Arlington Redevelopment Board
Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2018, 7:30 PM
Senior Center, Main Room

This meeting was recorded by ACMi.

PRESENT: Andrew Bunnell (Chair), Andrew West, David Watson, Eugene Benson, Kin Lau
STAFF: Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development/ Secretary Ex-Officio

The Chair moved to the first item on the agenda, Public Hearing – Special Town Meeting, Article 2, Zoning Bylaw Amendment/ Recodification about proposed amendments to the zoning bylaw.

The Chair stated that the Zoning Recodification Working Group (ZRWG) and staff worked with a group of residents known as the "Citizens Group" to review their comments. Many concerns were addressed through that process; however, differences of opinion about remaining outstanding issues remain.

Public comment was opened.

- Steve Revilak, 11 Sunnyside Avenue, Town Meeting Member, shared information he learned while researching the town's process of developing the zoning bylaw in 1975. He stated how limited the public process was compared to the current recodification process. He stated that from then to now, the bylaw gained about 80 to 100 pages of content. The bylaw had grown weary from the hand of many pens and bylaws have a life span. This motivated him to join the ZRWG with the hopes of creating a bylaw that should do what a bylaw should do: states what the town's policies are and is a useful tool for retrieving information.

- John Worden, 27 Jason Street, Town Meeting Member, stated that he was there in 1975 and could provide a firsthand account of what happened. He said that was displeased that the "redlined" document that was released just yesterday and was not available earlier in the process. He believes that the "redlined" document exposed substantive changes.

The Chair closed public comment.

Mr. Benson congratulated the ZRWG and expressed that this was a wonderful example of crowd sourcing. He expressed uncertainty about moving forward but stated that if a better version of the draft could be produced, then it should be moved to Special Town Meeting.

Mr. Lau thanked staff, the ZRWG, and the Citizens Group for their efforts. He expressed hesitation about moving forward and desired more time to review additional comments.

Mr. Watson shared his perspective as a ZRWG member and stated the group encouraged and was responsive to public comment. He further expressed uncertainty about moving forward and desired more time to review the newly-available "redlined" document as well as additional comments.

Mr. West stated that he felt that we were almost at the finish line and the process has shown that it was not clear if we needed to address what are being called substantive issues. He asked that the Board not delay.

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The Chair stated that due to the late time that staff were provided with the Citizens Group comments (9:00 PM the evening before), there was not enough time to provide a response. He stated that he was less concerned with what are being called substantive policy changes than typographical errors or omissions. He believes that these are correctible.

One additional member of the public wished to provide public comment. The Chair reopened public comment.

- Ted Peluso, 438 Massachusetts Ave. stated that a lot of hard work and time were put into the recodification process and that the document was worth presenting to Special Town Meeting. He stated that due to the size and complexity of the document, there will always be concern, and that it should not be on the warrant at Annual Town Meeting.

Wynelle Evans, a member of the Citizens Group, asked if she could respond to the earlier matter regarding the group's comments. The Chair invited her to speak. Ms. Evans expressed that due to connectivity issues, she was unable to send the document prior to the time she did last night. She stated that there were significant changes to the proposed Zoning Bylaw and several typographical errors in the dimensional tables. Ms. Evans asked the Board to take no action.

Ms. Raitt suggested that instead of the Chair continuing the hearing to January 11, the Board continue the hearing to January 22. This would allow the Board, ZRWG, staff, and the public to provide additional input and further review before Town Meeting. She suggested that the first two neighborhood meetings be rescheduled if the Board decides to move the continuation date. The Board discussed this option and decided to continue the hearing to January 22.

The Chair encouraged all comments, questions and concerns be provided via email and stated all written evidence would be accepted.

The Chair asked for a motion to continue the meeting to Wednesday, January 22, 2018. Moved by Mr. West. Seconded by Mr. Lau. All voted in favor. (5-0)

Meeting adjourned.

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