

Concerns about ADU proposal at Town Meeting – Bad for the environment.

A proposal to allow extra apartments in R1 areas will be placed before Town Meeting. But allowing extra apartments with kitchens and separate entrances will serve as the opening to eliminating single family housing in Arlington. Residents who purchased their homes on a quiet street may now be confronting short term rental units all around them. ADUs create a two family home on a single lot. People who live in a single family zoned area should not be subjected to a surprise removal of zoning protections.

What's to prevent a developer/homeowner from eliminating green space/trees/nature by building a second unit in a house, equipping it with an expanded asphalt driveway, and renting it out, creating an Airbnb, or eventually selling the unit as a condo? These extra apartments will decrease the number of small, starter homes, and add to the selling price of the existing home with the unit.

It is unethical to remove single family zoning status from neighborhoods where people have invested their life's savings expecting to live in a neighborhood full of trees, gardens, and yards for children to play in.

Instead of pushing zoning changes, the town should be considering long range planning to protect the health of our environment. We need more green space and less residential density in Arlington. ADUs will cause increased traffic and strain on town services in our neighborhoods.

My grandmother lived with us for a time when I was a child. After college I continued living with my family. There was no need to add a separate entrance or build a separate home on the property to house family members. The proposal before Town Meeting is not about family members – it is about changing the character of our town.

ADUs are simply an effort to add as much housing as possible, which profits only developers. I have always loved walking around my hometown and noting the victorians, capes, ranches, colonial revivals, and other styles, with their lovely trees, gardens and yards. Tragically, the town continues to allow unregulated teardowns leading to large home construction in my neighborhood. I would like to see the town focus on eliminating that problem instead of creating new housing problems.

Colleen Cunningham
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pro-environment, green space, open space.