



Ref.: 21016

May 17, 2021

Mr. Peter Matchak, Director of Planning  
Town of Ashland  
101 Main Street  
Ashland, MA 01721

Reg.: 2<sup>nd</sup> Traffic Review, Arbella at Ashland  
MBTA Access Road, Ashland, MA

Dear Peter:

***Ron Müller & Associates*** (RMA) is in receipt of the supplemental information submitted by the applicant for the above-referenced project in response to our May 4, 2021 initial review letter. The following additional documents were reviewed as part of our peer review services to the Town of Ashland:

- May 13, 2021 letter from MDM Transportation Consultants, Inc. to Mr. Peter Matchak, Director of Planning, Town of Ashland.

For ease of reading, this letter paraphrases our initial comments where additional information was requested, the applicant's responses, and any additional comments we have at this time.

Comment 3: We questioned whether the Cirrus Apartment development was fully occupied at the time the June 2019 counts were conducted.

The applicant responded that the Cirrus Apartment development was at or above 95 percent occupancy at the time the June 2019 counts were conducted. Therefore, the counts do not need to be adjusted to account for any unoccupied units. Comment resolved.

Comment 7: We suggested the applicant contact the Town of Ashland to determine if there are any planned or approved developments in the area that would impact traffic within the study area.

The applicant responded that based on conversations with the Ashland Town Planner on April 29, 2021 that there have been discussions associated with the development of a new Metrowest YMCA facility along Memorial Drive. However, it is not expected that this development will impact the project area of Memorial Drive. Additionally, it is assumed that a separate traffic study will be filed in the next three to five years for this development. Since this development will come after the Arbella development it is assumed that they will account for our traffic in their traffic projections. Comment resolved.

Comment 11: We requested the applicant obtain vehicle speed data along Memorial Drive near the site and that the available sight distances be compared with minimum requirements as established by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) based on the measured 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds.

The applicant obtained vehicle speeds traveling both northbound and southbound on Memorial Drive near the site using ATR data collected in June 2019. As such it was found that the average recorded speed along Memorial Drive traveling northbound adjacent to the site is 34 miles per hour (mph) while traveling southbound the average travel speed was found to be 31 mph, both slightly higher than the posted speed limit of 30 mph. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed traveling northbound near the site was found to be 39 mph while traveling southbound the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed was found to be 36 mph, both higher than the speed limit.

As shown in Table R3 there is approximately 390 feet of stopping sight distance (SSD) traveling both northbound and southbound. The table shows a minimum of 270 feet of SSD are required traveling northbound while 260 feet of SSD are required traveling southbound. These minimum requirements are based on the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile travel speeds. It should be noted that based on an 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of 39 mph traveling northbound the required SSD would be 295 feet, however given that 390 feet of SSD is available the minimum requirements can be met.

A review was also made of intersection sight distances (ISD). Based on Table R4, the available ISD looking south from the site driveway is 455 feet while looking north the available ISD is 390 feet. ISD is generally based on the posted speed limit. Based upon the posted speed limit of 30 mph, the desirable ISD would be 335 feet. Given that there is 445 feet of available ISD looking north and 390 feet

of available ISD looking south, the desirable sight distances are also met. No further comment.

- Comment 12: We recommended that since ADA compliant sidewalks are unable to be provided on the access road that the road be striped to provide 11-foot-wide travel lanes and 5-foot-wide shoulders, as opposed to 12-foot-wide travel lanes and 4-foot-wide shoulders. This would provide a full width bicycle lane as well as a means for pedestrians to walk along the road in lieu of a sidewalk.

The applicant has agreed to modify the pavement markings along the site driveway to include 11-foot-wide travel lanes and 5-foot-wide shoulders. These modifications will be reflected in the next design submission prepared by Allen & Major Associates. Comment resolved.

- Comment 13: While we do agree with the proposed guardrail locations, we do recommend that terminal end sections be installed on all four guardrail ends and that curved sections be used to flare the terminal end sections away from oncoming traffic.

The applicant has agreed to modify the proposed guardrail along the site driveway to include terminal end sections and flared end treatments. These modifications will be reflected in the next design submission prepared by Allen & Major Associates. Comment resolved.

- Comment 14: It is recommended that on the driveway approach to Memorial Drive the stop line be located 5 feet from the proposed crosswalk and stop signs be placed adjacent to the stop line.

The applicant agrees to modify the proposed stop line and stop signs on the driveway approach to Memorial Drive. These modifications will be reflected in the next design submission prepared by Allen & Major Associates. Comment resolved.

- Comment 15: We recommend that the applicant confirm with the Ashland Fire Department that the Town of Ashland's Tower One fire truck can safely navigate the site and the access road. The fire department should also confirm that there is adequate accessibility to all sides of each building.

The applicant responded that a vehicle turning movement plan was submitted and showed that the Town of Ashland's Tower One fire truck can safely navigate the site and access road. The applicant has committed to continue to work with the Ashland Fire Department to ensure accessibility as the design progresses. No further comment.

Comment 16: As previously noted in Comment 11, the sight triangles shown on the site plan may need to be revised pending the results of the speed data. Additionally, it should be ensured that any proposed landscaping or signs be located outside of these sight triangles.

The applicant adjusted the sight lines based on the vehicle speed data discussed in Comment 11. Based on the speed data, adequate sight distances are provided at the site driveway. It is still recommended that any proposed landscaping or signs in the vicinity of the driveways be kept low (maximum two feet in height from street level), or set back sufficiently so as not to impede the available sight distances. No further comment.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding this review.

Sincerely,

***Ron Müller & Associates***



Kirsten Braun, P.E.  
Associate