



TOWN OF ARLINGTON

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DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager
From: Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning & Community Development
Ali Carter, Economic Development Coordinator
Date: November 6, 2020
Re: Arlington Economic Development Recovery Task Force Recommendations

The Arlington Economic Development Recovery Task Force (Task Force) is making the following recommendations to reduce financial burdens on local businesses, to encourage shopping locally during the holiday season, and to implement a wintertime amenity adjacent to the Arlington Heights Busway as part of the MassDOT-funded Shared Streets and Spaces program.

1. Alcohol license fee reductions: Recently, license renewals were mailed out from the Select Board office, and since then business owners have requested some relief from these fees in consideration of their operating constraints during the pandemic. Most of the licensing fees in Arlington are modest (e.g. <\$100), but the alcohol licenses, depending on the business, range from \$1,000 to \$3,000.

Other communities in the area, including Cambridge, Somerville, Malden, and others are offering a 50% fee reduction on licenses in their municipality.

Last year, Arlington generated the following income from alcohol licenses:

All alcohol: \$39,775
Beer and wine: \$26,500
Clubs: \$4,600
Theaters: \$3,100

In light of the modest impact a partial or full waiver of these fees will have on the Town's budget relative to the relief it will provide for local restaurateurs, the Task Force proposes a 50% fee reduction on all alcohol, beer & wine, and clubs. The Task Force also proposes a total waiver of these fees for our two theaters in town, which have been more or less shuttered since March.

2. Waiver of Parking Fees at Meters: We want to thank the Board for waiving parking fees in the municipal parking lots from the Small Business Saturday (November 28th; the Saturday after Thanksgiving) through December 26th. The Task Force requests also waiving fees at on-street metered spaces during this same time period. The intention of this effort is to encourage residents to patronize local businesses during the holiday season, which is especially critical this year as we encourage people to shop Arlington first.

3. Parklet platform installation at taxi cab stand in Arlington Heights: Supply chain disruptions for outdoor seating infrastructure have delayed the delivery and implementation of parts of the parklet program in Arlington which is begin funded by a MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces program grant. The Town is waiting on the arrival of two prefabricated parklet platforms measuring 8' 9" long by 8' 4" wide, anticipated in mid to late November. We are now proposing to install these platforms in the taxi stand space near the Arlington Heights Busway. We are working to address winter weather and plowing concerns around these platforms and, based on that, will plan our installation accordingly.

Below are some concept drawings for locating the parklet platforms in a portion of the taxi stand adjacent to the Arlington Heights Busway. These platforms are ADA-compliant and would provide much-needed seating for riders, as well as lighting. Currently the only bench where riders board the bus is to the rear of the building where there is no visibility from the street. We are proposing adding seats on these platforms and installing string lighting, plugging it into a municipally powered light post. This would add visibility, seating, and lighting to an otherwise pretty sparse landscape.

Space will remain available for taxis at this location where they can continue to pick-up or drop-off customers. A November 2019 study of parking utilization in the Heights conducted by the Department of Planning and Community Development showed that the taxi stand was not utilized by any taxis during any observation period. Therefore this proposed temporary use should not disrupt the service to which it is currently dedicated.



