



## **Town of Arlington, MA Redevelopment Board**

### **Agenda & Meeting Notice February 28, 2022**

This meeting is being held remotely in accordance with the Governor's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20. Per Board Rules and Regulations, public comments will be accepted during the public comment periods designated on the agenda. Written comments may be provided by email to [jraitt@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:jraitt@town.arlington.ma.us) by February 28, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. The Board requests that correspondence that includes visual information should be provided by February 25, 2022 at 12:00 p.m.

The Arlington Redevelopment Board will meet Monday, February 28, 2022 at 7:30 PM in the  
**Join via Zoom at <https://town-arlington-ma-us.zoom.us/j/87005581929> , Meeting ID: 870 0558 1929. To call in, dial 1-646-876-9923, 870 0558 1929 then #.**

#### **1. MBTA Communities**

7:30 p.m. Review Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development Guidelines and Discussion

*Board will receive information from staff on the draft guidance and Board will discuss*

#### **2. Committee Updates**

8:30 p.m. Envision Arlington Standing Committee and Open Space Committee

*Board will receive updates on committee activities and plans from ARB designees to the Open Space Committee and Envision Arlington*

#### **3. Meeting Minutes (1/24/22 and 2/7/22)**

9:00 p.m. Board will review and vote to approve meeting minutes

#### **4. Open Forum**

9:05 p.m. *Except in unusual circumstances, any matter presented for consideration of the Board shall neither be acted upon, nor a decision made the night of the presentation. There is a three-minute time limit to present a concern or request.*

#### **5. Adjourn**

Estimated time of adjournment: 9:25 p.m.

**6. Correspondence Received**

D. Seltzer 02282022



## Town of Arlington, Massachusetts

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### MBTA Communities

#### Summary:

7:30 p.m. Review Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development Guidelines and Discussion

*Board will receive information from staff on the draft guidance and Board will discuss*

#### ATTACHMENTS:

	Type	File Name	Description
▢	Reference Material	MBTA_multifamily_Feb_2022_-_ARB.pdf	MBTA Communities

# MBTA COMMUNITIES

Zoning Requirements, Timelines, Eligibility



**Arlington, MA**

# MBTA COMMUNITIES

**1**

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Legislation

**2**

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Funding and  
compliance

**3**

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Draft Guidelines

**4**

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Timeline

**5**

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Possible ideas  
for compliance



To be eligible for funding from MassWorks, Local Capital Projects Fund, or Housing Choice Initiative, an MBTA Community shall have...

“at least one zoning district of reasonable size  
in which multi-family housing is permitted  
as of right.”

— ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND BILL (PARTNERSHIPS FOR GROWTH), JANUARY 2021

