

September 11, 2023

From: JoAnn Robinson, Chair Arlington Historical Commission
Stephen Makowka, Chair, Arlington Historic District Commissions

To: Members of the Arlington Redevelopment Board
Cc: Arlington Select Board, Planning Department Director, Town Manager, Working Group Members

RE: Proposed MBTA Communities Zones

As we all know, there are many reasons to support the creation of areas in Arlington that could provide additional housing; but there is also a great need to see that the history of individual buildings and properties should be preserved.

We appreciate that the current MBTA Community proposals now avoid Arlington's Local Historic Districts that have been established under MLC 40C. But many individual properties that are within the bounds of the current Working Group's proposals are designated significant historical properties that are not recognized to be protected.

For example the two Alternate Areas that are proposed include many properties that resonate with Arlington citizens. The two houses built in 1720 and 1816 by the Locke families who fought in the Battle at the Foot of the Rocks when the British were retreating from Lexington are just two illustrations.

However, the properties mentioned above and many other properties are not protected or even considered given the draft of the new MBTA Communities zoning recommendations. These resources were specifically highlighted in the Town's Master Plan for protection and preservation.

Our concerns were raised with the Planning Director and with members of the Working Group by the historical community in August 2023 but it appears that they have not been considered in the current proposals.

We ask that the MBTA Working Group be directed to integrate the protection of historic properties (including the Local Historic Districts, National Register Districts, and other significant properties included in Arlington's Historic Inventory) into any *proposed MBTA Communities Overlay Zone*. We would gladly work with the proponents to make a systematic evaluation of these categories to protect them.

Sincerely,



JoAnn Robinson
Chair, AHC



Stephen Makowka
Chair, AHDC