

From: Jenny Raitt
To: aquinn@town.arlington.ma.us
Subject: Fwd: citizen comment on recodification document
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2018 9:29:07 AM

Jennifer Raitt
Director, Planning and Community Development
Town of Arlington
781-316-3092

Begin forwarded message:

From: JO ANNE PRESTON <ja-preston@comcast.net>
Date: January 10, 2018 at 3:41:16 AM EST
To: jraitt@town.arlington.ma.us
Subject: Fwd: citizen comment on recodification document
Reply-To: JO ANNE PRESTON <ja-preston@comcast.net>

Dear Jenny,

I am sending you my comments for your consideration. Thank you for taking the time to answer my questions yesterday.

It is from the horrific experience with a developers that convinces me that moving many parts of the zoning bylaw from the authority of the elected representatives to "administration" would be a major step backward for Arlington.

Jo Anne

----- Original Message -----

From: JO ANNE PRESTON <ja-preston@comcast.net>
To: zba@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: January 10, 2018 at 3:33 AM
Subject: citizen comment on recodification document

Dear members of the Zoning Board of Appeals,

I was unexpectedly unable to attend the Monday meeting and ask you to delay the Special Town meeting vote.

I am emailing you my remarks for your consideration.

I am Jo Anne Preston, member of the Webcowet Neighborhood Preservation Group.

I would like to ask the ARB to delay voting this Zoning Recodification proposed Bylaw until a final document is available for town-wide discussion and consideration.

I have been attending meetings regarding this document since last summer and have read all the revisions.

- It is clear to me and many others that the byLaw is still in rough form and needs considerable editing and rewriting. How can you vote on some important bylaw without having a final version and once released to you having time to carefully read it?
- I object to the many sections of the current Bylaw which relegate important policy issues to “administration” taking them away from the authority of the elective representatives of Town Meeting.
- It is from the experience of the residents of the Webcowet neighborhood, trying to contain the illegal actions of a rogue developer, that convince me that taking more authority over development from elected representatives is a mistake. No administrative agency or person responded to our concerns except the town manager’s office. However, both times the intervention from the town manger’s office were violated by the developer, leaving us totally powerless. One example, of a policy change is the section 3.1.4 stipulating a monetary penalty for violations. The December 12 version eliminates any specific monetary penalty. I was told that this determination would be made by "administration," not town meeting.

Hope remained that concerned residents could call on their elected Town Meeting representatives but now we see important areas of their authority over development leaving by the back door.

Going forward, taking away powers from Town Meeting is a policy issue that needs considerable open detailed discussion over time, and should not be part of an effort to just update and revise.