6 of 43

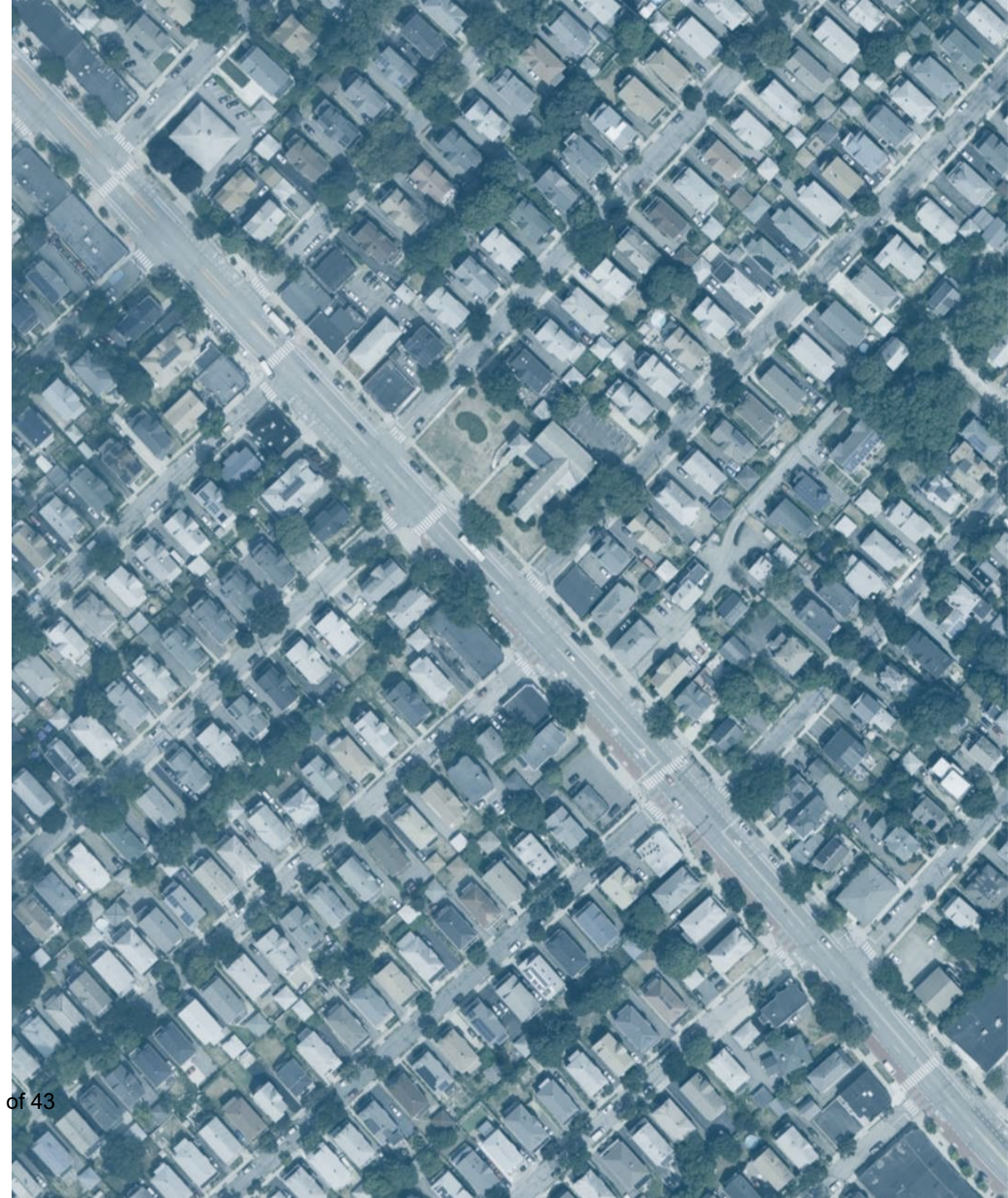


# Multi-Family Zoning Requirement

codified in Section 3A of MGL c. 40A

- At least one district *of reasonable size*
- Multifamily housing permitted as of right
- No age restrictions; suitable for families with children
- Minimum gross density of 15 units/acre
- Not more than ½ miles from a subway station or bus station\*

\* As applicable to Arlington



# MGL C. 40A SECTION 3A

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- Not more than ½ miles from a subway station or bus station\*

\* As applicable to Arlington

# DRAFT GUIDELINES

- At least 50 acres total
- Building with 3+ residential dwelling units
- No age restrictions or bedroom limits in zoning
- Capacity for 5,115 units\*\*
- At least ½ of the land area of the district is within ½ miles of the station

8 of 43\*\* This number is based on current housing units and community type; Arlington is categorized as a Rapid Transit Community; this number is 25% of total housing units



**By complying with MBTA  
Communities legislation,  
Arlington would remain  
eligible for funding from...**

**\$ MassWorks Infrastructure  
Program**

**\$ Housing Choice Initiative**

**\$ Local Capital Projects Fund**

# 2

## HOW COULD WE USE THIS FUNDING?

MassWorks, Housing Choice Initiative, or Local Capital Projects Fund

# 2

## How could Arlington use this funding?

MassWorks, Housing Choice Initiative, or Local Capital Projects Fund

Design and construction funding for public infrastructure (roads, utilities, biking and pedestrian facilities, and improvements to public properties

Community capital grants for infrastructure upgrades, updating Master Plan, zoning amendments/studies

# 2

## How could Arlington use this funding?

MassWorks, Housing Choice Initiative, or Local Capital Projects Fund

### In Last 5 Years

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\$0 Awarded

### In Near Future

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Applying for MassWorks funding for Mass Ave/Appleton project

MassWorks 2021 awards averaged \$1.1 M per project in 51 communities

May be eligible for Housing Choice Initiative Grants in 1-2 years

Not eligible for Local Capital Projects Fund

### In Outyears

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State may funnel more state funding through these programs like these that are tied to incentive-based standards



3

# DRAFT GUIDELINES

Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development  
released *DRAFT* Guidelines regarding the Multi-Family Zoning Requirement  
for MBTA Communities

**[www.mass.gov/mbtacomunities](http://www.mass.gov/mbtacomunities)**

# 3

## How does Arlington comply now with the *draft* guidelines?

### Suitable for children – no limits on:

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- ☒ Age
- ☒ Size of units
- ☒ Number of bedrooms
- ☒ Size of bedrooms
- ☒ Number of occupants

### As of right

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- ☒ At least 3 units on a parcel\*
- ☒ Without discretionary permits

\*Currently only allow two units per lot by right. Special permits are required for three-family structures even in the R3 zoning district.

### Reasonable Size

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- ☒ 50 acres
- ☒ Within ½ mile of MBTA stations
- ☒ At least 15 residential units/acre

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- ☒ 50 acres
- ☒ Within ½ mile of MBTA stations
- ☒ At least 15 residential units/acre
- ☒ Capacity for 5,115 residential units



4

# TIMELINE

to remain in compliance as a MBTA Community



# 4

## Timeline to remain in compliance

**May 2, 2022**

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Hold a briefing with the Select Board and submit information regarding current compliance

**March 31, 2023**

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Submit action plan of how Arlington intends to come into compliance to the state for approval

**December 31, 2023**

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Action plan for any zoning changes must be adopted

# 4

## Next Steps

- Please copy staff on any comments on draft guidelines – comments due by March 31st
- Consider attending Select Board meeting once scheduled in March
- Once DHCD Final Guidelines are issued, DPCD will return to ARB with an update and discussion on how to move forward (end of summer/ early fall 2022)

[mass.gov/mbtacomunities](https://mass.gov/mbtacomunities)

# 5

## IDEAS FOR COMPLIANCE

Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development released DRAFT Guidelines regarding the Multi-Family Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities

# 5

## Ideas for compliance with draft guidelines

### Reduce Development Subject to Special Permit

3 or more residential units

Structures along or immediately  
behind Mass Ave

Structures in R3 – R7 and some  
Business Districts

### Increase Dwelling Unit Flexibility

Create a very large 40R District (150 to  
300 acres)

Permit 2 accessory dwelling units in  
single-family zones



# Transit loci

— ½ mile radius





For discussion; maps are for illustrative purposes

# East Arlington

Approximately  
65-70 acre district,  
primarily within ½  
mile of Alewife  
Station

