

From: Elise Selinger <selinger.elise@gmail.com>
To: Erin Zwirko <EZwirko@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 09/08/2018 10:40 AM
Subject: Fwd: Arlington Housing Plan Implementation Committee

Hi Erin,

My answers are in-line below and my resume is attached. I hope you have a great weekend!

Cheers,
Elise

Hi Elise,

It was great speaking with you yesterday afternoon. As I mentioned, if you would send me your resume and briefly answer the questions below, that would be appreciated.

1. Which 2016 Housing Production Plan strategy do you think the Town and HPIC should prioritize and why? You can find the HPP here: <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/town-governance/all-boards-and-committees/housing-plan-advisory-committee>

- I commend the Town and the team of consultants for creating such a thorough Housing Production Plan with many important strategies. Among the 15 strategies detailed in the plan, I believe that strategies 1, 2, and 3, all related to zoning reform, are the most impactful and a priority. Given that the state legislation didn't pass, the feasibility of these long-term and ongoing strategies are much more challenging nevertheless I believe the HPIC should persist in these aims. I'm very aware of the need for legislative reform and community education on this issue. Recently, I co-founded a tech start-up called Placeful Technologies Inc which created an online educational tool for the City of Boston Housing Innovation Lab that pairs 3D visualization with financial feasibility to illustrate the need for dimensional zoning relief to encourage multifamily development that meets the twin goals of financially feasible and maintaining neighborhood character.
- Secondary to these top priorities, I would offer that the committee should also pursue strategies 5, 8 and 14. Strategy 5, an overlay district is a medium term pursuit and will help the Town get closer to hitting the 10% SHI goal. Strategy 8, facilitating the development of senior housing options can have a ripple effect across the housing market as I describe in more detail in question 4. I am also most equipped to assist the committee in this effort bringing my knowledge from my job at Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly which develops, owns and operates affordable independent senior housing. For Strategy 14, DHCD highly encourages (almost requires) that a Town provide funding for any capital awards granted by the agency and the creation of a HTF will go a long way towards smoothing that road by building the necessary infrastructure both personnel, political and financial to facilitate more large-scale affordable housing in the Town.

2. What do you see as barriers to residential development in Arlington?

- The greatest barrier to residential development and redevelopment across the board is the lack of a predictable and efficient zoning/permitting path for impactful multifamily/mixed-use projects. Today these projects require special permits, with no clear review timeline (# days), which increases project costs that further compromise affordability and/or dissuade potential development. Since the state legislation didn't pass, obtaining zoning variances/rezonings will be a tough road with 2/3rds of town meeting. Even Chapter 40B projects are a long and difficult road since there is still no clear review timeline.
- I believe that the greatest barriers from a community engagement perspective will be concerns about traffic and parking. Given the forthcoming BRT pilot coming this fall, there will hopefully be a positive impact on traffic

congestion and with the numerous alternative transportation modes available today, there is a strong case to be made to lower parking ratios but car ownership, especially for young and middle age families will still be essential. The cost of meeting zoning-mandated parking is often prohibitive, especially for small-scale development on small lots when street parking is prohibited due to the overnight parking ban. Changing the overnight parking ban is beyond the scope of the HPIC but is very interrelated to housing production.

3. How have you supported increasing residential development in the community?

- I just moved to Arlington in July 2018 and am excited to get to know the community. Prior to moving to Arlington, I lived in Inman Square in Cambridge for four years. During that time, I was an active participant on the Policy Board of A Better Cambridge (ABC), a YIMBY organization. As a member of the Policy Board, I advocated for more diverse housing options in the community and spoke at public meetings in favor of new housing proposals.

4. What types of new housing do you think are needed within the community?

- There is a clear opportunity for mutual gain when you can think about seniors and young families as a group that can help each other rather than separate populations. For both low-income and moderate income seniors, a key factor to successful aging is not just health but a sense of community and socialization. As the HPP report finds, many seniors in Arlington are living alone. Aging in community brings a sense of purpose and connection while aging in place (even in ADUs- given the winter season) can often result in loneliness and isolation, regardless of frailty. The existing housing stock dating from the early 20th century with stairs, bathrooms with tubs and significant maintenance also creates challenges for frail elders and those with disabilities. Creating independent living options for low and moderate income seniors in TOD locations with walkable services and amenities will create opportunities to age-in-community (Strategy 8). Meanwhile, new senior housing will unlock both rental and homeownership opportunities for young/large families looking for 2-3+ bedrooms either through use of the existing home or redevelopment of those parcels with dense multifamily housing. Depending on whether or not these homes are suitable for redevelopment, accessory dwelling units (ADUs) can also have an impact for single person, elderly (when appropriate) or non-elderly households. There are many homes in Arlington with rear separate garages and with the right zoning tools, these could be redeveloped as single-story or two-story ADUs or larger 6+ unit multifamily dwellings.

