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**Date:** 06/10/2022 10:43 PM  
**Subject:** The importance of Town Manager and Director of Planning positions working for the existing residents

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Dear Members of the Select Board:

I am writing to ask you to consider the importance of the existing residents and businesses when choosing the next Town Manager and Director of Planning and Community Development (APCD) roles. These are important unelected positions that provide direction and support for much of what goes on in our town. You Select Board Members are our only elected officials who can influence the professional staff to support the voters, the taxpayer and the existing residents, so I ask you to make these selections with us in mind.

Arlington needs a professional staff which works for its existing residents and businesses as its primary and most important stakeholders.

Recent experience has left me feeling that outside organizations, including the Metro Mayors' Coalition and the Metro Area Planning Council, were more important to some of our staff than our residents. Our needs must come first and the public must be broadly aware and supportive when the staff undertake major changes. Our needs include preserving and improving our affordability, our housing stock and resident diversity, protecting our open spaces, tree canopy and climate resiliency.

Unfortunately, there were times recently when our needed improvements in diversity, equity, inclusion were mixed up in a regional push for higher density, when historical injustices were incorrectly ascribed to our town for the apparent purpose of either distracting the public's frustration from equity and social justice issues, by pushing outside-town goals like urbanization and expensive density.

Arlington has many attractions that drew us here. Most people tell me about the special position our town occupies between not-too-urban and not-too-suburban, with access to transit, diverse housing stock (multifamily, 2 family, single family), walkability to shops and restaurants and our similarity to the communities around us, but with more affordability. Affordability is very important - and changes to this should be done with the full involvement, input and approval of the existing residents. Diversity and open space, including protecting our climate resiliency and trees are likewise critical.

An upcoming MBTA Overlay threatens to seriously affect our residents within a half mile of transit hubs. 40B so-called "Affordable" projects which circumvent our zoning could be avoided if the Town and APCD were to prepare an adequate defense. Such work would allow us to focus on actual housing crisis mitigation and to protect our wetlands and East Arlington from worse climate issues and flooding.

Arlington has a large structural financial deficit, which will leave us at least \$5 million dollars short when the ARPA funds run out in 2 years. With this in mind, we need a right-sized government working for the existing residents: Office of the Town Manager - and Department of Planning and Community Development, supporting the will of the people who pay them – taxpayers, residents and Select Board.

The Select Board doesn't have the time to monitor all the departments and boards' actions so to make sure that they are functioning best for our townspeople. This is why the positions of APCD Director and Town Manager are so important, and why I am looking to you to make sure the candidates for these roles will acknowledge the existing renters and owners - and tirelessly work for them.

Please enter my correspondence with the upcoming SB Meeting, June 13 on the subject of the Town Manager role.

Thank you,

Carl Wagner  
30 Edgehill Road