

From: Beth Melofchik

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2023 7:24 AM

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

Cc: Clarissa Rowe; Dermot Whittaker; George Parsons; Alan Jones; AHDC Chair; AHDC; Jim Feeney; Angela Olszewski; Allan and Barbara Tosti; JoAnn Robinson; H Leavell Arlington Tree Committee

Subject: Historic Arlington & Tree Canopy & Housing

Dear Ms. Zsembery and Arlington Redevelopment Board Members,

Membership in Battle Road Scenic Byway, a federal designation, granted recently, is a lifeline to Historic Arlington.

An MBTA Communities Plan which does not acknowledge and preserve historic Arlington, which does not acknowledge and buttress a healthy replicating municipal tree canopy would serve us ill and will reflect badly on Town Hall and on all of us.

Historic Arlington is an economic driver not fully realized due to decisions and planning of earlier iterations of ARB and Town Hall leadership.

Battle Road Scenic Byway membership provides a lifeline if carefully managed for a reinvigorated Historic Arlington with economic benefits.

Climate Breakdown is all around us. The rainfall in Leominster could next time be in Arlington. Trees are part of our Municipal Vulnerabilities Preparedness Plan, without them we are sunk. All the yard trees and street trees together form our municipal tree canopy, our forcefield to meet and process climate breakdown.

The auto dealership on Mass Ave which in an earlier era convinced town hall that only commerce of a certain kind mattered, is a dinosaur. Where are their street trees? What is the temperature of their lot and how much does it heat surrounding properties?

What is the storm water runoff from their property to Mill Brook, volume? content?

Are we Route 1 or Battle Road Scenic Byway? What is the streetscape design?

The MBTA Communities Plan touted to date serves one narrow constituency, housing numbers & its beneficiaries: property owners & market rate buyers and renters. Left out is the current Arlington community and any climate breakdown plan or historic Arlington plan.

Life is a tapestry. Municipal governance a tapestry of interests and concerns and dollars.

Our natural gas infrastructure is inadequate.
Our public wastewater infrastructure is inadequate.
Our budgeting has been inadequate. We are told of 3 overrides pending.

Representation of Historic Arlington on the MBTA Communities Working Group is inadequate.
Representation of Arlington's Tree Canopy on the MBTA Communities Working Group is inadequate.

Chasing and enabling market rate housing to the exclusion of all else squeezes out the middle, punishes the green environment and punishes those living in naturally occurring affordable housing, our teachers, seniors, and shift workers.

Arlington's answer to the mandate cannot do it all within the parameters of the mandate. Please, let's do what we are asked to do honorably meet the mandate at compliance and, take the time to design a more thoughtful plan for December 2024.

Trying to meet an earlier deadline is tearing the community apart.

The Supreme Judicial Court Ruling in favor of Louise Barron reminds all of us of what John and Samuel Adams and the Founders strove for: the right to hold and express a dissenting opinion.

Please, take the time to craft a holistic solution. And please include this in correspondence posted and shared.

Respectfully,
Beth Melofchik, Town Meeting Member
Green Arlington MA