



TOWN OF ARLINGTON

MASSACHUSETTS

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

March 6, 2016

Kevin F. Greeley, Chair
Board of Selectmen
Town of Arlington
720 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476

**RE: 2016 Annual Town Meeting Warrant 30:
"Transfer of Town Property/1 Mount Gilboa Road"**

Dear Mr. Greeley and Members of the Board:

At its March 3, 2016, meeting, the Arlington Conservation Commission heard from Mr. John Belksis, the main proponent of Warrant Article 30, "Transfer of Town Property/1 Mount Gilboa Road", and members of the public; the Commission also had received many e-mails. The Commission discussed the article and then unanimously approved the following motion:

The Conservation Commission opposes Article 30 regarding the transfer of Mt. Gilboa property to the Arlington Housing Authority.

It is our responsibility to protect conservation land, and this proposal is very detrimental to that purpose.

Arlington has very little conservation land – about thirty acres total. The Mt. Gilboa conservation area at 10.7 acres is the largest and most attractive of those parcels. To transfer roughly 1.7 acres from the center and top of this would both reduce valuable conservation land and have a very negative impact on the remaining area. Also once the land is transferred, Article 97 protections will be lost and there is nothing to prevent future development of that site whatever current intentions might be.

The transfer also goes against the long range plan of the Conservation Commission to improve public access at the top of the hill with an accessible vista park.

We are supportive of affordable housing in appropriate locations, but Mt. Gilboa is not such a place.

Please contact me should you have questions.

Sincerely,

/s/ Nathaniel Stevens

Nathaniel Stevens, Chair

cc: A. Chapdelaine, Town Manager
D. Heim, Town Counsel
A. LeRoy, Chair, Open Space Committee