— ½ mile radius



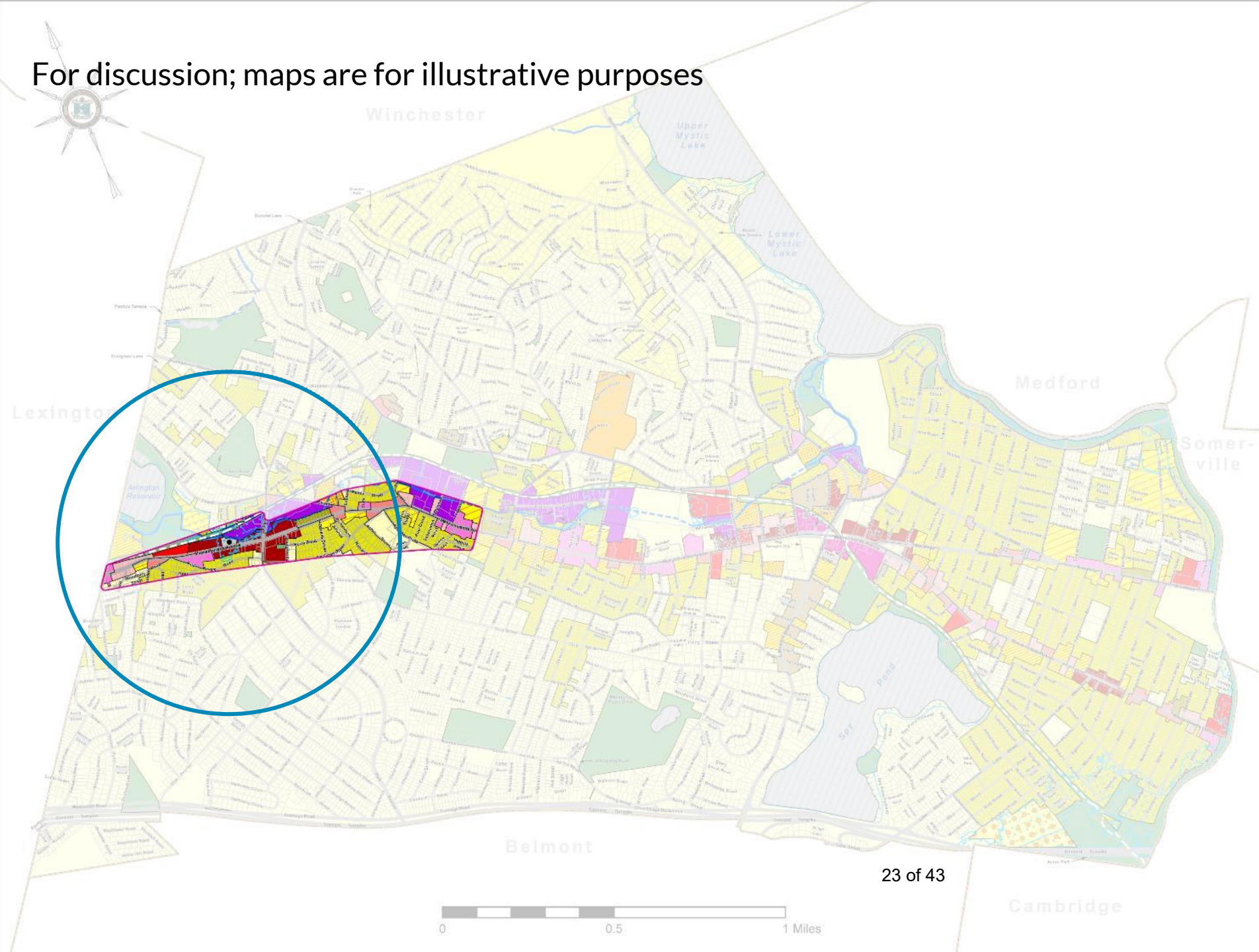


For discussion; maps are for illustrative purposes

# Arlington Heights

Approximately  
50-55 acre district,  
primarily within ½  
mile of Heights Bus  
Depot

— ½ mile radius





For discussion; maps are for illustrative purposes

## Business Districts

Three districts  
totaling roughly  
140-145 acres, one  
located in each  
business district

— ½ mile radius





For discussion; maps are for illustrative purposes

# Corridor overlay

Establishing an overlay a set distance from the Mass Ave corridor (1/10<sup>th</sup> and 2/10<sup>th</sup> mile distances shown). Total district size between 200 and 450 acres.

— 1/2 mile radius





# MBTA COMMUNITIES

Zoning Requirements, Timelines, Eligibility



**Arlington, MA**



## Town of Arlington, Massachusetts

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### Meeting Minutes (1/24/22 and 2/7/22)

#### Summary:

9:00 p.m. Board will review and vote to approve meeting minutes

#### ATTACHMENTS:

Type	File Name	Description
▣ Reference Material	Draft_ARB_Minutes_1-24-22.docx	Draft ARB Meeting Minutes 1/24/22
▣ Reference Material	Draft_ARB_Minutes._2-7-22.docx	Draft ARB Meeting Minutes 2/7/22

**Arlington Redevelopment Board**  
**Monday, January 24, 2022, 7:30 PM**  
**Meeting Conducted Remotely via Zoom**  
**Meeting Minutes**

This meeting was recorded by ACMi.

**PRESENT:** Rachel Zsemlery (Chair), Eugene Benson, Kin Lau, Melisa Tintocalis, Steve Revilak

**STAFF:** Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development and Kelly Lynema, Assistant Director

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The Chair called the meeting to order and notified all attending that the meeting is being recorded by ACMi.

The Chair explained that this meeting is being held remotely in accordance with the Governor's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20. This order from Governor Baker allows for meetings to be held remotely during this time to avoid public gatherings.

The Chair introduced the first agenda item, Organizational Meeting. The Chair said that she will take nominations for the 2022 Board Chair and Vice-Chair positions. Mr. Lau nominated Chair, Rachel Zsemlery, to continue as Chair in 2022, Mr. Benson seconded, Ms. Zsemlery accepted the nomination and the Board approved 5-0.

Mr. Benson nominated Mr. Lau to continue as Vice-Chair in 2022, Ms. Tintocalis seconded, Mr. Lau accepted the nomination and the Board approved 5-0.

