

To see if the Town Meeting will vote to amend Section 6.1 of the current zoning bylaw regarding off-street parking to encourage new businesses such as restaurants, or take any action related thereto.

The proposed amendment would strike the word “restaurant”, and any reference to restaurants in that section to the bylaw, with the revised wording reading as follows:

Indoor Motion Picture Theater, restaurant , gymnasium, auditorium or similar place of public assembly with seating facilities	1 space per 4 seating capacity. Seasonal outdoor seating for restaurants shall not count toward total seating capacity
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The Arlington Heights business district was established when the primary means of transportation was a streetcar line running down Massachusetts Ave., rather than the widespread use of private automobiles. As such, buildings housing commercial establishments were constructed without consideration for off--street parking. As an example, under the current bylaw, it would be virtually impossible for a new restaurant (or any other new business) to meet this requirement if it was to be situated on the north side of the block bordered by Park Avenue on the West, and Davis Rd. on the East. This situation also applies to other areas of the town.

The wide variety of restaurant choices in Arlington has made the town a destination for residents of nearby communities, as well as providing abundant dining opportunities for residents. Restaurants not only bring in customers of their own, but by drawing in people who may not be familiar with other businesses in the town, can offer increased visibility to these other establishments.

The existing bylaw states: “Off-street parking space shall be provided for every new structure, the enlargement of an existing structure, the development of a new land use, or any change in an existing use in accordance with the Table of Off-Street Parking Regulations, and the other requirements contained in this Section 6.1”

A significant number of restaurants in town do not currently have designated off-street parking, and maintaining the existing bylaw as is would serve as a significant impediment to the opportunity for new ones to open.

The Town has repeatedly expressed a strong desire for three vigorous business districts in East Arlington, Arlington Center, and Arlington Heights. In past years, a number of businesses have closed in the Heights business district, and the current parking bylaw makes it challenging at best for new businesses to enter the area. We believe that changing the existing bylaw would aid in encouraging the growth of additional dining establishments, and help to create a vibrant and diverse commercial community in Arlington.

Please note that the following Arlington restaurants do not have designated off-street parking:

Trattoria Nina	Boston Pizza and Curry
Thai E-Sarn	Boston Pizza

Classic Café
Szechuan's Dumpling
Home Taste
Arlington House of Pizza
Retro Burger
Blue Ribbon BBQ
Jose's Torta Mexicana
Butternut Bakehouse
Sabzi
Luigi's Italian Kitchen
Quebrada Baking
Town Tavern

Little Q Hot Pot
Olympic Pizza
AdventurePub
Barismo 11
Zhu's Garden
Thrive Juice Café
Sugo
Anthony's East Side Deli
Za
Arlington Diner