

From: David W Baldwin
Sent: Sunday, September 10, 2023 1:11 PM
To: Claire Ricker
Subject: Comments on MBTA Communities Arlington WG proposal

Dear MBTA Communities Arlington Working Group,

I am writing to express my support for the Working Group's goal of encouraging the expanded use of public transportation to decrease auto traffic, decrease fossil fuel use, and developing additional affordable housing.

This support is contingent on greater protection for open space, historic buildings, and their setting. My concern is that Arlington's historic built environment is not adequately protected and will be adversely affected by the proposed plan as presented. The few surviving extant structures from the 18th and 19th centuries are critical links to our past. Our historic buildings are the visual connection to Arlington's heritage. As we progress forward, we must not forsake what came before. Historic structures help provide town citizens important visual cues that create in us, a truer sense of belonging, community, and interconnectedness (non-tangible elements important to our societal happiness).

For more than 50 years the citizens of Arlington have recognized the importance historic preservation to the character of our town. Town meetings on at least nine occasions have created and enlarged historic districts.



Entering Arlington along Massachusetts Avenue, the entrance sign reads, "Welcome to Historic Arlington settled 1635." Traveling on this street, there are numerous historic buildings both residential and commercial that deserve protection from development. These buildings and other structures have been documented in the Town of Arlington's historic building surveys and inventories.

I offer that all buildings included in the town's historic building surveys and designated having historic value be specifically exempted from the proposed plan.

Thank you for all your efforts to find an equitable solution to this difficult set of issues. It is critical that we carefully review all the consequences both anticipated and unanticipated of the proposed plans. This plan does not need to be submitted until 12/31/2024, there is ample time to strengthen the protection of Arlington's historic built environment.

Sincerely,
David Baldwin
49 Academy St.
Arlington, MA

Commissioner, Arlington Historic District Commission
Past President, The Arlington Historical Society
Past Chair, Schwamb Mill Preservation Trust, Board of Trustees
Past Commissioner, Arlington Historical Commission
Past Commissioner, Belmont Historic District Commission