The Chair introduced the second agenda item, Continued Public Hearing Docket #3665, 645 Massachusetts Avenue. Ms. Raitt gave an overview of her memo to the Board including the updates received from the applicant and outstanding items the Board requested. The Chair introduced Robert Annese, who is representing the applicant. Mr. Annese introduced Brooke Cabrera Chase Bank's Market Director of Real Estate, Jim Lalli, Project Architect, and the property owner, Richard Ramsey. Mr. Annese said that the applicant thinks that this is a good site for this bank. Mr. Annese said that Arlington has fewer banks than surrounding communities.

Mr. Lalli said that it is possible to have long term bike parking in the bank's lounge and will discuss more suitable long term parking options if necessary. Mr. Lalli said that site constraints including parking and the sidewalk location will not permit an ADA compliant entrance at the back of the building. The Mass. Ave. street ADA compliant parking spots will service the bank so there will not be many changes from the access used today.

Brooke Cabrera explained why Chase would like to be located in Arlington based on the town's demographics. Ms. Cabrera said that Chase's ATM does not count towards a bank and feels that Arlington is "under banked" since the number of banks in town is lower than surrounding communities. Ms. Cabrera said the location will be more of a casual advice center than a traditional bank branch. Ms. Cabrera said with fewer branches, Chase is choosing locations carefully and is looking to hire locally. Ms. Cabrera said that Chase Bank would offer financial stability for this site in Arlington.

Richard Ramsey said as the landlord for 645 Mass Ave. he did everything in his power to keep Not Your Average Joe's operating. Not Your Average Joe's decided that the location was under producing and decided to close. Mr. Ramsey said that he fears that more businesses will be forced to close so he continues to make concessions to help tenants and prevent vacant storefronts along Mass. Ave. Mr. Ramsey said that he has carried 645 Mass Ave. over the past two years with negligible rents while continuing to pay property taxes, expenses, and the mortgage. Mr. Ramsey said that he has never asked for assistance from the Town and is hopeful that his record of helping tenants will be viewed positively. Mr. Ramsey requested that the Board approve Chase's application so Mr. Ramsey's team can proceed with renovating the space for this

financially viable tenant. Mr. Annese said that this site does not have to be a restaurant; it needs to be a tenant that brings a viable return to the owner so we don't have more vacant retail spaces. There is no overabundance of banks in this town when compared to surrounding communities.

Mr. Lau asked Ms. Cabrera about the lobby floorplan including the living room area and tables. Ms. Cabrera said that there are booths for discussions that are not private, private conversations will take place in the offices. Mr. Lau said that the change to the windows and the addition of benches and planters in the front is a nice change. Mr. Lau said that he does not think the bike rack shown in the plans is the type suggested by the Town so those might have to be changed. Mr. Lau said he supports this project that Arlington does not have too many banks, and this area adds to a good mixture of banks and restaurants in the center.

Mr. Benson asked to confirm that the indoor and outdoor racks are consistent with the Town's guidance. Ms. Raitt confirmed that both of the types of racks are compliant and additional parking was included. Mr. Benson asked if there might be a better designated location for indoor bike parking. Mr. Benson asked Ms. Cabrera how many people this location would employ. Ms. Cabrera said that there would be five to six full time employees and other private bankers that float between locations. Mr. Benson asked about the disparity between the square footage of Not Your Average Joe's and the Chase Bank's plans for the site. Mr. Ramsey confirmed that the square footage of the unit is 3,800 square feet, the old measurement was inaccurate. Mr. Benson said that the concern was that there were too many banks in this area of Mass. Ave., not the entire town.

Mr. Benson asked why Chase Bank would like to be in Arlington Center. Mr. Benson said the civic block is across the street from 645 Mass. Ave. The foot traffic is cut down on the civic block and that puts a burden on the stores and properties like 645 Mass Ave. Mr. Benson said that there might be better locations in Arlington for this bank. Ms. Cabrera said that as part of the bank's expansion a lot of thought is put into where the branches should be located and Chase wanted to be in a location with the proximity to Whole Foods, CVS, and Stop and Shop. Mr. Annese said that this is a B5 business district where there might a centralization of a certain type of business. There are plenty of restaurants in Arlington Center. Mr. Annese said that maybe it is time to give consideration to the owner of the property. Mr. Benson asked Mr. Lalli why a parking space in the rear could not be removed to allow an ADA accessible entrance in the back of the building. Mr. Lalli said that due to the ramp incline it may flow outside of the property line and onto the sidewalk. Mr. Lalli said that an ADA space and ramp would require the removal of three parking spaces.

Ms. Tintocalis said her concern is looking at the use for this property. Leaving the space empty is sad but the adverse impacts outweigh the benefits in this case because of the hours of operation and limited social interaction that are typical of banks. Ms. Tintocalis said she does not think the space needs to be a restaurant but the use should match the goals for Arlington Center articulated in the Master Plan. Ms. Tintocalis asked Ms. Cabrera about the metrics Chase Bank used to determine that this location is a high traffic area. Ms. Cabrera said that the data is based on average daily traffic volume on a given corridor. Ms. Tintocalis asked if the bank looked at foot traffic, Ms. Cabrera confirmed the data is only based on vehicular traffic. Ms. Tintocalis said she is concerned that that foot traffic was not considered. Ms. Tintocalis asked if the rent changes based on tenants. Mr. Annese said that Not Your Average Joe's was paying 6% of their rent. Ms. Tintocalis said that the recent challenges have hit the hospitality industry very hard so this is a unique time. Mr. Ramsey said that tenants in another location had struggles prior to the last two years. Mr. Ramsey said that if we have too many vacant retail units it creates a downward spiral in this town. Mr. Ramsey said if Not Your Average Joe's were still viable today, they would have remained at 645 Mass. Ave.



The Chair opened the floor to public comment.

