The civil drawings will be modified to coordinate with the landscape drawings to show a six foot high vinyl privacy fence.

South Yard

- We submit that the front setback of the building is not inadequate. This is a modern, forward looking structure on a busy arterial street. Like other recent mixed use buildings on the avenue, it takes its cues from the commercial properties in the area, many of which have little or no setback from the sidewalk. The hardscaped space provided is adequate for modest outdoor seating in the event a food use goes into the retail space. It provides room for a bike rack, the transformer vault, a bus shelter, columnar street trees on the property, and access for both vehicles and pedestrians. Rather than mimic the pattern of single family homes and small apartment buildings with grassed front yards, we feel a more urban, hardscaped approach is appropriate for this site and program.
- A bus shelter could be added to the site plan at the southwest corner, adjacent to the existing bus stop, however, we question the utility of a shelter in this location. The site is served by the # 77 bus route, which connects Arlington Heights Station with Harvard Station by way of Porter Square. The site is on the outbound side of this route, a few stops east of the terminus in Arlington Heights. Most of the riders on the outbound busses are coming west from Harvard and Porter Squares. There will be few if any passengers waiting to board at this location to ride the short distance to the end of the route. While a shelter on the inbound side of the street would be a benefit, a shelter on this site will, in our opinion, get very little use. We are planning an open seating area with benches at the southeast corner of the property.
- The garage door will be recessed to twelve feet behind the main façade, and enlarged to eighteen by nine feet, to allow space for queuing without encroaching on the sidewalk and easier access for trucks.
- The bike rack will be relocated to a position parallel with the main façade to avoid blocking the sight lines at the garage entrance.
- The proposed building is 3.0 feet closer to the street than the immediate abutters. It is .6 feet closer than 1011Mass. Ave, and 10.1 feet farther back than the bike

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shop at Brattle Street. We do not believe matching the adjacent setbacks will make a material difference in the perceived scale of the building.

Second Level Courtyard

- Privacy for individual residential patios will be achieved by a combination of landscaped buffers and six foot privacy fencing
- The courtyard is north of the rear façade of the house to the east. The residents of the building will be affected by noise long before the adjacent property. Use of the courtyard and related noise issues will be addressed in the rules and regulations of the condominium association.
- The shadow study shows the progression of shadows across the outdoor space. Some shade in the summer months should be viewed as an advantage.

Roof Decks

- Roof decks will meet the access requirements of the ADA
- Roof decks will meet the Building Code requirements as to egress.

c. Use and treatment of natural resources

- Landscape and built elements on the adjacent properties will be protected during construction by way of fencing, siltation barriers and, if necessary, shoring. Details of the protection strategies will be developed as part of the detailed demolition and construction plans.

d. Building design, setbacks, massing, and scale in relationship to the surrounding context and topography

- We do not see a need to re-distribute the massing to create a neighborhood fit with the existing, mostly two and a half story fabric. This neighborhood can and should evolve over the next several years. This is a major arterial street, perfect for transit oriented development. The future of the avenue should include larger mixed use buildings fronting the street with outdoor spaces away from the traffic and noise of the street itself. The proposed massing is required to achieve fifty units and fifty parking spaces. This density allows the revenue stream to support thirteen affordable units in a sustainably designed modern building. The top floor is set back to reduce the height at the street. The articulated bays, sun shades, and cornices lines respect the residential scale and height of the neighbors while allowing the needed volume.
- The revised ground level plan incorporates the suggested re-organization. The trash room is moved farther back into the building, allowing the office and new lounge function to share the glass line. These active uses will enliven the façade at the center of the building.
- Reduction in the parking is not feasible from the developer's point of view as their minimum for marketing purposes is one parking space per residential unit.
- Stacked parking is not feasible as each space will be assigned to a separate apartment.
- Alternative driveway and access arrangements were studied during the early schematic phases of the project. Given overall lot width, the topography, and the total program requirements, there was no feasible alternative which allowed for the garage door off the front façade. The current plan recesses the door, reducing the visual impact.

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e. View sheds of the project visible from the public street, public areas, and from the vantage of nearby residential neighborhoods.

- See existing and proposed images of street and aerial views of the proposed project.

f. Pedestrian and vehicular access and circulation, adequacy of accessible provisions. Of particular interest are the implications of access and egress in terms of pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.

Adequacy of parking.

- Given the vehicle parking requirements, there is insufficient footprint available on the ground floor for 75 bicycle parking spaces.
- Both elevators are of adequate size to accommodate bicycles.
- Elevator cab finishes will be adjusted to accommodate bicycle traffic.
- A bicycle wash station will be provided in the garage.
- A bicycle repair stand will be included in the bicycle storage room.
- Since each parking space will be controlled by a separate unit owner, stacking cars is not feasible as one unit owner would inevitably block another in a stacked arrangement.

g. Integration of building and site, including but not limited to preservation of existing tree cover, if any.

