

From: Len Kardon
Sent on: Monday, September 11, 2023 6:02:07 PM
To: Claire Ricker
Subject: hearing comment

The following is submitted as public comment for the Arlington Redevelopment Board hearing on September 11, 2023 on the proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment / MBTA Communities Overlay District. Please be sure it is distributed to each member of the ARB and included in the hearing record.

I am writing to request that the Arlington Heights Neighborhood Multifamily Subdistricts (Heights and Heights Extension) be trimmed in the same manner as the East Arlington Neighborhood Multifamily Subdistrict was trimmed at the Working Groups August 8 meeting (limit to parcels on Mass Ave and parcels adjoining those parcels) for the same reasons - it creates incentives for disruptive redevelopment that won't add units. As Ms. Aamodt noted, "they'll make unattractive additions to the buildings...we'll end up with basement apartments and awkward add-ons, compromising the architectural integrity of the neighborhood ...that will make the consistent fabric alien and produce sub-par architecture."

It is important to note that minimum lot sizes are excluded in the overlay. Existing nonconforming lots would suddenly be open to redevelopment - even replacing a single family with a larger single family home of three or four stories would be allowed with no new units would be created. Let's be careful about what we are doing, start with a zone on or adjacent to Mass. Ave, and build from there. Let's not incentivize disruptive redevelopment of luxury units in our existing two-family neighborhoods.

I fully support increased multifamily housing in Arlington and am disappointed that 100% of existing commercial and industrial property was excluded from the proposal when, as Arlington's own Director of Planning noted, some of these parcels represent the best opportunity for significant multifamily development with inclusion of affordable units. However, disrupting the neighborhoods off of Massachusetts Ave is not a substitute for those missing parcels. Based on past versions that did have a smaller Heights district, the plan would still likely have double the required capacity if the heights subdistricts were trimmed. I urge you to make this change

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