

**From:** Stefan Wolpert

**Sent:** Monday, January 12, 2026 2:56 PM

**To:** Claire Ricker

**Cc:** Sarah Wolpert

**Subject:** In regards to Site Plan Review Docket #3881 for 259 Broadway

Hello, please find comments and questions for the Arlington Redevelopment Board  
From: Sarah and Stefan Wolpert, 5 Webster Street, diagonal and partially abutting 259  
Broadway

Traffic Safety and Sight Lines (Palmer Street / Broadway)

1. This building is located on a corner lot where the existing dwelling and lawn currently provide critical sight lines for vehicles turning from Palmer Street onto Broadway. The proposed building appears to fully block these sight lines.
2. How has the Town evaluated vehicle sight lines for cars exiting Palmer Street onto Broadway, particularly given that Palmer Street is not perpendicular to Broadway?
3. Has a traffic safety or visibility study been conducted for this intersection?

Does the Town plan to:

4. Convert Palmer Street to one-way (northbound)?
5. Increase no-parking setbacks on Broadway near the intersection?
6. Without such measures, how will the Town ensure safety for cars, pedestrians, and cyclists at this intersection?

Building Height and Legal Basis

7. Please clarify the specific legal basis and computation under the Arlington Zoning Bylaw for permitting a five-story building at this location.

MBMF Broadway Setback Compliance

8. Please confirm whether the proposed building complies with all applicable MBMF Broadway setback requirements, including:  
Minimum front yard setback: 15 feet (reduced to zero only if commercial space requirements are met)  
Minimum side yard setback: 5 feet on each side  
Minimum rear yard setback: 20 feet

Front Yard Setback Reduction to Zero Feet

9. Does the proposed building meet the requirement that at least 80% of the lot frontage be occupied by the building?

10. Please show this frontage calculation clearly on the drawings.

11. The application references 92% “Non-residential frontage for bonus,” but this does not appear consistent with the actual lot frontage shown.

#### Ground-Floor Commercial Requirement

12. Does commercial/retail use exceed 60% of the ground-floor square footage?

13. The application states 67.44% “Ground Floor Use for Bonus,” but the square footage of non-retail space is not clearly defined.

14. Please provide a clear breakdown of ground-floor square footage by use.

#### Affordable Housing Commitments

15. What binding legal agreements ensure that these units remain affordable long-term?

16. For how many years are affordability restrictions guaranteed, and under what enforcement mechanism?

#### Historic Context and Neighborhood Compatibility

17. The existing structure is included in the Arlington Historical Commission’s Historic Structure Inventory and is located two doors from a historic district.

18. How has the project been reviewed for compatibility with nearby historic resources?

19. What consultation, if any, has occurred with the Arlington Historical Commission?

#### Building Design and Massing

20. Does the proposed building satisfy Town design standards regarding blank or flat façades?

21. The side of the building facing 44 Palmer Street is extremely plain and flat and does not reflect the character of the surrounding historic neighborhood (see View 3 – Palmer Street, Looking South).

22. The fifth story facing Broadway appears boxy and industrial in character (see View 2 – Palmer Street, Looking North).

23. What design changes could be required to better integrate the fifth story with the neighborhood?

### Fencing and Lighting

24. The proposed 6-foot fences are not shown in any rendered views. Please include them in additional visual materials.

25. Will nighttime lighting spillover be evaluated prior to building permit sign-off?  
Nearby projects have not complied with approved lighting plans, resulting in direct bulb glare onto adjacent properties.

26. How will compliance with the lighting ordinance be enforced?

### Parking and Street Congestion

27. Fourteen residential units are likely to generate parking demand well beyond the proposed 5–6 parking spaces.

28. Is the Town prepared to issue overnight residential parking permits for new tenants?

29. Palmer and Webster Streets currently have no parking time limits, unlike Broadway.

30. How will increased demand from retail customers and 14–28+ residents be managed?

31. Palmer Street effectively functions as a one-lane road when cars are parked.

32. What parking or curb-use changes are planned on Broadway and Palmer Streets to accommodate the new retail spaces?

### Viability of Proposed Commercial Spaces

33. One proposed commercial unit is listed as 337 NSF, which appears too small for most retail uses beyond a small office.

34. What types of commercial businesses are realistically targeted for the 337 NSF and 883 NSF spaces?

35. How do these sizes compare with existing Arlington commercial space inventory?

36. How many units of similar size are currently vacant versus leased?

37. If the 337 NSF space is a significant outlier, how is it being evaluated as a bona fide commercial use, rather than a perfunctory space included solely to obtain zoning bonuses such as zero-foot setbacks or additional height?