

Ref: 9204

December 19, 2022

Ms. Elizabeth Hughes
Town Planner
Town of Concord
141 Keyes Road, 1st Floor
Concord, MA 01742

Re: Response to Engineering Division Comments
Concord Center for Visual Arts – 37 Lexington Road
Concord, Massachusetts

Dear Elizabeth:

Vanasse & Associates, Inc. (VAI) is providing responses to the comments that were raised in the December 2nd, 2022 memorandum prepared by Mr. Justin Richardson, P.E., Assistant Town Engineer, concerning his review of the September 7, 2022 *Transportation Impact and Parking Demand Assessment* (the “September 2022 TIA”) prepared by VAI in support of the proposed renovation and expansion of the Concord Center for the Visual Arts (a.k.a. “Concord Art”) located at 37 Lexington Road in Concord, Massachusetts (hereafter referred to as the “Project”). Listed below are Comments 11 through 20 that were identified in the subject memorandum that pertain to the September 2022 TIA followed by our response on behalf of the Project proponent.

Comment 11: *In the Transportation Impact and Parking Demand Assessment there is no discussion of handicap parking spaces for the project. Please address this.*

Response: The handicapped parking for the Project is accommodated on-site by way of the existing driveway.

Comment 12: *What will the existing driveway be utilized for?*

Response: The existing driveway accommodates parking for disabled persons that are taking classes or attending exhibitions, and is also used for deliveries during show installations and events.

Comment 13: *On Page 5 of the Transportation Impact and Parking Demand Assessment, in Paragraph 3 the number of guests is missing.*

Response: Visitation for a special event or class at the Concord Art facility varies from approximately 15 persons (weekly night classes) to approximately 75 persons (storytelling, lectures, shows and most weddings/parties), and are schedule to occur during off-peak periods on weekdays, during the evening and on weekends, when traffic volumes are lower and public parking is available within a reasonable walking distance.

Comment 14: *In the Transportation Impact and Parking Demand Assessment it states that special events are scheduled on site “during off-peak periods on weekdays, during the evening and on weekends,...”. Please provide more detail on the days and times of said special events. If the site plan is approved, it is recommended that a condition of approval be implemented that strictly limit large special events to be outside of the peak parking times within the concord center.*

Response: The table below summarizes the days and times of special events and the number of attendees for the existing facility and after the completion of the Project.

Event	No. of Attendees	
	Existing	Proposed
<i>Events and Lectures:</i> Once per month on Wednesday or Thursday evening after 5:30 PM	70	75
<i>Juried Show Artist Receptions:</i> Once every 4 months, approximately 3 times per year. . Occurs on Thursdays after 5:30 PM. Note that not all people are in the building at once during the course of the reception.	200	200
<i>Curated Show Artist:</i> Once every 4 months, approximately 3 times per year. Occurs on Thursdays after 5:30 PM	75	75
<i>Night Classes:</i> Weekly on Monday-Friday after 6 PM	12	30
<i>Weddings:</i> Approximately 4-5 times a year and generally on Saturdays after 5 PM	100 passed food 50 seated dinner	100 passed food 50 seated dinner

Comment 15: *The Concord Art facility has been in operations for a long time. Does it have records on the number of patrons using the facility and where the patrons currently park? It appears that the required 27 spaces for the existing site are being calculated per zoning requirements, but if actual data is available that would be of more value. Additionally, the Transportation Impact and Parking Demand Assessment presumes that all patrons park in public spaces, but have any arrangements been made with private parking areas in close proximity to the site that could facilitate parking? If not, it is recommended that this be pursued.*

Response: Concord Art does not keep records or track where patrons park. In the past they have made arrangements with local churches for parking when an event is expected to draw a large number of attendees. Wedding planners have requested that their guests park at the town municipal lot. These parking accommodations have worked since weddings generally occur in the evening when the municipal lot has available capacity.



Comment 16: *The Transportation Impact and Parking Demand Assessment states that the development will create a “deficit of 16 parking spaces” during regular operation, but it does not provide any analysis on the public parking spaces that are currently used. Where are the current primarily used spaces located for the site? Where are the anticipated extra 16 spaces located?*

Response: The parking demand analysis that is presented in the September 2022 TIA is a zoning based analysis to demonstrate compliance with the Concord Zoning Bylaw. This analysis indicated that 27 parking spaces are required for the existing facility which are met by a combination of on-site parking and off-site parking, including public parking along proximate roadways and within municipal parking lots. With the completion of the Project, 43 parking spaces are required, or 16 additional parking spaces. Consistent with the current parking accommodations for the Concord Art facility, it is expected that this additional parking demand (16 spaces) will be satisfied through the use of existing public parking that is available within walking distance of the site.