Julie Rioux said Chase may not be happy to hear that the neighborhood is a low to moderate income neighborhood. As much as Ms. Cabrera expressed that Chase would like to be welcoming and embrace the community, the statements Ms. Cabrera made about Arlington's wealth and income of its citizens does not make us feel that Chase will be welcoming. Ms. Rioux is concerned about comments that seem to be seeking praise for providing basic customer service in lower to moderate income communities. Ms. Rioux said that she is troubled by the presence of a company that seems to have thinly veiled contempt for some of us being located in central Arlington.

Ms. Cabrera said that she was sorry she did not describe the community programs eloquently enough and said that other community programs go above and beyond what would be provided in Arlington.

Jonathan Nyberg said it is important the Arlington that we have viable tenants. If we have a banking center in the center of Arlington it is great. We need to look at the big picture. By having a bank there is extra parking available at night for all of the Center restaurants.

Jo Anne Preston asked if products and services will be provided for Winslow Towers' senior residents, who are an important part of the community and located just next door.

James Fleming said it is frustrating to hear that Arlington is "over banked". We don't get to choose who comes into our community. If we are having trouble attracting restaurants it sounds like a community problem, not a landlord trying to fill a vacant space problem.

The Chair stated that she did not hear any concerns about the proposed aesthetics or configuration for this proposal, the only concerns are about the use. The Chair said she is in favor of the proposal; there are no metrics for the right numbers of banks or restaurants. A responsive potential national tenant that will invest in the property, who has been responsive to the Board's requests, is indeed favorable to a vacant storefront. The Chair reminded the Board that they will need a unanimous vote this evening since there were only four Board members when this application was first presented.

Mr. Benson said that although there are no precise metrics the bylaw would allow the Board to deny a permit if the Board finds that the requested use is detrimental to the character to the neighborhood and is not desirable for public convenience or welfare. Mr. Benson said the question of excessive use in this neighborhood is that he hoped that the bank would have chosen to go to Arlington Heights or East Arlington instead. Mr. Benson reviewed the banks in surrounding towns and found that other communities have more banks in a single area. Mr. Benson said he will not oppose the Special Permit.

Mr. Lau said he agrees with Mr. Fleming's statement and having an empty storefront is not the way to go. Mr. Lau said a bank is not detrimental to the area and this location is more convenient than the Heights. Mr. Lau said he is very much in favor.

Ms. Tintocalis said she agrees that a viable tenant is important but she has not seen where the community has desired a bank in this environment. The lack of activation and vitality due to this use is a concern and the walkability in the area has not been considered.

The Chair pointed out that there are dead times with lack of walkability and at some point of the day for any use and asked for Ms. Tintocalis to consider the range of activation and uses that different businesses can bring.

Mr. Lau pointed out that the entirety of Mass. Ave. is not walkable, that there are nodes that develop that way. We are trying to encourage walkability but Arlington is not quite there yet, and that is part of the quaintness that we like.

Ms. Tintocalis said that she is confident that Mr. Ramsey and Arlington will find a tenant that is not a bank. In terms of desirability this property owner will find another tenant. Ms. Tintocalis said she would like to stay committed to the Master Plan and the goals for the whole community.

Mr. Ramsey said that he is helping other tenants survive. Mr. Ramsey said that the bank will not be open until November or December 2022. Mr. Ramsey said in a perfect world we would be able to pick and choose but things are getting worse, and not just in Arlington Center. Mr. Ramsey said that the other tenants in the area need the people coming to the bank.

Mr. Benson said that he respects Ms. Tintocalis' opinion, but Mr. Benson feels that the real issue is if one more bank will tip the area, then it will not work anymore. Mr. Benson said that this bank would not tip the area to where it would be in trouble.

Mr. Annese asked if he could provide Ms. Tintocalis with any information that could have Ms. Tintocalis consider a change. Ms. Tintocalis said it would have to be a revised proposal regarding the storefront. Once the bank opens it probably will be in use for 20 years, Ms. Tintocalis said she had reached out to people in her district and the feedback has not embraced Arlington Center as a banking center. If there is a possibility for the bank to have a smaller footprint, Ms. Tintocalis would consider that proposal.

Mr. Ramsey asked if he, Mr. Annese, and Ms. Cabrera should come back with a modified proposal. Ms. Raitt said she could discuss a revised proposal in the future with Mr. Annese, which would be a different proposal and would need to be refiled. Mr. Annese asked if the applicant would have to submit a new proposal with modifications to the square footage submitted with the current proposal. Ms. Raitt said that is correct, that would be a repetitive petition. Mr. Annese suggested that the Board might consider allowing Mr. Annese to come back to provide information to meet Ms. Tintocalis' concerns. Ms. Raitt said that she has given her opinion regarding the best course of action. Mr. Annese asked that this hearing be continued. Mr. Lau said that if the space is reduced to less than 2,000 square feet than that would be as of right and the Board would not have a say in that case.

Ms. Tintocalis moved to continue the hearing for Docket 3665, Mr. Lau seconded, Vote of 3-1-1. (Mr. Revilak abstained as he was not appointed at the time this hearing began). Since the above motion failed the Chair called for a vote on Docket #3665. Mr. Benson moved to approve Docket #3665 with the stipulation that the indoor bicycle parking is confirmed as compliant by the Department, Mr. Lau seconded, Denial 3-1-1. (Ms. Tintocalis opposed and Mr. Revilak abstained as he was not appointed at the time this hearing began).

The Chair introduced the second agenda item, the review and adoption of the Housing Production Plan (HPP). Ms. Raitt said that the Housing Production Plan is a tool to create housing and provides a great analysis of local market trends and needs. The purpose of the plan is intended to address unmet housing needs, plan to achieve the 10% year-round housing production goal for 40B, and a tool to potentially prevent unwanted 40B development by having an updated plan. Ms. Raitt said that the plan has been amended with edits from the Board and the Housing Authority. Ms. Raitt said that if the Board adopts the plan tonight the next step is for the Select Board to adopt the plan and then the plan will be submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development for approval.

