

Arlington Redevelopment Board
March 27, 2019, 7:30 p.m.
Senior Center, Main Room, First Floor
Meeting Minutes

This meeting was recorded by ACMI.

PRESENT: Andrew Bunnell (Chair), David Watson, Eugene Benson, Kin Lau

STAFF: Jennifer Raitt, Director, Planning and Community Development

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:30 pm with the first item on the agenda, Article 16 as amended by Steve Revilak.

Mr. Revilak summarized his amendment as follows: Keep the requirement of 15 percent affordable units per project of six units or more; increase to 20 percent at 20 or more units; developers would not receive a density bonus for projects that include only the required number of affordable units (at least one); if developers build in excess of the minimum, they will get the bonus; and the density bonus would be available to smaller projects of 4-5 units.

Mr. Benson agreed with the 20 percent increase. He suggested language changes to 8.4.2.c that would add additional zoning districts. Ms. Raitt stated that she believes Mr. Benson's suggestion would not be within scope.

Mr. Watson asked if more specific language was needed re: inclusionary units/density bonus. Discussion followed. Mr. Lau stated if the Board felt that Mr. Revilak's "inclusionary plus" amendment is fair, he would go along, but recommended that they look at this again next year to see if it could be more equitable to middle-income residents. The Chair stated they could move this to Town Meeting and recommend the zoning bylaw working group continue looking at the issues. Ms. Raitt stated that since any project would require a special permit, this would create the opportunity to work with developers on affordability and unit sizes.

Mr. Benson recommended changes to 8.2.4, setbacks. Discussion followed. Mr. Benson continued with page 21, disagreeing with open space on roofs, which would not be public space, and which would be better used for solar. Discussion followed. Mr. Benson stated they would not be reducing the amount of open space but reallocating it. Mr. Watson spoke in favor of creating more flexibility regarding allocation. Discussion followed. The Chair stated open space on roofs is not functional; the Board can request different plantings than grass that are more environmentally responsible. Mr. Watson spoke in favor of trading "open space" for "landscape." The Chair stated he would give allocation priority during the next cycle.

Mr. Benson asked about setbacks required on three story buildings. Ms. Raitt and Ms. Zwirko explained that they are not required. The Board agreed on no changes to the current language.

Mr. Watson asked about setbacks/stepbacks affecting abutting properties, and asked if this would be a problem with visual massing. Discussion followed. Ms. Raitt stated this would come before the Board for case by case EDR review if that scenario occurred.

Mr. Benson asked if apartment buildings include "multifamily." Ms. Raitt said yes, as described in the bylaw. The Board agreed to rethink the definitions. Mr. Benson stated he has problems with the parking numbers, but favors more flexibility with the number of spaces according to the type of apartment. Discussion followed. There was talk of a possible vote but with a number of substantive and administrative issues unresolved at the moment, Article 16 was tabled to later in the evening.

The Chair moved to the next items, Articles 6 and 7. The Chair stated the bulk of these articles would be addressed as part of the bonus in Article 16. On both articles, Mr. Lau motioned to move to Town Meeting as amended; Mr. Benson

seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 8. Mr. Watson asked what the Board had agreed on. The Chair replied no rooftops, and landscaped rather than usable open space. Discussion followed. The Chair requested to move to Town Meeting as amended. Mr. Lau motioned; Mr. Benson seconded; Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 9, Definition of Structures, regarding townhouses. Discussion followed. Mr. Lau stated he could not find a spot on the map where this would be applicable. Ms. Raitt stated this pertained to townhouses in R districts where the use is allowed. Discussion followed. Mr. Watson moved to advance Article 9 as proposed to Town Meeting; Mr. Benson seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 10. The Chair recommended a vote of no action. Mr. Benson so moved; Mr. Lau seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 11, Height Buffers. Ms. Raitt handed out graphics to the Board, and discussion of height buffers followed. Mr. Lau stated he would be more supportive of the distance if it was taken from the closest corner of an abutting building rather than the edge of the property line. Mr. Lau, Mr. Benson, and Mr. Watson expressed disapproval of the numbers. Discussion followed. The Chair stated he did not know where to go with this article at the moment. Discussion followed. Mr. Watson asked if the proposal gives the Board the discretion rather than the right to change the buffer; Ms. Raitt stated this would need to be added to the vote. Discussion followed. The Chair proposed to move the article as amended; Mr. Benson so moved; Mr. Lau seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 12, Corner Lots. Ms. Zwirko presented the article and discussion of setbacks followed. Mr. Watson stated the new language would allow one side of a building to come out further than another and suggested a vote of no action. Mr. Lau moved for a vote of no action; Mr. Watson seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 13. Mr. Benson moved for no action; Mr. Lau seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 14, parking reduction -- administrative change adding R7 to reduced parking requirements. Mr. Benson moved in favor; Mr. Lau seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 16. Mr. Benson moved as amended; Mr. Lau seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 15, accessory dwelling units. Mr. Lau asked if accessory dwelling units are permitted only by special permit; the Chair confirmed. Discussion followed. Mr. Lau asked if the special permit would be grandfathered in; the Chair confirmed, depending on the nature of the sale; if the building is sold and either unit is unoccupied, the accessory dwelling unit cannot be used. Discussion followed. Mr. Watson asked if more is needed re: enforceability; the Chair stated the special permit adds to the enforceability. Discussion followed. Ms. Raitt explained that an amnesty period could be provided during the first year of the existence of the bylaw. Mr. Benson stated more specific language is needed regarding expanding an existing dwelling. Discussion followed. Mr. Watson asked if this would allow someone to expand a home and then apply for an accessory dwelling unit; Mr. Benson stated putting an addition on to have an accessory dwelling unit should not be permitted. Discussion followed. Mr. Benson was concerned that an owner could be absent only three months at a time; the Chair suggested a change to the wording. Discussion followed. Mr. Watson stated the Board has addressed many of the concerns of the public and would like this to go before Town Meeting. Mr. Benson moved it go before Town Meeting as amended; Mr. Watson seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 17, sign regulations. Mr. Watson requested a review of certain changes, and Ms.

Zwirko answered to his satisfaction. Mr. Benson stated there was no definition of permanent or temporary sign. Ms. Zwirko clarified that these definitions exist. Mr. Benson asked why there were no time limitations; Ms. Zwirko explained. Mr. Benson had a question on exemptions; Ms. Zwirko clarified. Mr. Watson moved to advance Article 17 as provided; Mr. Benson seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next items, Articles 18 and 19. A discussion of changes in Article 18 followed. Mr. Lau moved to advance Articles 18 and 19 as provided; Mr. Benson seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 20, review of religious and educational uses. Ms. Raitt stated the Town Counsel discouraged a site plan review by the Board. Discussion followed. Mr. Benson requested clearer language about meeting requirements, and requested further review by the Town Counsel. The Chair tabled the article to Monday, 4/1.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 21, bicycle parking. Ms. Zwirko reviewed. Discussion followed. Mr. Benson moved to bring the article before Town Meeting as amended; Mr. Watson seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 22, correct citation errors. Administrative changes were made. Mr. Lau moved to bring Article 22 before Town Meeting as presented; Mr. Watson seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 23; he stated this is coming off. Mr. Benson moved no action; Mr. Watson seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 24, definition of half-story. Mr. Benson suggested they incorporate Mr. Klein's changes; the Chair agreed. Ms. Raitt stated that these suggestions were out of scope, due to the limitations of the warrant article language. Mr. Benson moved to bring Article 24 to Town Meeting as presented; Mr. Lau seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor. Mr. Benson stated, and the Chair agreed, that the Residential Study Group should bring these matters to the Board beforehand so that the Board has ample time for review and inquiry.

The Chair moved to the next item, Article 25, driveway grade. Mr. Benson stated this is worse than the current bylaw, because it does not state how to measure the 15 percent. Discussion followed. Mr. Lau moved for no action on Article 25; Mr. Watson seconded; the Board voted unanimously in favor.

Ms. Raitt requested an additional meeting, possibly April 8. Future projects were discussed.

Mr. Lau moved to adjourn; seconded; Mr. Watson seconded; Board voted all in favor.

Meeting adjourned.