

Arlington Redevelopment Board
Monday, April 8, 2019, 7:30 p.m.
2nd Floor Conference Room, Town Hall Annex
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, and Erin Zwirko, Assistant Director, Planning and Community Development

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:30 pm, notified the group that the meeting is being recorded by ACMi. The Chair introduced with the first item on the agenda, Draft Report to Town Meeting. Mr. Benson suggested that they should list the vacancy on the ARB. Mr. Watson suggested that the ARB be more explicit in explaining the benefits of the density bonus for smaller developments. The Chair suggested that the report explain the required EDR Special Permit review process. Mr. Watson suggested reorganizing the “why now” to make it more chronological. Mr. Benson asked if other reasons should be included in this section. Mr. Lau stated it is important to include that Arlington is losing opportunities because Arlington is not engaged in a housing plan and cannot access State funds that would be used for infrastructure. The Chair suggested including this information in the “why now” section of the report, as justification for why the ARB is looking to make changes.

Ms. Raitt explained that the “why now” statement includes economic reasons: increasing economic opportunities, addressing existing vacancies, addressing the long waitlists of people in need of housing, and diversifying the housing stock. Arlington currently does not have the option of accessing many State grants because Arlington is not working to meet its housing goals. Missed opportunities include access to State funding sources that would help improve infrastructure and public streetscapes and capital for housing development. Ms. Raitt said she would also like to address displacement which would be in the form of a Town rather than a Zoning Bylaw amendment. Mr. Benson stated he would like to make sure that Town Meeting hears this information.

Mr. Benson stated that he thinks a one page chart for Town Meeting Members with an explanation of article 16 and the other articles that would need to be passed to conform to the new article 16 should be created. Ms. Raitt said that they can work to simplify the existing one page document. Mr. Watson stated that after a neighborhood meeting the neighbors asked for some kind of animation that shows the effects of the new building changes on a hypothetical build out and a comparison to the current rules. Mr. Lau stated that the feedback he received when attending the neighborhood meeting at the Hardy School was that it was positive to share that new housing allows for increased density while also addressing aging in place and the housing for people with disabilities. Taller buildings will require an elevator, which increases accessibility.

Mr. Watson noted that in the ADU article states that the lock down date, as proposed in the zoning amendment, will determine the date by new units could be created. Mr. Benson stated that the lock down date actually has to do with the existence of the building envelope; ADUs can only be created within building envelope as it existed on that date.

The Chair motioned to vote to adopt the report as amended, authorize staff to make administrative clerical and typographical changes, and include the paragraph changes that includes the “why now” explanation. Mr. Lau moved to approve. All approved (4-0)

Second agenda item Meeting Minutes - from 3/18/19. The Chair motioned to approve the minutes with amendments. Mr. Benson moved to approve. All approved (4-0)

The chair moved to adjourn to Town Meeting at 8:10 p.m.