

Arlington Redevelopment Board
Monday, April 22, 2019, 7:00 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 7:00 pm, notified the group that the meeting is being recorded by ACMI and potentially by members of the public. The Chair introduced with the first item on the agenda, Construction Update on 925-927 Massachusetts Avenue. Mr. Annese introduced himself as counsel for the petitioner Richard Fraiman. Demolition began on the front of the 925-927 Massachusetts building. The demolition was halted because the remaining shell of the building became unsafe. No work was done for three weeks until Building Inspector reviewed and approved the site. Mr. Annese says that the building department has been contacted and approved the plans as shown in the site rendering. Mr. Lau stated that the roof should not continue to cantilever over the Stop & Shop property and that the plans must be modified to address this issue. Ms. Raitt requested an updated set of drawings with the revised plan for the cantilevered roof.

Mr. Benson asked if this building is a non-conforming structure. Mr. Annese confirmed that it is a non-conforming structure, stating that the non-conformity will not be destroyed by the construction. Mr. Benson asked for confirmation in writing from Building Inspector. The Chair concurred and stated that he is not pleased that the portion of the building was taken down before consultation with the ARB and Building Inspector. Mr. Annese asked if there is any construction that can continue while the ARB receives the memo with the inspector's opinion. The Chair said he would allow construction to begin on the rear portion of the building and hold off on construction of the front portion of the building until the ARB receives the memo from Mike Byrne and civil drawings.

Mr. Lau motioned to allow the contractor to continue work at 925-927 Mass. Ave once the board receives new drawings addressing the roof overhang into adjacent property and a memo from the Building Inspector dealing with the non-conforming structure. No work may proceed with the front of the structure, the former nail salon, until this information is received and approved by the Board. Mr. Benson seconded. All approved (4-0).

The Chair introduced the second Agenda Item, Substitute Motions filed by Town Meeting Members for Annual Town Meeting articles. Ms. Raitt reviewed the motions received from Town Meeting Members. The Chair suggested that the Board take a position on each of the substitute motions in case the Board is asked for their opinion in Town Meeting. The Chair stated that the board had previously discussed Article 24, Christian Klein's amendments would be accepted if asked. The Board agreed.

The Chair stated with respect to Article 16 that this substitute motion does not work towards encouraging multi-family and mixed-use on smaller lots. The bylaw discourages the subdivision of lots. Mr. Lau stated that developers would still be required to get a special permit approved by the Board. Mr. Benson said that the Board could technically say no if they found that the developer subdivided for the sole purpose of evading the affordable housing requirement. Ms. Raitt said that the required staff review should uncover developers subdividing for this purpose before the request is brought before the Board. Mr. Watson said he feels that the report clearly lays out the plan and encourages smaller developments and also create the density bonus framework for larger developments. Mr. Watson suggested not working with the smaller developments now in order to move the density bonus forward. The Chair stated that would leave the amendments as proposed which will help add housing units and add commercial space for businesses that would like to locate in town but cannot currently find suitable space. Mr. Benson stated if the Chair is asked about this substitute motion the board supports this nuanced answer.

The Chair said that Barbara Thornton's substitute motion is acceptable.

Mr. Lau stated that the board is already not supporting roof gardens that balconies can be removed from open space. The board agreed.

The Chair introduced the third Agenda item, review Meeting Minutes from February 25 and March 27. Mr. Watson moved to approve the February 25, 2019 minutes with amendments. Mr. Lau seconded. The Chair abstained from voting. The board approved 3-0.

The Chair stated that the March 27, 2019 minutes will be reviewed at the next meeting on May 20, 2019.

The Chair moved to adjourn to Town Meeting. All approved (4-0). Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Arlington Redevelopment Board
April 24, 2019, 7:45 p.m.
Town Hall

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

STAFF: Jennifer Raitt, Director, Planning and Community Development, Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager

The Board remained in session during Town Meeting. The Chair convened a meeting among ARB members to discuss Town Meeting business regarding the continued Town Meeting discussion of Article 16. Staff (Ms. Raitt and Mr. Chapdelaine) were present for the first portion of the meeting and were excused during deliberations and decision.

Members discussed that they listened intently to Town Meeting's concerns on Monday night and Town Meeting Members' desire for more information and involvement and additional discussion with members of Town Meeting. The ARB should therefore reconsider its position and choose to recommend a vote of No Action on articles 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16. With a No Action vote, these articles will be referred back to the ARB and staff for further study and recommendation to a future Town Meeting.

The Board still believes these recommendations are a net positive for the town, and that the encouragement and growth of mixed-use and affordable housing development is critical to Arlington's progress and growth, but understand that Town Meeting would like more information.

The Board discussed the importance of delivering this message to Town Meeting prior at the opening of Article 16 tonight and that we encourage Town Meeting Members and their constituents to remain informed and to take part in the discussion and to fully participate as the conversation continues to final ZBL recommendations. It is also important to convey that this discussion is part of a broader conversation as a part of the ongoing master plan implementation process and that the board looks forward to a town-wide discussion.

Lau moved to accept a vote of No Action, Watson seconded. All voted in favor (3-0).

Adjourned to Town Meeting.