

Arlington Redevelopment Board
January 7, 2019, 7:30 p.m.
Senior Center, Main Room, First Floor
Meeting Minutes

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; Erin Zwirko, Assistant Director of Planning and Community Development

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:30 pm and turned to the first item on the agenda, EDR special permit public hearing for 10 Sunnyside Ave. The proponent requested postponement and for the hearing to be reschedule to January 28 at 7:30 p.m. The chair entertained a motion to reschedule. Chair presented letter of continuance to be signed. Mr. Benson so moved, Mr. Lau seconded, Board voted all in favor. (5-0)

Agenda Item 2 being delayed till 8:20, The Chair moved to review of minutes of November 19. The Chair made two corrections to the minutes: Mr. West was present; Mr. Lau was not; and there were two votes of 4-0, not 5-0. Ms. Raitt stated she will adjust accordingly. Mr. Benson moved to accept the minutes with the Chair's changes and with Ms. Raitt's proviso. Mr. Watson seconded. Board voted all in favor. (5-0)

Ms. Raitt listed upcoming meetings: Thursday 1/10, Forum, Auditorium, 7 pm, regarding housing; and the Board meetings on 1/16 and 1/28.

The Chair requested a motion for recess to 8:20 p.m. Mr. Lau so moved, Mr. West seconded. Board voted all in favor. (5-0)

Meeting Recessed.

The Chair reopened the meeting at 8:20 p.m. and turned to the proposed warrant articles for 2019 Annual Town Meeting.

Ms. Raitt reviewed the proposed articles. Article A, zoning bylaw amendment, sign regulations: Mr. Benson stated A and B may be merged together. Ms. Raitt stated Article B is just for reference because it is for the Select Board to amend the Town Bylaw and should not be inserted into A. Ms. Raitt addressed Articles C and D together. She stated that she will discuss these articles with the Conservation Commission chair the following Friday and will update the Board on the 16th as to a possible plan of action. Article E, codification of Dover Amendment reviews. Mr. Benson stated the bylaw is okay but could be improved. Ms. Raitt stated the bylaw requires a special permit for these uses, but needs a separate section to clarify the review process; and also to move 3.4 Paragraph J to a separate section. Article F, bicycle parking standards. Mr. Watson stated he is looking forward to seeing the changes but would like a bike parking guide alongside the bylaw changes. Ms. Raitt stated the Senior Transportation Planner, Daniel Amstutz, is interested in development of the guide and of the bylaw language. A companion guide should be considered as a separate document.

Articles G-Q, multifamily zoning. The Chair reminded the Board that the language for the vote is in process; right now the warrant language needs review. Mr. Benson referred to Article I, expressing continued concerns and interest in the Board maintaining special permit authority. The Chair agreed with Mr. Benson that this should be under special permit control, at least initially. Mr. West asked if there will be an analysis of proposed densities. The Chair stated this will be in process once articles are filed. Mr. Benson requested continued discussion of parking requirements, E and G. He requested that the report about the survey be shared with the Board. He could not link to this; Ms. Raitt stated she will send to Mr. Benson. Mr. Benson stated per his own informal survey, the vast majority of two-families in East Arlington had more than two cars in the driveway, indicating to him that one parking space might not be enough.

Article R, administrative corrections. Ms. Raitt stated bylaw references need to be updated administratively.

Article S, accessory dwelling units. The Chair asked if this is ready to go. Ms. Raitt stated they would start with what they had shared with the Board about a year ago. Mr. Benson did not think they had had enough time for input; he favors accessory units but has concerns about the proposal.

The Chair stated as far as the timeline goes, this evening they would see to the proposed warrant language, not actual language to be discussed. There will have to be a vote by next Wednesday. Ms. Raitt stated the articles are due on the 25th. The Chair asked when they could expect to see the proposed amendments. Ms. Raitt stated that in February they would draft more language; in March the Board will hold public hearings; by the second week of April, report to Town Meeting would be finalized. Mr. Lau asked how many more meetings to expect; Ms. Raitt replied four Board meetings plus four neighborhood meetings.

The Chair requested red-lined changes on any draft language be returned to Ms. Raitt by Thursday.

The Chair opened the floor for public questions.

Carl Wagner stated that the people of Arlington do not want more density, and a yes vote here and in Town Meeting on items G-M will ruin the town. He stated in the town voted no twice, in 2014 and maybe 2016, on accessory apartments. He requested the Board not force things down the throat of the Town Meeting members and thus the voters.

Wynelle Evans, member of the Residential Study Group, stated further study is needed on Article S -- amending to allow accessory units -- before another vote is taken, to avoid unintended consequences (e.g., inspection, enforcement, compliance). She requested the Board allow the Residential Study Group to do its job on this article.

Jo Anne Preston stated her concern that an outside group was invited in to perform the analysis and make recommendations. Their only interest is increasing housing density. Every school is at maximum capacity. There will be not be unintended consequences but ignored consequences. The Chair stated the stated goal of the Master Plan is to increase housing in Arlington, and there is no intention to discourage children from coming into town. Ms. Preston replied that they will need to plan for another elementary school. She also was concerned about the street walls' effect on climate change, and stated that moving green spaces to balconies and roofs is not a solution. She stated more social planning is required, and there was no discussion of low-cost housing. The Chair stated the inclusionary zoning bylaw will not change, and the increased developments would trigger the affordable housing requirement. Ms. Preston then suggested the town look into cohousing and other intentional communities.

The Chair requested a motion to adjourn; Mr. Lau moved to adjourn, Mr. Watson seconded. Board voted all in favor. (5-0)

Meeting Adjourned.