



Housing Corporation of Arlington

252 Massachusetts Avenue, Office, Arlington, MA 02474

tel: 781.859.5294

fax: 781.859.5632

info@housingcorporarlington.org

www.housingcorporarlington.org

December 15, 2025

Arlington Redevelopment Board
730 Massachusetts Avenue, Town Hall Annex
Arlington, MA 02474

To the Members of the Arlington Redevelopment Board,

Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) is pleased to submit this application for a new development in Arlington Center: Emma's Court. With this project, HCA plans to redevelop 17 Newman Way and the vacant front lawn of 840 Massachusetts Avenue into 40 new affordable rental homes.

In September 2025 — with tremendous support from the Town of Arlington, the Arlington Affordable Housing Trust and the MA Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities — HCA acquired the buildings at 840 Mass Ave, 846 Mass Ave and 17 Newman Way. HCA will preserve the existing 57 units at 840-846 Mass Ave as permanently affordable housing, in addition to creating new housing through this project.

Emma's Court consists of two new buildings. Building 1, on the front lawn of 840 Mass Ave, brings a design that responds to its prominent corner location on a commercial corridor and will include a first floor commercial space. Building 2, at 17 Newman Way, is designed to fit in with neighboring smaller scale residential homes. The new buildings of Emma's Court will form a campus with the existing units at 840-846 Mass Ave that will provide 97 total residential units and one commercial space among four buildings, and 48 parking spaces.

Emma's Court is located in an area with exceptional access to transit, open space, and public resources. Future residents will be steps from the Route 77 bus, and a short walk from the Minuteman Bikeway, Mill Brook Park, Buzzell Field Park, local grocery stores and pharmacies, and the many amenities in Arlington Center.

A key project feature is the native planting courtyard located between Building 1 and the existing building at 840 Mass Ave, which will have pathways to connect to the public ways around the site. The courtyard will provide an important quality of life benefit to all residents of the existing and new buildings, while also providing public views of this newly landscaped space.

We are also pleased to use this project to reconnect to the history of the property, and to honor former owner and resident of the site, Emma Locke Sprague. Originally built in 1927, the building now located at 840 Mass Ave was first known as Lockeland Court, after Henry Josiah Locke, an Arlington Selectman who ran a market garden and farmstand on the site. Locke passed the family farm on to his daughter, Emma Locke Sprague, who continued to operate it independently for many years. After selling the land to enable the new Lockeland Court development, Emma moved into the building at 840 Mass Ave, where she stayed until passing away in 1936. Emma cared deeply about her community and left much of her significant estate to the people of Arlington, including trust funds for the Robbins Library, the First Parish Unitarian Church, and for "indigent widows" in the town. She also created a fund for maintaining

the flag and flagpole in front of Arlington High School, which she stated in her will that she admired daily from her home across the street.

The Emma's Court project will result in an enhanced campus that reflects both the history and the future of Arlington. The new project will also carry forward the spirit of generosity and civic-mindedness embodied by Emma Locke Sprague as it brings enhanced greenery, connects residents through shared open space, and helps ensure that Arlington is a place where people of all incomes can thrive.

Thank you for your review and consideration of this proposal. We look forward to presenting our submission publicly in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erica', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Erica Schwarz
Executive Director