

Arlington Redevelopment Board
Monday, June 21, 2021, 7:00 PM
Meeting Conducted Remotely via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

This meeting was recorded by ACMi.

PRESENT: Rachel Zsembery (Chair), Eugene Benson, Kin Lau, Melisa Tintocalis

STAFF: Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development and Kelly Lynema, Senior Planner

The Chair called the meeting to order and notified all attending that the meeting is being recorded by ACMi.

The Chair explained that this meeting is being held remotely in accordance with the Governor's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20. This order from Governor Baker allows for meetings to be held remotely during this time to avoid public gatherings.

The Chair introduced the first agenda item, ARB Committee Appointments. Ms. Raitt gave an overview of the six committees that work with the ARB. Ms. Raitt said that the following groups do not currently have a member of the Board attending: the Zoning Bylaw Working Group, the Master Plan Implementation Committee, the Housing Plan Implementation Committee, and the Remote Participation Study Committee. Community Preservation Committee. The Chair determined that it would be best to revisit the appointments when the gubernatorial designee joins the Board.

The Chair introduced the second agenda item, ARB Properties Update. Ms. Raitt said that 23 Maple is now occupied by staff from the Town Departments that are being relocated because of the DPW Yard building reconstruction at 51 Grove Street. Mr. Benson asked if the updates have been completed to ensure that the building is ADA accessible. Ms. Raitt said updates have been made and she will check to make sure that the rear entrance is fully ADA accessible. Ms. Raitt said that the Central School Renovation is experiencing some delays and the anticipated end date is mid-September. Ms. Raitt said that cooling issues on the third and fourth floor are impacting tenants. Mr. Lau asked if the Board could schedule a time for a walk-through of the Central School building. Mr. Benson asked about the circular driveway on Maple Street and said that last year the water was ponding up and not properly draining as it was intended to do. Ms. Raitt said that the area is lacking plantings and Ms. Raitt said she will update the Board regarding the continued functionality. Ms. Raitt said that the Whittemore Park project has begun and phases 1 and 2 are the focus of the project at this time. Ms. Lynema gave an overview of the landscape plan for the Board. Mr. Lau asked about the future of the beer garden at that location. Ms. Raitt said that after construction that Whittemore Park will be a great site for community events and activities, including a potential beer garden. Ms. Raitt said that the maintenance of the Board's properties has transferred to the Facilities Department and the longer term goal is to transfer ownership/management of these properties away from the Board. Ms. Raitt said that in the future this issue will be brought formally to the Board for discussion and a vote. Mr. Benson asked who would be responsible for decisions for these properties if not the Board. Ms. Raitt explained that the Town Manager's office or the Facilities Department would be responsible. Ms. Tintocalis asked if the Board should research best practices for creating profitable publicly held properties. Ms. Raitt said she has been working on finding a different option for 23 Maple Street, but it did not come to fruition. Ms. Raitt said that the Jefferson Cutter House has potential to become potentially more dynamic for the community. Ms. Raitt said that the Central School is already heading into that transition in a positive way. Ms. Raitt said that Board discussion regarding the properties going forward would be interesting for the community. Ms. Raitt said that she will explore additional options regarding transition of the Board's properties.

The Chair introduced the third agenda item, Housing Plan, and Open Space and Recreation Plan updates. Ms. Raitt said the Chair and Mr. Benson joined the housing forum which was attended by approximately 50 people. Ms. Raitt said that an

overview was provided, and stakeholder interviews were shared along with responses to the questionnaire conducted with the community. Ms. Raitt said small group breakouts also were held to discuss issues regarding housing needs, challenges being faced, and ideas regarding opportunities for the future. Ms. Raitt said a form is still available online for public feedback along with the information from the Housing Plan meeting. Ms. Raitt said additional engagement opportunities will be announced. Mr. Benson said that enhancing the Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw should be one of the goals of this process. The Chair said she found it interesting that the meetings held that week, including the Bikeway meeting, included the same themes regarding housing, access, and how transportation is integrated with the business districts. Ms. Raitt said that about 40 people participated in the Open Space and Recreation Plan Workshop. Ms. Raitt said that the State's Open Space plan requirements and the current plan were reviewed and then there were also breakout groups for both Open Space and Recreation discussions. Ms. Raitt said that the department is working to find ways to engage as many people as possible for the development of both plans.

The Chair explained that the fourth agenda item, Meeting Minutes, would be held for the next Board meeting.

The Chair introduced the last agenda item, Open Forum. The Chair opened the floor to public comment but with no meeting attendees in queue to speak the Chair closed the floor to the public.

The Chair asked about the location and time for the Board's next meeting. Ms. Raitt said that the next meeting on July 12th and asked the Board if they would like to meet or schedule another Zoom meeting. The Chair said that she would like to move meetings back to 7:30 p.m. Mr. Lau said he would like to have in person meetings at 7:30 p.m. when reviewing a project. Mr. Benson said he would like to continue the Zoom meetings because he feels that there is more participation with the online meetings as opposed to meeting in the confined space of the conference room. Ms. Tintocalis said she does not have a preference but would like to meet at 7:30 p.m. The Chair said that at this time the Board can continue to meet remotely for the time being, but at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Lau moved to adjourn, Mr. Benson seconded, approved 4-0.

Meeting adjourned.