5. What do you see as barriers to preserving housing affordability and how do you think the HPIC can address these barriers?

- The most significant barrier to preserving housing affordability is the lack of any form of rent control, which is a state issue and beyond the means of the HPIC. This is a really tough issue because the preservation funds at the state-level are highly competitive. The HPIC can partner with the State, HCA/AHA or other developer help put pressure on the property owners to keep the units affordable and work out a deal to buy out the owners. Looking ahead to future projects, the HPIC should prioritize local resources for projects that provide affordability in perpetuity. These include promoting deed-restricted homeownership opportunities and 100% affordable rental deals.

Thank you!
Erin

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Date: Thu, 30 Aug 2018 14:29:32 -0400

Elizabeth (Elise) Selinger
Real Estate Innovation Manager



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly | Boston, MA

Sept. 2016-Present

Real Estate Innovation Manager

- Project Manager for 370 Harvard Street, a 62-unit new construction affordable senior housing in Brookline, MA https://www.jche.org/370_Harvard_st..shtml
- Project team member for proposed 150+ unit independent living for moderate income seniors
- Assisting Chief of Real Estate and Innovation in research on innovative home care and health insurance payment and service models in senior housing

Placeful Technologies, Inc. | Boston, MA

January 2017-Present

Co-Founder and COO

- Developed an online educational tool for the City of Boston Housing Innovation Lab that enables residents to discover various scenarios for housing development. Through a series of lessons and interactive exercises, resident can visualize different planning options and their effects on affordability, building bulk (massing), parking ratios and financial feasibility.

MIT AgeLab | Cambridge, MA

January 2016-May 2016

Research Assistant for Director Dr. Joseph Coughlin

- Conducted thesis research forecasting demand and supply in the senior housing real estate market in Metro Boston through 2030 using original research for supply data and American Community Survey Census data for demand forecasting
- AgeLab “Lifestyle Leaders” 85+ Focus Group: created and administered a qualitative survey as well as led an afternoon program for the focus group on the senior housing market and LTSS services in Metro Boston

Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly | Boston, MA

July 2015- May 2016

Real Estate Intern

- Created, analyzed and presented the results of an original market database of 100+ age-restricted housing properties in the Greater Boston to the JCHE Board of Directors Real Estate committee
- Conducted research on existing senior housing and Long Term Support Service (LTSS) models including analyzing residency agreements and the alignment of housing and LTSS public program eligibility in Massachusetts in “Options Charts”
- Created an entry-fee financial model to test the feasibility of developing JCHE’s innovative “Apartments for Life” concept at a potential site in Greater Boston, including modeling the long-term affordability of the project for future moderate-income residents

Massachusetts Institute of Technology | Cambridge, MA

August 2014- May 2015

Research Assistant for Prof. Karl Seidman, Dept. of Urban Studies and Planning

- Co-authored a white paper on the political history and housing production of Community Development Corporations in Boston (<http://tinyurl.com/hxvrzfn>)

Urban Homesteading Assistance Board | New York

August 2012-July 2014

Co-op Preservation Associate

- Completed four NYS-Article 8A major capital improvement loans from conception to closing (including J-51 tax abatement applications) totaling \$2.5M for four limited-equity residential co-ops representing 98 housing units in New York City.
- Secured an assessed value property tax cap (NYS-Article XI) for a 19 unit sweat-equity co-op in the Lower East Side resulting in \$775,000 property tax forgiveness and a 50% reduction on future property tax bills, the highest single building tax savings achieved by UHAB.
- Oversaw credit and lending review and closing for five limited equity co-op unit transfers to new owners totaling (\$300,000) in FY2013-2014.

Bilingual (Spanish/English) Project Associate

August 2010-August 2012

- Provided technical assistance to 40+ limited-equity co-ops (i.e. preparation of annual operating budgets, maintenance and repair plans, resale policies, settling estates and certifying annual elections) in coordination with their property managers and attorneys.

EDUCATION

Massachusetts Institute of Technology | Cambridge, MA

Master of City Planning, 2016

- Concentration in Housing and Community Development
- Thesis: "Forecasting Service-Enriched Senior Housing in Metropolitan Boston: Housing + Services Innovation"

Bowdoin College | Brunswick, ME

Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a minor in Economics, 2010