- The existing site condition at the rear area consists of piles of urban fill capped with invasive species trees and shrubs. In response to feedback from the Conservation Commission, a plan has been developed to create a new urban park for passive enjoyment of the outdoors. The work of creating the park includes removing the existing trees and re-grading the north portion of the site. The installation of the new materials will include a detailed maintenance plan to protect and nurture the investment in perpetuity.
- Plant material on adjacent properties will be protected as part of the detailed construction plan.

h. Exterior materials

- A detailed summary of the exterior finishes will be provided.
- High quality materials will be used for all exterior finishes.
- Thin brick has a long track record of good performance in the New England climate. It is the best choice from the weight, cost and energy points of view.
- Windows will be operable vinyl casement and awning sash exceeding the requirement of the energy code. Corner units will be thermally broken aluminum glazing systems with a mix of fixed and operable units.
- The parking garage will be mechanically ventilated with internal fans and surface louvers.
- Heat pumps for the retail space will be located on the roof.
- In the event a fire pump is needed to boost water pressure, a gas fired generator will be located on the roof. Absent the need for a fire pump, there will be no gas service to the building and the gas line will be removed from the site plan.

i. Energy efficiency

- The developer is planning on an all-electric building.
- The envelope and building systems will be designed to the pending revised stretch energy code, 225CMR 23.00, which is scheduled to be adopted in the

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Commonwealth later this year. The HERS 52/55 pathway has been tentatively selected as the basis of design. The new stretch code includes provisions for limited air leakage, limiting thermal bridging, wiring for electric vehicles (10%), and ventilation energy recovery.

- In the event the Town of Arlington adopts the Specialized Code ahead of this project being permitted, the developer will adapt to the new regulation. This will require pre-certification to Passive House standards.

j. Exterior lighting

- The lighting plan includes bollard lighting for the path through the north yards area. The balance of the space is deliberately left dark.
- The spillover of one tenth of one foot candle is generally considered de minimus and is ignored.

k. Proposed landscape elements, planting materials, and planting design

- Please advise what additional information is desired.

l. Feasibility of incorporating environmental and energy performance standards in the design, construction and operation of the building.

- If required by the adoption of the Specialized Code, the project will comply with Passive House standards.

m. Any other design-related considerations identified by DSA, BZA, Town staff, working group, or the citizenry of Arlington.

- A gate will be added to provide additional access to the rear.
- Neighboring buildings are shown on the civil drawings prepared by Patriot Engineering.
- No ground mounted mechanical equipment is proposed.
- Basement areas will meet the Code as to egress.
- Electric outlets will be included in the bike storage room to allow charging of e-bikes.
- Common areas will be designed to meet the Code as to egress.
- Backup power will be by means of batteries, unless a generator is required to support a fire pump.
- Proper precautions will be taken during construction to protect the adjacent structures. The excavation work plan will be available for review by the Building Department at the start of construction.
- The requirements of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board will be met for the project.
- The Arlington Fire Department has reviewed the project.
- A code analysis will be provided as part of the permit set. We are responsible for meeting the Building Code.
- The graphic scales on the drawings have been corrected.
The ADA bath on the ground level is provided for the convenience of residents and visitors, it is not associated with the Fitness Center. Based on the likely use and population, we believe a single toilet room is sufficient.
- The sycamore tree cannot be preserved due to the requirements of the program.
- We will investigate the addition of glass into the rated enclosure around the main stair at the lobby level.

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- The signage for the building entrance and the retail space will be handled as individual letters on the entry and shading canopies. Additional signage, if necessary, will be located behind the glass in the retail space.
 - Up lighting in the project has been eliminated. The LED fixtures at the fifth floor level are under the roof overhang. They cast light down on to the façade below. We believe the design is dark sky compliant.
- n. Techniques to mitigate visual and other impacts.
- See responses above.

With input from the development team, we also offer this narrative describing the waste and recycling program:

The Residences at Mill Brook Condominium Association will contract with a local, private waste management company to provide trash removal and recycling services for the residents of the building. Residents will carry their trash and recycling down to the trash room located on the ground floor and accessible from both the lobby and the garage. The trash room will have ventilation, epoxy flooring with floor drains and will be designed and equipped for wash down. Trash and recycling will be sorted by the residents and stored in rolling totes.

On select days, the onsite maintenance personnel will roll the totes out to the driveway. The private waste management company will enter the property, park in the driveway, empty the rolling totes into the truck, load the recycling, and haul the refuse away. Site staff will return the totes to the trash room. The driveway is 21' feet wide, allowing adequate ingress or egress from the garage for the brief period when the truck is being loaded.

The frequency of pickups will be based upon the volume of refuse and recyclable items generated by the Condominium Association.

We have also reviewed the comments in the TetraTech Letter of January 6, 2023 related to the Conceptual Architectural Plans (Tab 09). Our responses follow the format of the original document.

35. Structural column in the garage – Columns are shown on the updated garage plan.
36. Accessible spaces- Accessible spaces are shown on the update garage plan.
37. Charging stations – Ten EV charging stations (20% of total) are shown on the update garage plan.
38. Backing space at end of aisles- The updated garage plan designates wall spaces as compact and shows additional clearance for backing.
39. Green roof – The second level courtyard includes 778 square feet of planted area. These spaces will have a mix of shrubs and grasses in addition to four larger trees. These green areas will serve to reduce the heat island effect and create a pleasant outdoor area for the residents.
40. Hanging bike racks – The hanging bike racks will consist of brackets securely mounted at the side or end of the parking stall above the hood elevation of a typical vehicle. These racks are in addition to 49 bike storage spaces located in the basement bike room.
41. Mechanical equipment – The updated fifth floor and roof plans show the proposed locations for roof top mechanical equipment.

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42. Basement excavation – The excavation for the basement may require measures to protect the adjacent right of way and properties. These measures will be defined as part of the detailed excavation plan to be developed as the project progresses.

Please be in touch if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Christopher H. Mulhern

Christopher H. Mulhern AIA

For

Harrison Mulhern Architects