



To: Town Meeting Members  
Subject: Arlington's Disability Commission Supports Warrant Article 55

April 17, 2024

Hello Town Meeting Members,

Arlington's Disability Commission supports Warrant Article 55 and the Town's efforts to secure Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program grant funds to rebuild the Fox Branch Library and create a truly accessible location in East Arlington.

Warrant Article 55, an article of appropriation for matched funds for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program, is a key piece in the grant process. This Town appropriation for \$150,000 allows the library to remain eligible for funds not to exceed \$100,000 from the State for planning and design, and a percentage of eligible construction costs.

The Fox Branch Library is not a physically accessible building. Before visitors enter the building, they must first climb a step at the main entry. Library programs and community meetings are held in the lower-level Community Room. Without elevator access, the lower level is accessible only via a staircase, excluding anyone who uses a mobility device or who cannot navigate a staircase. Improvements to this building, at minimum, are necessary to support architectural access in Arlington's public buildings. This grant is a step in the right direction in creating inclusive, equitable, and accessible spaces for our diverse population. The Disability Commission also welcomes the opportunity to consult in the future on accessibility for people with disabilities not only those addressed by mobility access alone.

With our endorsement, we urge Town Meeting to vote favorably to approve Warrant Article 55 and continue efforts to create a branch library that supports the needs of all residents of Arlington.

Thank you,

Arlington Disability Commission