



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
Department of Planning & Community Development  
730 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, Massachusetts 02476

---

## **Public Hearing Memorandum - Update**

*The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Arlington Redevelopment Board and public with technical information and a planning analysis to assist with the regulatory decision-making process.*

**To:** Arlington Redevelopment Board

**From:** Jennifer Raitt, Secretary Ex Officio

**Subject:** Environmental Design Review, 190, 192-200 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA  
Docket #3650

**Date:** June 3, 2021

---

This memo is provided as an update to the last memo provided on March 31, 2021. The following items have been updated pursuant to this application:

- Updated Plan Set, May 25, 2021
- Amended drainage summary letter, May 25, 2021
- Amended Dimensional and Parking Information form, May 25, 2021
- Update Submission Comment, June 7, 2021
- Garage turning, figures 1, 2, 3
- Explanation of changes to Civil Plan
- Traffic Impact Assessment, update June 7, 2021

The Board requested that the applicant address the following issues in this next plan iteration:

- Lower floor-area-ratio;
- Add back commercial space;
- Provide greater detail about parking options;
- Provide details regarding the third-floor terrace amenities;
- Incorporate an exhaust system to accommodate a potential future restaurant use;
- Address mismatch between façade of the bank building and upper level façade;
- Reorient the proposed first floor space to make better use of the windows and the large, vaulted windows on the side of the first floor;

- Incorporate other uses besides residential, such as offices, on the second floor; and
- Incorporate solar ready elements onto the building roof.

Department staff reviewed the updated materials and provided the following comments:

- The revised proposal provides a more suitable relationship between the ground floor storefront and the upper floors. The six windows on the front third of the building at the second and third floors on the front lack detail and could be revisited. In general, however, the new design treatment makes the windows appear larger, providing improved balance between the transparency of the ground floor with the upper stories.
- The applicant improved the blank façades on both Chandler Street and Lake Street from the last iteration. They would be further improved if wall areas on both of those side streets were dedicated to public art. This building is in the center of the Arlington Cultural District and public art, such as murals, would improve the structure's visual contribution to the district.
- The upper floor facade is a mix of brick and painted fiber cement panel or clapboard, with matching cornice/trim details. In this iteration of the design, the applicant has selected materials and colors that complement the existing bank building.
- The applicant is proposing a floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.2 (-.9 from the prior proposal) and has reduced the total proposed height and stories from 60 feet/five stories to 50 feet/four stories. As a result of this reduction, the applicant is no longer seeking relief from the rear height buffer.
- The revised proposal shows a slight increase in commercial space from 2,084 to 2,436 square feet (+352 square feet). While the applicant added 352 square feet of commercial space to the proposed development, there is still an overall loss of commercial space in the building is 8,981 square feet.
- The revised proposal also shows a reduction in residential units from 37 to 24 units (-13 units). The number of affordable units has decreased from eight to five units (-3 units), although the proportion of affordable units has been maintained at 21%. Further, a 24-unit building requires four units that are a representative mix of the units available in the building available to eligible households earning up to 70% of the area median income. Affordable units are a mix of studios (2) and one-bedroom units (3) distributed across all floors. None of the three two-bedroom units are designated as affordable.
- The building materials on the upper stories are now more complimentary to the materials on the original ground floor façade and the elements that will be retained.
- The parking garage has been improved with less static space. Moving the short-term bike parking inside the garage is an improvement. Adding another electric vehicle charging spot is also an improvement. The width reductions to the drive aisle are sufficient. While the number of proposed parking spaces has been reduced, further

reductions could also be proposed given the proposed number of units and location of and access to the property.

- The revised proposal provides a more thoughtful approach to the residents' experience of accessing the building, providing a primary entrance through the bank building, a modest awning over the entry on Chandler Street, and a second means of egress on Lake Street.
- While we are pleased to see that the same number of indoor bicycle parking spaces has been retained, the applicant should clarify if the elevator can accommodate bicycles adequately, including larger-than-usual bicycles such as cargo bikes.
- The applicant should confirm how much of the existing structure will be demolished and the approximate construction area surrounding the site. The applicant will be required to completely reconstruct the sidewalk as currently designed and repair any damaged public amenities. The applicant will be required to maintain the existing transit and pedestrian access to the Mass Ave side of this property during construction. Pedestrian access should be fully maintained along Mass Ave because using the signal here to cross Mass Ave is safer than trying to cross at Marathon Street to get to the businesses between Chandler Street and Egerton Road.