Mr. Lau asked about the steps after the plan is approved. Ms. Raitt said that each action item in the plan would have to be followed up on individually, including the suggestions in the Housing Plan for zoning changes.

Ms. Tintocalis said she sees the Housing Production Plan as a guidebook that will provide the community with thoughtful goals for affordable housing.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment.

John Worden said that if this plan were adopted it would destroy this town as we know it. Some parts of the plan are inappropriate and ridiculous, for example conducting a racial impact study and whether Arlington's zoning has an impact on groups protected by the Fair Housing Act. Mr. Worden said that the only impediments people of color face when purchasing a home in Arlington is the price, zoning is not keeping these people out of Arlington. Mr. Worden said his neighbors who are people of color did not have any trouble buying homes in Arlington. The real issue is keeping instead of encouraging the destruction of small single-family houses.

Patricia Worden said that this draft plan provides a blueprint to enable enrichment of developers and disregards those of very low income, the environment, our school system, and infrastructure. It is not in compliance with the Master Plan which specifies that we need only affordable housing and senior housing. This plan provides housing only for the wealthy not moderate to low income families. The Housing Production Plan fails to justify the requirements for the plan itself. The plan is full of inaccuracies and inconsistencies that lack adequate research. This is just a plan; it does not have to be enacted. The portion of the plan that includes adoption of zoning to comply with the MBTA communities law should be removed. East Arlington to Hardy School is already in compliance with the law, the density in that area is already greater than 16 units per acre and the law only requires 15 units per acre. The Planning Department wanted to rezone the area to allow for dense apartments and replacing business and restaurants in the area.

Stephen Blagden, who lives in California, said the zoning map is inadequate in detail to propose housing bylaw changes. The Housing Plan should be postponed until the zoning map is corrected and which may eliminate the need for this plan. This should be an objective presentation of data, unless the Town specified a document of this type Mr. Blagden suggest a rewrite maintaining objectivity. The most ominous proposal is eliminating single-family zoning. Families will choose other towns to live in; these negative effects should be greatly weighed. Affordable is elusive, economic decline can reduce prices but can also reduce approved buyers, lower prices would lower everyone's property values. Tax subsidies raise living costs for everyone else displacing buyers at edge of affordability. East Arlington is proposed for a pilot lifting of the overnight parking ban at the loss of quality of life.

Carl Wagner Edgehill Road said we should be looking at what we are doing. If it is a radical change who else has done it and what was the outcome. Mr. Wagner said that people move to Arlington expecting it to be a nice town of housing diversity, Arlington is

60% plus multifamily. Arlington is the first community, after the urban communities, where people can have a little bit of space that is less expensive than surrounding towns, except for Medford. The Housing Production Plan says we should get rid of single-family zoning to create housing choice, but for whom. It is for higher income people, the plan will not give affordability. We talk about being anti-racist and inclusive people on fixed and lower incomes how can we offer affordable units when creating higher priced units. The Housing Production Plan should meet the laudable goals of the Master Plan. This plan has not been approved by any democracy in Arlington it is simply a work by a consultant.



Annie LaCourt said she is in support of the Housing Production Plan. It has the right goals and is applying the right strategies. She loves that kids can go to school with kids from families from many economic backgrounds. Diversity in Arlington takes including more housing strategies and providing housing in the “missing middle”. We can’t control the market or stop developers from knocking down homes and creating “McMansions” but we can create different types of housing at different price points.

Jo Anne Preston said she was surprised that the plan did not mention the Arlington Housing Authority. Ms. Preston said that she submitted 10 pages of suggestions, references, and additions, but none of Ms. Preston’s suggestions were incorporated. Ms. Preston said that she received requests for more information but that information is not in the draft. Tenants in the AHA units should be included when calculating affordable units. Ms. Preston said that the AHA already has a house for individuals with disabilities. Ms. Preston recommends that the approval of the Housing Plan is delayed until the additions from the AHA are included.

Ms. Raitt said that she provided the Board a draft that included edits that addressed Ms. Preston’s suggestions so if the plan is adopted this evening, then it would be approved as amended to include those additions.

Karen Kelleher said that she is on the Housing Plan Implementation Committee and Chair of Affordable Housing Trust Fund, she would like to draw attention to the framework for the Housing Production Plan. There is are tremendous amounts of demographics and economic data that points out the challenges we have in creating affordable housing, the inventory limits we have, and the path forward for creating affordable housing. The plan identifies three key areas where Arlington is having challenges: we have little affordable for low- to moderate-income households so our housing stock does not meet the needs of the people who live here; there is little racial, ethnic, and class diversity in Arlington; and there is a lack of adequate housing choices to support diverse housing needs. Arlington’s affordable housing production and inventory is not keeping pace with communities that we compare ourselves to. We are not doing our share to carry our weight in the region. There are three strategies in the plan: funding to make housing affordable to those with low- or moderate-incomes, regulatory reform which involves change to make it possible to create affordable housing, and leadership. The Board will take on the leadership challenge posed by the plan.

Don Seltzer said he has written to the Board with his concerns about how this plan overstated the number of single-family homes in Arlington, only 39% is single-family housing. It is not correct that more than 60% of our land can only be used for single-family homes when R1 zoning also includes Town buildings, the library, schools, and cemeteries. Single-family homes are located in the R2 district which can be torn down and two-family homes are created by right. Mr. Seltzer said that he has been tracking the teardowns in the R2 districts for the last two years and not one of the developers has built affordable housing, all of the two-family units built to replace the torn down single-family home are luxury units. Mr. Seltzer asked the Select Board to analyze the impact to infrastructure, particularly school enrollment. The State requires that this analysis be part of a housing plan. Mr. Seltzer challenges this plan’s reliance on the 2015 McKibbin forecast and the incorrect findings regarding Arlington’s total population growth. The rezoning of R1 and R0 districts has nothing to do with affordable housing and is beyond the scope of what the state asks for in a housing plan.

