

From: Beth Melofchik

Sent: Monday, September 11, 2023 7:43 AM

To: Claire Ricker; Rachel Zsembery; Melisa Tintocalis; Kin Lau; Stephen Revilak; Eugene Benson; Eugene Benson

Cc: AHDC Chair; JoAnn Robinson; Beth Melofchik; Dermot Whittaker; Jim Feeney

Subject: Why target Old Schwamb Mill

Claire Ricker, Director Planning and Community Development
Redevelopment Board Members

Dear Ms. Ricker and Board Members,

I write out of an abundance of concern for Old Schwamb Mill as it has come to my attention that it has been included on a version of the MBTA Working Group maps. To target the Old Schwamb Mill for redevelopment regardless of the reasoning inspires me to share the role the Old Schwamb Mill plays in the Arlington community particularly after recent remarks by one of your members, also a member of the MBTA working group, who stated at a recent Historic District Commission meeting that perhaps the owners of the Mill would like to redevelop their property.

This remark is illustrative of the breadth and depth of ignorance as to the contribution, historical, musical, artistic, and educational which the Old Schwamb Mill makes to Arlington and beyond.

We approach the 250 anniversary of the events of April 19, 1775. Arlington is a member of Battle Road Scenic Byways communities along with Concord, Lexington and Bedford. The Community Preservation Act Committee after lengthy deliberations awarded a large grant to Allen Tosti's project to create an historic site at the corner of Lowell Street and Massachusetts Avenue, near Old Schwamb Mill.

Will Arlington consider relinquishing membership in Battle Road Scenic Byways since Town Hall chooses to award no value to historic properties? Will Mr. Tosti cease his project, Massachusetts Avenue streetscape having no historic significance worth preserving, seemingly according to Town Hall. Battle Road Scenic Byways is about preserving the streetscape.

Town Hall seeks to allow obliteration of historic sites across town among them:

Old Schwamb Mill, 17 Mill Lane -- b. 1860, National Register
Capt. Benjamin Locke, 21 Appleton Street -- c. 1740, National Register
Lt. Benjamin Locke, 11-12 Lowell Street -- 1816, National Register

Were the CPA funds misspent on the project brought forth by Mr. Tosti?

What is the significance of Battle Road Scenic Byway? Will more town funds be thrown after an illusory goal of historic significance while the Redevelopment Board and MBTA Working Group wreak a path of destruction obliterating the historic significance of Menotomy, what little remains along with the history of water driven manufacturing along Mill Brook?

What impact 6 story canyons surrounding Old Schwamb Mill? What impact on the Battle Road?

The nation has a housing shortage. The Boston region has a housing shortage. This is not occurring in a vacuum. The historic fabric of our community must be considered and afforded protection. Or, spend not a penny further on historic projects. We are left to be satisfied with granite markers like the one for Black Horse Tavern, [Black Horse Tavern Marker | Freedom's Way National Heritage Area \(freedomsway.org\)](#). Previous incarnations of redevelopment boards having afforded no value to historic sites.

Visit Concord and Lexington for historic sites and significance in 2025 and for shade trees.

Arlington is ersatz. Town Hall's choice.

Kind regards,
Beth Melofchik