

Please fix the Master Plan Advisory Committee membership - Arlington needs broad representation in zoning and redevelopment

From: C Wagner

To: Shaina Korman-Houston; Kin Lau; Claire Ricker; Rachel Zsembery; Stephen Revilak; Stephen DeCoursey; Len Diggins; Eric Helmuth; John Hurd; Diane Mahon; Jim Feeney

Cc: SBadmin

Mon 5/20/2024 12:41 PM

May 20, 2024

Dear Town Manager, Select Board and Redevelopment Board Members and Planning Director:

(Please include this into the correspondence for tonight's ARB meeting and the SB meeting.)

Please act to reconstitute the proposed Arlington Master Plan Advisory Committee (see [link to list](#)) so that it has members of a broad range of stakeholders and stakeholder organizations in Arlington. The current composition is lopsided and not representative of the various taxpayers, renters and residents, the businesses and needs of our town today and in the future.

Arlington is facing major changes by our recent overcompliance with the MBTA density overlay - an act that restricts affordability measures and encourages 'luxury condo development'. The reason I am writing now is that we just experienced the result of an unrepresentative and inequitable working group can do to Arlington. The MBTA density overlay working group under the Department of Planning and Community Development and the ARB resulted in proposals that that similarly did not represent Arlington broadly and resulted in proposals that go against the current Master Plan, open space, climate resiliency, sustainable municipal finance. At one point, the working group proposals suggested doubling Arlington's housing stock and not requiring any parking in the thousands of new units! We have experienced the result - but we are only just beginning to see the resulting changes - enormous buildings, little or no setbacks or open space. Only through large efforts by members of the ARB and citizens and citizen groups like [Arlington Residents For Responsible Redevelopment](#) were a few of the worst proposals removed. Due to that earlier working group's composition, Arlington will see 78 foot buildings, dramatic loss of open space, 13 foot high stories, mushrooming of expensive luxury condos and inevitable displacement of lower and middle income residents.

A body that offers recommendations should include a broad section of our town's existing business and residential interests. During the MBTA density overlay work, other towns like Lincoln and Lexington involved their stakeholders: representatives for the elderly and affordable housing organizations, historical preservation, open space/trees and commercial/business matters, neighborhood groups and municipal financial bodies etc. The Master Plan currently reflects these diverse and important stakeholders. The proposed advisory committee is not adequate in including these. In fact, I believe includes at least one person sanctioned by the Facebook Arlington list for abusive comments and those picked to rewrite out Master Plan to fit a dense city. Please look to

[Lincoln's MBTA Working Group](#) , among other communities, for the diversity of stakeholders and town-organizations to be represented. **The goal of an advisory committee should not be to push through the changes desired by one group.**

I wrote to many of you previously over MBTA working group and was disappointed that you did not act sufficiently - see link for [this open letter](#). I hope you will consider the importance of an equitable and diverse body to decide any changes to our Master Plan for our town and intervene in the membership of the Arlington Master Plan Advisory Committee.

Thank you for your work and effort,

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