The Chair asked Ms. Lynema to respond to some of the questions about the quoted statistics from the plan. Ms. Lynema said that the single-family home statistics in the plan are from the 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) figures and Ms. Lynema said she thinks Mr. Seltzer may have used the Town Assessor’s database to find the statistics he quoted. Ms. Lynema said that the HPP report states that single-family homes make up 44% of Arlington’s housing stock. ACS 2019 figures show that Arlington has 38.4% single-family homes that are detached and the remaining 5.6% of single-family homes are attached. The 60% figure should be considered within the context, the plan says that Town now has 19

residential and non-residential zoning districts, often with complicated zoning regulations, over 60% of the town falls within its lowest density residential districts, R0 and R1. The only economic use allowed is a single-family home. Ms. Lynema clarified that economic use in this case means what can be built by right on that land. Using the Assessor's database shows that of Arlington's 2,372 acres of land, 1,673 acres of that land are in R0 and R1 districts, so upwards of 75% of current land area is dedicated to single-family housing.

Christian Klein said that the Housing Production Plan is a very important document. A HPP allows the Zoning Board of Appeals to have some level of control over the comprehensive permitting process. The recommendations in the plan will still need to be approved through Town Meeting. This is a guide for where Arlington needs to be. We need affordable housing and this is a complicated issue. Mr. Klein said that he is glad that the Board is taking this on. Mr. Klein said that his one wish is that we could preserve two-family homes as two-family and not as split condos. Mr. Klein said he owns a two-family and rents the second unit. Two-family homes open a level of opportunity for people.

Wynelle Evans said she supports all three warrant articles that the Board is considering for Town Meeting this year. Ms. Evans said she is particularly interested in developing Russell Common. However the HPP calls for creating much denser neighborhoods and allows for taller multi-unit buildings at market rates. There is no statistical back up to show how or if these changes will control prices. These are enormous changes to implement without solid proof that they will work. As the Master Plan notes Arlington has done a good job at creating and maintaining housing choice with diverse housing stock. Cambridge and Somerville did not see a leveling or drop in prices after the development in those cities that increased density. Research shows the upward pressure that increased density has on market rate prices and disappointing results from density bonuses. The urban displacement project at Berkley found that subsidized housing has doubled the impact of market rate development on affordability. The effectiveness of market rate housing in mitigating displacement diminishes as more market rate housing is built. Ms. Evans said she hopes that we focus on the HPP recommendations to create and enhance subsidies for affordable housing specifically, and allow the suggestions that allow up zoning and density bonuses to fade.

Jonathan Nyberg said he agrees with Annie LaCourt's statement. In Arlington there is a limited supply of land so we have to look at how we are going to use the land if we are to develop more housing. I hope our fear of change doesn't cripple our ability to move forward as a community.

Jennifer Susse said that she loves the idea of trying to do something with Russell Common. Any good HPP has to be clear-eyed about our current trends and we are currently losing diversity. The things that developers build is bigger two-family housing and to change that means we should change zoning. We can slowly make some tweaks to zoning to preserve what we love about Arlington and have development that aligns with our values.

Eileen Cahill said she is a Civil Engineer and would like to know how Arlington's current failing infrastructure would be able to handle the increased demand on the systems, like the sewer and water for example. There is a lot of traffic on small roads that were not designed for the volume with two cars per house. There is stress on the school system and we want to make sure we are thinking about that.

The Chair closed the floor to public comment and turned the meeting back to the Board.

Mr. Benson said he thinks the plan is necessary for the town and implementation will require many steps, including approval from Town Meeting. It is a plan that we can go forward with and will make the town proud.

Mr. Revilak said the issues are about affordability and quantity. Arlington has under built for the last two decades which exacerbates the quantity situation. Mr. Revilak mentioned Jordan Weinstein's comment that was submitted to the Board referred to single-family homes in the R2 district were taken down to create condos. Mr. Revilak said in the beginning of 2021 the median sale price in Arlington was \$960,000.00, Mr. Revilak said he has been tracking real estate sales. Of the 25 converted two families which are now condos, 10 went for above the median sale price and 15 actually went for below the median price. Mr. Revilak said seeing these sale prices made him want to allow the change zoning to two-family by right even more than he wanted to before.

Ms. Tintocalis said the Housing Production Plan gives us a lot of strategies to use to move forward in the process.

Mr. Revilak moved to adopt the amended Housing Production Plan, Mr. Benson seconded, approved 5-0.

The Chair introduced the fourth agenda item, Zoning Warrant Articles for 2022 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Raitt gave an overview of the draft Warrant Articles for Town Meeting. The Chair asked about the specification to require the installation of solar energy systems. Mr. Benson said that the specification was patterned after a Watertown ordinance that requires solar on some roofs for new buildings or major renovations, with a few exemptions. Mr. Benson said a member of the Clean Energy Future Committee spoke to someone in Watertown about how the ordinance is working.

The Chair introduced Christian Klein who reviewed potential articles which were also discussed by the Zoning Bylaw Working Group, including to: clarify the definition of a half story; define porches to clarify that porches are an open structure; address yard encroachment; clarify the calculation of the applicable area and to include for large additions within the foundation; and amend unsafe structures section.

Mr. Benson said that it may take a little more time to finalize the wording for the main motion for some of the ZBA draft warrant articles.

The Chair suggested amending the article language to include terms for enclosed and unenclosed porches. The Chair asked if the Board would agree to work with the ZBA to finalize the wording for the ZBA's proposed warrant articles.

Mr. Lau moved to support filing the warrant articles, as amended, with the addition of the warrant articles proposed by Christain Klein, Ms. Tintocalis seconded, approved 5-0.

The Chair introduced the fifth agenda item, Committee Updates. The Chair asked to share time sensitive items tonight and review any other items during the next meeting. Ms. Raitt said that there are multiple presentations coming up this week and next week some presentations to the CPA Committee on four applications.

