

From: "Erin Zwirko" <EZwirko@town.arlington.ma.us>  
To: "Ralph Willmer" <ralph.willmer@gmail.com>  
Cc: abunnell@town.arlington.ma.us, dwatson@town.arlington.ma.us, ebenson@town.arlington.ma.us, JRaitt@town.arlington.ma.us, klau@town.arlington.ma.us, "Mary Muszynski" <MMuszynski@town.arlington.ma.us>  
Date: Mon, 25 Mar 2019 15:35:10 -0400  
Subject: Re: Zoning amendments before the ARB

Hi Ralph,

Thank you for your comments.

Best,  
Erin

Erin Zwirko, AICP, LEED AP  
Assistant Director  
Department of Planning and Community Development  
Town of Arlington  
direct: 781-316-3091  
[ezwirko@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:ezwirko@town.arlington.ma.us)

From: Ralph Willmer <ralph.willmer@gmail.com>  
To: Erin Zwirko <EZwirko@town.arlington.ma.us>  
Date: Mon, 25 Mar 2019 15:30:22 -0400  
Subject: Zoning amendments before the ARB

Hi Erin -

I am sorry that I have not been able to attend the Monday evening hearings of the Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) due to other meeting commitments. I wanted to take the opportunity to provide some brief comments for the public hearing record and voice my support for the proposed zoning amendments.

First, it is important to note that this effort is driven by the recommendations contained in both the 2015 Master Plan and the 2016 Housing Production Plan. Both of these plans have been adopted by the Town of Arlington and thus act as the Town's overarching policy documents regarding land use planning, and housing diversity and affordability issues. Following the adoption of such plans, the typical process involves the implementation of a plan's recommendations, many of which would result in the drafting of amendments to the Zoning Bylaw. The Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) has been methodically working through the recommendations of the Master Plan and has been working with other committees to address some of these recommended zoning changes. As part of this effort, the Town worked with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to identify the appropriate areas where changes could be effective.

As a result, the Town is now proposing a number of zoning amendments to address issues identified during the planning process such as changing demographics, the lack of diversity in housing types found in Arlington, locating housing in areas that are best served by transportation, and the need for more affordable housing. Through these recommended changes to zoning, the Town can create new opportunities for redevelopment along major transportation corridors that directly meet the needs of the Town's population. The areas affected are those that fall within the Town's higher density residential districts and the business districts.

Taken together, the proposed amendments should result in creating opportunities to redevelop properties particularly along the Mass Ave., Broadway, Summer St., and Pleasant St. corridors in a manner that is consistent with existing development at an appropriate scale for those roadways. any increases in height would be offset by design considerations such as step backs and height buffers to reduce the visual impacts from both the roadway and adjacent neighborhoods. Proposed projects would still be subject to ARB review and approval (through the Environmental Design Review Special Permit and the Town's Design Standards) to ensure that all aspects of site design are considered before a project is approved.

The reduction in the number of parking spaces is consistent with what numerous other communities have considered for multi-family buildings where the units tend to be smaller and do not require multiple spaces for each unit. This allows for more creative housing development without having to set aside more space for parking than is typically required.

Finally, in order to meet the need for more diverse housing options, it is important for the Town to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs). This would create housing opportunities that meets the demand for a range of household types, such as seniors, multi-generational households, individuals with disabilities, lower income households, and single person households. ADUs would have to meet certain standards and criteria, and can only be located in the R0 and R1 zoning districts after issuance of a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Based on the experience of other municipalities in the area, such a change would not negatively impact the surrounding neighborhood.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.

Ralph Willmer  
Member Master Plan Implementation Committee and Zoning Bylaw Working Group  
17 Walnut Court