Comment 17: *CPW regularly receives complaints about traffic, parking, pedestrian access and safety, and bicycle access and safety in concord center. Further parking zoning relief seems excessive and will only exacerbate a current and ongoing issue in concord center. How common is this for developments similar to Concord Center for Visual Arts to receive additional parking zoning relief?*

Response: We defer to the Planning Division, but note that VAI has worked on several projects in Concord Center that have demonstrated compliance with the parking requirements of the Zoning Bylaw by demonstrating that there is sufficient public parking located within a reasonable walking distance to meet the parking requirements of the Zoning Bylaw. It is not uncommon in a town center or central business district that parking requirements, when specified, are satisfied through the use of off-site public or commercial parking.

Comment 18: *Was the “Parking Inventory and Regulations (5 Minute Walking Distance)” figure prepared from a field examination of the area? What criteria was used to determine where public spaces are available and were parking limitations explored? For example, parking on both side of Heywood Street is not recommended due to the narrowness of the roadway, heavy traffic, and is a primary response route for emergency vehicles. Were the Town of Concord, Massachusetts Traffic, Parking and Pedestrian Rules & Regulations reviewed prior to the preparation of said figure?*

Response: Figure 2, *Parking Inventory and Regulations (5 Minute Walking Distance)*, reflects a filed inventory of existing parking conditions as observed in April 2019 and updated to include Lexington Road and Heywood Street in July 2022. We do not disagree with the comment pertaining to parking along both sides of Heywood Street and would suggest that the Town consider a regulation prohibiting parking along one or both sides of the roadway. It appears that parking along one side of the roadway could be accommodated if so desired.

Comment 19: *Because of the concern that on-street parking may not be adequate for the proposed changes, a post construction review of the traffic and parking after 6 months of issuing occupancy should be performed and reported to the Town.*



Response: The Project is expected to result in a minor increase in the number of parking spaces that are required pursuant to the Zoning Bylaw (16 parking spaces). Given that there are 582 public parking spaces located within a 5-minute walking distance of the Project site and that over 240 of these spaces have previously been identified as being available between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM on both a weekday and a Saturday, more than sufficient parking should be available to off-set the number of additional parking spaces that are required to support the Project. Further and as identified herein, the majority of the events that would require the additional parking occur during off-peak periods on weekdays, during the evening and on weekends, when traffic volumes are and parking demands in the area are lower.

Comment 20: *The introduction paragraph of the Transportation Impact and Parking Demand Assessment states “(iv) evaluates safety considerations with respect to motor vehicle crash data, pedestrian and bicycle accommodations and sight lines.” VAI reviewed MassDOT’s high crash location database and made mention of existing sidewalks and lack of bike lanes. Have they reviewed the existing conditions of the street proximate to the site to identify any safety issues with sight lines, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings and bicycle use? Accident data from CPD should also be evaluated within close proximity to the site. Will any of the patrons be walking or biking to events and therefore not require parking spaces?*

Response: Sight lines along Lexington Road approaching the driveway that serves the Project site are unimpeded. Lines of sight for motorists exiting the driveway are limited by on-street parking along the north (Project) side of Lexington Road; however, we note the following: i) the driveway has limited activity; and ii) motorists exiting the driveway have clear sight lines to pedestrians walking along the sidewalk and then are able to position their vehicle across the sidewalk and then use the parking lane as a buffer to observe approaching traffic before exiting.

The sidewalk along Lexington Road follows the existing topography and conditions and width vary along its alignment, with driveway crossings flush such that the sidewalk crosses the driveways. The closest marked crosswalks for crossing are provided to the west of the Project site at Monument Square. The crossings are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), noting that wheelchair ramps are not consistently provided and those that are provided are deficient as to material type (cement concrete is required), do not include a tactile warning panel or serve multiple crossings.

Bicycle accommodations are not provided along Lexington Road and the roadway does not provide sufficient width on a continuous basis to support both bicycle travel and on-street parking.

Walking and bicycling will be encouraged by staff and event attendees when practical given the nature of events and attendee attire (dress). The Project proponent is supportive of pedestrian improvements that can be undertaken in the area, including exploring opportunities for a pedestrian crossing of Lexington Road in the vicinity of the Project site.

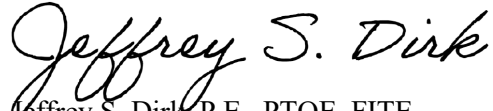


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We trust that this information is responsive to the comments pertaining to the September 2022 TIA that were raised in the December 2, 2022 memorandum prepared by Mr. Richardson. If you should have any questions or would like to discuss our responses in more detail, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

VANASSE & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Handwritten signature of Jeffrey S. Dirk in black ink.

Jeffrey S. Dirk, P.E., PTOE, FITE
Managing Partner

Professional Engineer in CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, and VA

JSD/jsd

