

Reuse and Feasibility Plan

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Site Assessments

Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.



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Building Inventory



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Orientation

- Existing Complex
 - (5) Buildings built between 1909 and 1982
 - Main Hospital – 170,000 sf, Nurses' – 25,000 sf
- Existing Mech/HVAC systems
- Potential future uses considered
 - Housing
 - Office
 - Laboratory

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Orientation (continued)

- Evaluating reuse potential
 - Depth of plan
 - Floor to floor heights and plenum space
 - Access to natural light/ventilation

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Reuse Potential of Existing Buildings

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Nurses' Building

- Existing Building (built 1917)
 - 25,000 sq. ft. on (5) floors
- Small floor plate and shallow depth: ideal for housing, small for office/lab
- Floor to Floor heights tight – not feasible for ceiling distributed ducted air system
- Window opening sizes offer access to natural light and ventilation

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North Building

- Existing Building (built 1982)
 - 52,200 sq. ft. on (3) floors
- Large floor plate and deep plan: not well suited for housing, ideal for office/lab
- Floor to Floor heights adequate for new ducted air systems
- Continuous aluminum strip window openings offer good access to natural light and ventilation

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East Building

- Existing Building (built 1909)
 - 31,400 sq. ft. on (4) floors
 - Occupied by Lahey Clinic
 - Extensively renovated in mid 1990's
- Mid sized floor plate and plan depth: possible housing reuse, small for office/lab
- Above ceiling space minimal for new office/lab HVAC system
- Window openings offer adequate access to natural light and ventilation.

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South Building

- Existing Building (built 1964)
 - 67,200 sq.ft. on (5) floors
- Large floor plate and wide plan: not well suited for housing, ideal for office/lab
- Adequate above ceiling space for ducted air systems for office, but potentially tight for Lab use
- Exterior aluminum curtain wall system offers potential for good access to natural light and ventilation

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West Building

- Existing Building (built early 1950s)
 - 24,400 sq.ft. on (4) floors
- Smallest floor plate of all 5 buildings: reasonable for housing, small for office/lab
- Adequate space for horizontally ducted air systems
- Existing window openings small, offering limited access to natural light and ventilation

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Urban Design

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Town Context

- Transportation
- Open Space Systems
- Land Use

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Neighborhood Context

- Neighborhood compatibility
- Open space system and pedestrian network
- Surrounding land use

Neighborhood Land Use

- Mixed use character

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Site Context

- 18.5 acres on hill 150 feet above Summer Street
- 9.2 acres open space
- Rock outcroppings give visual appeal
- 7 acres reasonably untouched

- *Site not conducive for large scale recreational use*
- *Promontory and overlook is ultimate open space amenity*

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Site Land Use

- 200,000 sq.ft. of building space, and 560 parking spaces
- R-1 zoning could provide 150 single family units
- PUD zoning could provide 750,000 sq.ft. mixed use
- *With PUD, density supports costs for public improvements and maintenance*
- *Public uses and open space requires a balance of private investment on the site to be fiscally achievable*

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Transportation

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Roads

- Summer Street: 18,000 vpd. (Oct. 1998)
- Grove Street: 5,500 vpd. (Oct. 1998)
- Brattle Street: 3,500 vpd. (Oct. 1998)

- *Little growth in volume over last 10 years.*
- *Streets in the area are local, many are private.*

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Intersections

- Summer/Brattle/Hemlock level of service below acceptable
- Improvements predict better level of service
- Summer/Grove failing (northbound turns) movements
- Summer/Grove and Summer/Oak Hill ranked as problems by residents

- *Mitigation will be required for any new development*
- *Summer/Brattle/Hemlock improvements slated for 2004.*

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Access Modifications

- Primary access off Summer Street
- Secondary access points should be considered for integration
 - Public uses, school access, neighborhood character, emergency vehicles
- Relocate existing site access drive
 - May have physical constraints
- *Development will need to consider location and number of site access drives*

