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Date: March 18, 2019 at 3:16:37 PM EDT
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"Mary Krepelka" <mkrepelka@town.arlington.ma.us>
Subject: ARB Hearings Comments - From March 11 and on general process

Dear Members of the ARB:

I am writing to you with serious concerns over the pro-density articles that the Town Department of Planning and Community Development has put before you with the support of the Town Manager. Thank you for the work you do to serve and protect the residents and the Town of Arlington as you consider these serious matters.

The Articles, in total, push Arlington to change to be a denser more urban place. The Articles were drafted by outside organizations (MAPC and CHAPA) without the serious involvement or input of the town's residential and business owners and renters - the town's most important stakeholders, the tax payers. Even meetings with the public following the creation of the draft Articles were highly flawed - ARB meetings have not allowed the public to speak and Director Raitt's Jan 10 public forum didn't allow the public...to have a forum... after we were shown some summary material at 4 stations.

It appears that Oct 11 ARB meeting would have been the main place that someone who lives or works here could have had meaningful impact on changing or improving the Articles. But the public was not well informed at all before the drafting. In recent ARB meetings, it has been troubling that it appears Director Raitt has not supplied your board with adequate materials for you to judge either - and yet the pace of these radical changes has been far too quick, according to former ARB member Chris Loreti. This is especially concerning, since the Articles seek to change the nature of the R4-R7, B1-5 and Accessory Apartment (2 units in R0/R1) related areas. In other words the Articles essentially change the town that we all moved into because we liked it the way it is.

An argument made at a Dec 13 CHAPA-led meeting which didn't appear on the town's website list of meetings, and by which an invitation list was maintained by the Dept of Planning, was that new development will be great because it will help low and middle income renters - and the audience was largely represented by those people.

Yet the articles don't refer to affordability and in fact would worsen affordability in many ways. First, by allowing smaller 5000 lots and 1,000 sf units on these smaller lots, developers will be able to avoid Arlington's existing inclusionary requirement for affordable apartments. (starting at the 6th unit built). Second, multiple data shows that the effect of adding density

through 'upzoning' and removing zoning protections results in displacement of businesses and apartment dwellers and the moving out of existing property owners - in other words, the new developments bring in 'luxury condos', higher priced apartments and tear-down McMansions taking all the old lawn and yard space. Those that leave go because the average Arlington (2017) rent of about \$1500/mo is replaced by \$3,000/mo units (such as at 887 Mass Ave).

Arlington is already cheaper to live in than all the contiguous communities except Medford - on a rental and home price value basis. This is why I moved back here with my new wife in 1998, and I expect why you and your families came here, too. We essentially are the 6th 'affordable unit' for the towns around us!

Arlington is already the 2nd densest town, and 12th densest community of any kind in all of Massachusetts. We should recognize that increasing any density would only help outside interests - and not help the people who already pays taxes and live here - and we ask you to respect that solemn role - to protect us. Anything else and I can begin to understand why a motion has been submitted to change the ARB into an elected body - elected by the people who would be affected by the changes you are deciding upon.

I am, therefore, asking you as a body to vote NO ACTION on all of these pro-density articles submitted to you by the Dept of Planning and the Town Manager. The townspeople, including myself, want to believe and trust that you are working in our interest and to preserve our stake in the town.

Thank you very much,
Carl Wagner
Edgehill Road
TM Member, Precinct 11

cc:
Jennifer Raitt, Director, Planning and Community Development

Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager
Members of the Select Board