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January 9, 2022

By Electronic and First Class Mail

Rebecca Frawley Wachtel
Director
Department of Housing and Community Development
100 Cambridge Street, 3rd Floor
Boston, MA 02114
rebecca.frawley@mass.gov

Re: 10 Sunnyside Avenue, Arlington, MA

Dear Director Frawley:

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Select Board of the Town of Arlington (“Arlington”) in reference to the application for project eligibility/site approval submitted to MassHousing by the Housing Corporation of Arlington (“Applicant”) for the proposed development of approximately forty three (43) units of affordable rental housing and 433 square feet of commercial space on a 16,500 square foot parcel located at 10 Sunnyside Ave. in Arlington, MA (the “Development”). Based upon the preliminary plans and other information provided by the Applicant to date, MassHousing’s Smart Growth criteria, and the Board’s familiarity with the locus, the Board unanimously supports site approval and project eligibility.

First and foremost, consistent with many of Arlington’s plans, the project repurposes a built out, underutilized former automotive use site to meet one of the Town’s most pressing needs – affordable housing. As an HCA property, all of the units – a mixture of one, two, and three bedroom apartments – will be affordable at or below 80 percent of Area Median Income (“AMI”). Further, HCA aims to make over a dozen of which will be even more deeply affordable for 30% AMI in the best case scenario.

Second, the locus is accessible to public transit and in close proximity to the Minuteman Bikeway, while also providing a mixture of covered and uncovered onsite parking. The Board is optimistic that the plans as presently constituted will encourage residents of the proposed building

to utilize public transit and alternatives to automobiles while also providing protected, at-grade parking to meet resident needs.

Third, the project as proposed is slated to meet “Passive House” standards to achieve a low carbon footprint while also providing modest natural resource enhancement in a highly developed area. The applicants intend to supplement public shade tree plantings and install planting buffers, as well as offer a 2,600 ft. open space roof deck oriented in part towards furthering the building’s sustainability and natural resource enhancement.

The Board received no significant comments of concern from Town Departments or the public, but notes its trust in the Arlington Zoning Board of Appeals to further examine both the assets and potential liabilities of the project during the Comprehensive Permit hearing process. As such, while additional details regarding the site, building design, utilities, environmental impacts and mitigation measures, and traffic and public safety are expected to be scrutinized further by the ZBA, the Select Board is confident in its support for site approval/project eligibility; especially where this project is consistent with the goals and recommendations of the Arlington Master Plan, Housing Production Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, and Smart Growth criteria.

This Board will support the Zoning Board of Appeals with whatever resources necessary to fully and fairly evaluate the proposal and value the dedication of the ZBA and Town staff in working with the Applicant. On behalf of the Select Board of the Town of Arlington, please advise me if you have any questions or would like additional support for any of the comments registered herein.

Very truly yours,

On behalf of the Arlington Select Board as its Chair,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "LTD". The letters are stylized and connected, with a large "L" on the left, a "T" in the middle, and a "D" on the right.

Lenard T. Diggins