

Don't Pollute the Mill Brook with 40Bs

To the Editor,

Arlington's crown jewel is an unappreciated diamond in the rough. It has survived for eons and served many needs despite abuse. It is the Mill Brook (MB):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=MM834ZozpQM>

In Arlington for centuries MB has brought prosperity to Arlington. In 1985 Arlington's 350th Anniversary Committee presented a celebratory play about its industry. Its swift running water powered mills to process, produce and manufacture products used domestically or shipped all over the world. Today most of the mills are gone. MB's holding ponds are now school playing fields, gyms etc. Only the Old Schwamb Mill and the Theodore Schwamb Mill remain. But the MB Corridor still offers plenty of opportunity for economic development.

<HTTPS://WWW.ARLINGTONMA.GOV/HOME/SHOWDOCUMENT?ID=46513>

<HTTPS://WWW.ARLINGTONMA.GOV/HOME/SHOWDOCUMENT?ID=31058>

Opportunity for small life sciences spin-offs, technology entrepreneurs, service businesses etc. capitalizing on the boom of commerce/software development/biotechnology in all surrounding communities is being lost for Arlington and MB corridor. That is because Town Manager and his appointed ARB and Planning Department favor almost exclusively dense residential development. Far from soliciting new commerce they are even exacerbating demolition of existing businesses and restaurants to allow more residential density with its wealth transfer to developers/real-estate-industry/architects as encouraged by MAPC of which the Manager is Vice Chair. This is horrendous - Arlington being second most dense Massachusetts town. Schools are overcrowded, residential taxes are increasing. See warning of inadequate commercial tax revenue at Town Meeting:

https://youtu.be/MhdU_VDMaCQ?t=8689

With commerce now unsolicited and discouraged, jobs and internships, long a boon to residents, are gone. Even high school students could get jobs – e.g. at MB's former Brigham's ice cream manufacturing facility or as assistants in one of the Corridor's small artisan businesses.

From Massachusetts Avenue at Mirak auto dealership in Mill Brook Corridor one can view Theodore Schwamb Mill on one of the largest Industrially zoned lots on MB. Arlington's late John Mirak's dealership succeeded well at this site. Winchester Mirak heirs hoard land and now plan to use it as a cash cow by doing an end run around Industrial zoning to erect a six storey apartment building. They are doing this (realizing Manager's desire for residential density) by trying to force 40B development for residences in our Industrially zoned land which our Town Meeting-enacted zoning bylaws do not allow. Arlington cannot afford to lose Industrial land.

Select Board, ZBA, and Conservation Commission should strongly oppose this 40B project.

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