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Pedestrian Facilities

- Site not connected to Town sidewalk network
- Adjacent residential neighborhoods lack adequate sidewalks
- *Development will need to consider on-site and off-site pedestrian connections*
 - *Especially to schools*

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Bicycle Facilities

- Minuteman bikeway has access from Brattle Street
- No formal access to the Minuteman from Grove Street
- No on-street dedicated bikeways in the vicinity of the site.
- *Development will need to consider on-site and off-site improvements for bicyclists*

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Public Transportation

- Direct access to the site provided by MBTA Route 67
- Connections to Turkey Hill, Arlington Center, and Alewife Red Line Station
- Service currently underutilized
- Steep Grade (noise impacts)
- *Development will need to evaluate ridership to determine future need and balance for service*

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Environmental



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Asbestos and Lead Based Paint

- Asbestos containing materials found in many buildings
- Asbestos removal has occurred in some areas.
- *Conduct a preliminary Lead Based Paint and Asbestos Materials survey*
 - *Develop cost estimates*
 - *Costs incurred if buildings are reused or demolished*

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Above and Under Ground Storage Tanks

- Site contains several underground storage tanks
- *Reuse may require removal and closure*

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Massachusetts Contingency Plan Releases

- Hydraulic oil from an elevator (May 1994)
- Petroleum free product proved from a different origin
- Lahey owns the liability of clean up of the site
- Oil generally not a problem, with appropriate deed restrictions

- *Remediation in bedrock can be time consuming and costly*
- *Remediation will require more analysis*

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Infrastructure



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Wetlands

- No wetlands on site, and it is outside of the floodplain

Water Supply

- Water line connects to Summer Street (1910)
- Water line connects to Woodside lane (1963)
- Pump in North Wing (1980's)
- *Integrity of pipes should be considered, given their age.*

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Sanitary Sewer

- Line connects to municipal system in Summer Street
- Sufficient capacity exists for hospital uses
- *Roots and brush in area may have penetrated pipes, should be evaluated*

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Storm Drain

- Catch basins in parking areas and along site roads
- Lines discharge to Mill Brook
- Larger storms bypass catch basins (erosion problems)
- Neighbors report potential run-off impacts

- *Capacity of pipes appears inadequate area should be evaluated*

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Gas Service

- High pressure gas service connects to Summer Street
- *Lines should be evaluated for adequacy*
- *Utility easement not maintained, issues with root and brush penetration and should be evaluated*

Electric Service

- Service provided by Nstar (overhead wire)
- Nstar upgrading service enhancement to Arlington

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Soil Conditions and Bedrock

- Bedrock located at or near surface
- Bedrock outcrops are prevalent, depth to bedrock is very shallow.
- *Bedrock presents a need for potential blasting and will require careful consideration when developing final plans.*

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Market and Financial



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Demographic Trends

- Population is declining
 - Lost 7% in the 1980s, 5% in the 1990s
 - Fell from 48,200 in 1980 to 42,389 in 2000
- Minimal Growth in households
 - Net gain of 18 households during the 1990s
- Average household size has fallen from 2.58 in 1980 to 2.23 in 2001
 - County was 2.77 in 1980, 2.46 in 2001

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Demographic Trends

- Median household income is \$66,800
 - 5% lower than County
 - Incomes growing faster than inflation
- Median family income is \$79,750
 - 21% higher than Boston MSA
 - Makes qualifying for affordable housing programs more difficult

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Age Distribution of Households

- Strong growth in households in peak earning years
 - 35 to 44 and 45 to 54
 - Gained 1,800 households
- Loss in 15 to 34 cohort of 1,500 households
 - Younger age groups may be “priced out”
- County experienced similar trends
 - Lost households in the youngest cohort
 - Gained in all others
- Strongest growth in the 45 to 54 cohort

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Households by Income

- 25% of households have income of less than \$35,000
 - Number decreased by 2,600 since 1990
- 64% of households have incomes of more than \$50,000
 - Number increased by more than 4,000 since 1990

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Low Income Housing Needs

- Poverty rate was 4.6% in 1989
 - Declined to 4.1% by 2000 Census
- 1,714 Persons had incomes below the poverty level
 - 183 persons under age 18
 - 387 persons over age 65
- Elderly made up 27% of individuals living in poverty, but 44% of the households living in poverty

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Households At Risk

- Census 2000
 - 11,186 owner-occupied units
 - 7,825 renter-occupied units
- At risk of paying more than 30% of income for housing costs
 - 15.5% of owners (1,733 households) at-risk
 - 34% of renters (2,678 households) at-risk

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Unemployment

- Town has outperformed State and County
 - Town rate consistently the lowest by 1% to 2%
 - Strong downward trend for all areas
- 64% of households have incomes of more than \$50,000
 - Number increased by more than 4,000 since 1990

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Households by Income

- 25% of households have income of less than \$35,000
 - Number decreased by 2,600 since 1990
- Stable labor force
 - Ranges from 25,300 to 25,600
 - Growth limited by growth in housing stock
 - County experienced a gain of 20,000
- Majority of labor force does not work in Arlington
 - Employment opportunities limited within the Town

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Changes in Employment, 1995 to 2000

- Construction and retail trade sectors gained employment
- Wholesale trade, FIRE, personal/business services and professional services all lost employment
- Loss in professional services is deceptive
 - Sector lost 370 jobs, but entire loss is attributable to the loss of more than 700 health services jobs
 - All other subsectors experienced employment gains

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Changes in Health Services Employment, 1995 to 2000

- Arlington and surrounding communities all experienced a loss of establishments, indicating consolidation within the industry
- Belmont, Somerville and Winchester experienced gains in total health services employment
- Winchester gained almost 800 jobs
- Arlington has 14.4 health services workers per 1,000 residents
- Surrounding communities have an average of 49.9

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Residential Real Estate Market

- Arlington pricing lower than surrounding communities
 - Median price for SF homes was \$372,500 in 2001, up 64% since '97
 - Median condo price was \$274,500, up 120% since '97
- Community has higher number of transactions annually than surrounding communities
 - Average of 475 sales annually
 - 2.5% of housing stock turns over annually
 - Partly due to being “more affordable”

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Office Real Estate Market

- High vacancy at the present time
 - More than 1 million vacant SF in immediate area
 - Almost 15 million SF available in Boston and suburbs
 - Another 30 million SF “available”
- Rental rates in Arlington and Belmont are lower than other areas
 - No Class A space in Arlington
 - Rates around \$18/SF
 - Up to \$45 in Cambridge, Lexington

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Medical Office

- Limited market activity during last ten years
- Sales range of \$50 to \$245 per SF
- Less than 125,000 SF sold in ten years
- Average building size of 22,000 SF
- Skewed by one property in Somerville

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Food for Thought

- Should Symmes Hospital be demolished?
 - Buildings are difficult to retrofit for office or residential
 - Medical market has been consolidating
 - Even after significant investment, property will be less competitive than new construction
 - Mix of desired uses within a single building will be difficult
 - Market for newly constructed residential is very strong now

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Food for Thought II

- Cost Implications of Reuse/Redevelopment
 - Estimated investment at decision point - \$10 million (\$50/SF)
 - Demolition adds +/- \$2 million (\$10/SF)
 - Estimated developable land area is 8 acres
 - Investment per acre for development parcel is \$1.5 million per acre
- Dense development will be necessary to recover investment
 - 500,000 SF = \$24/BSF, 200,000 SF = \$60/SF

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Fiscal Impact 101

- Incremental costs to provide municipal services vs. incremental revenues generated
 - Cost and revenues associated with both residents and employees
 - Residential uses impact school enrollments
 - Number of children varies by unit type and # of bedrooms

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Audience Participation and Exchange

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Site Assessment Reports
are available on

<http://www.symmesarlington.org/>

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Next Steps

- Working with Symmes Advisory Committee to prioritize needs
- Testing and assessing uses on the site
- Defining alternatives

Next workshop “Options and Choices”

September 26, 2002

Location to be determined