The Chair introduced the sixth agenda item, Central School (Community Center) renovation update/ completion. Ms. Raitt said that the renovation is winding down and Town offices should be able to move to their permanent spaces in the building as of early March. Ms. Raitt offered to take members of the Board on a tour of the space.

The Chair introduced the seventh agenda item, Meeting Minutes (12/16/21, 12/20/21, and 1/3/22).

Mr. Benson moved to approve the 12/16/2021 minutes as amended, Mr. Lau seconded, approved 5-0.

Mr. Lau moved to approve the 12/20/2021 minutes as amended, Mr. Benson seconded, approved 5-0.

The 1/3/2022 minutes will be reviewed during the next meeting on 2/7/22.

The Chair opened the floor for the Open Forum portion of the meeting.

Patricia Worden said she would like to list some false citations about the Housing Plan Implementation Committee (HPIC)

that were made in the strategy portion of the Housing Production Plan. The plan to allow two-family homes in all residential districts as of right in Arlington was not voted on by the HPIC. Leadership responsibility for the HPIC, we (the HPIC) never voted to approve that. To update the regulations of the R3 and R4 districts to allow three family dwellings and townhomes as of right, HPIC never voted to accept this. To allow redevelopment of preexisting nonconforming residential usage in the industrial zone or reuse of industrial district site, the HPIC never voted to advocate for that. To increase the amount of land zoned for multifamily development and organize existing multifamily district, the HPIC made no decision to approve or endorse this strategy.

Jennifer Susse said that she worked with the School Committee for three years and spent many years looking at McKibbin numbers. There are only 16 more students than the projections showed. There were slightly fewer at the high school level and slightly more in the elementary school. The projections show that 300+ students will be leaving elementary schools. Elementary schools need to add additional classrooms when students are added, high schools have more flexibility. According to every analysis Ms. Susse said she has seen, Arlington should not have to add additional class rooms due to any of the common sense housing production suggestions.

With no other members of the public in queue to speak the Chair closed the open forum portion of the meeting.

Mr. Lau moved to adjourn, Mr. Benson seconded, approved 5-0.  
Meeting adjourned.

**Arlington Redevelopment Board**  
**Monday, January 7, 2022, 7:30 PM**  
**Meeting Conducted Remotely via Zoom**  
**Meeting Minutes**

This meeting was recorded by ACMi.

**PRESENT:** Rachel Zsembery (Chair), Eugene Benson, Kin Lau, Melisa Tintocalis, Steve Revilak

**STAFF:** Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development and Kelly Lynema, Assistant Director

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The Chair called the meeting to order and notified all attending that the meeting is being recorded by ACMi.

The Chair explained that this meeting is being held remotely in accordance with the Governor's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20. This order from Governor Baker allows for meetings to be held remotely during this time to avoid public gatherings.

The Chair introduced the first agenda item, Zoning Warrant Article Public Hearing schedule for 2022 Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Raitt reviewed the draft legal notice for the Zoning Warrant Article Public Hearings which includes the schedule for the Public Hearings. The first night will be March 7<sup>th</sup> to review three of the first articles. The next evening, on March 14<sup>th</sup> administrative amendments and James Fleming's articles will be reviewed. On March 21<sup>st</sup>, two citizens' petitions will be reviewed along with the petitions initially submitted by Christian Klein. During the public hearing on March 28<sup>th</sup>, the last three articles will be reviewed. On April 4, 2022 the Board will deliberate and may vote on the proposed amendments. Ms. Raitt said that a guide will be published for easy review of warrant articles and amendments online. The guide will be published beginning on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

The Chair asked the Board if there were any articles that the Board would like to have feedback from the Select Board as was done the previous year. Mr. Lau said that the Board would like to request support from the Select Board and Zoning Board of Appeals with the approved articles. Mr. Lau asked about additional information to review. Ms. Raitt said that the petitioners are in the process of providing additional information and the deadline to receive materials is one week before the scheduled hearing. The Chair said that the Department will provide an overview of each proposed article for the Board to review before each public hearing. Mr. Benson agreed that the Board would like to receive the proposed article details as soon as possible for review. Ms. Raitt said that she, the Town Manager, the Chair, Town Counsel, and the Select Board Chair, Steve DeCoursey would meet to discuss the proposed articles and decide which articles should receive feedback. The meeting would then be summarized in a memo for the respective Board.

Mr. Benson said that he would like the articles regarding two-family construction allowed by right in the R0 and R1 residential zones, enhanced business districts, solar energy systems, and increasing the floor to area ratio (FAR) in Business Districts to be reviewed by the Select Board. Mr. Benson said that he does not understand the article regarding appeals so it needs to be figured out if the Select Board should be involved. The Chair asked if Mr. Benson would like to receive feedback from the Zoning Board of appeals and Mr. Benson suggested checking in with Christian Klein first.

Ms. Tintocalis asked if discussing zoning articles with other boards is a typical practice. The Chair said that the Board has met with the Select Board in different ways which has identified how interconnected the articles related to Town or Zoning Bylaw are. So the Board has reached out regarding a few articles to take the temperature of both Boards and understand the perspectives related to the expertise and experience of each board.

Mr. Revilak said he would like the Select Board to review two proposed articles, the two-family by right and the appeals article. Mr. Revilak would like to appeals article reviewed because it seems to have both a Human Resources and a cost

component, the Town Manager may also like to weigh in. Mr. Revilak said that the Select Board has interest in the Town's commercial vitality so the Select Board may also find it worthwhile to review the proposed article to expand the business district.

The Chair said that during the upcoming meeting the Board should select which of the Select Board's articles to review and offer support.

Mr. Benson asked for clarification about the Select Board's role in these reviews. The Chair confirmed that the Select Board will not vote on the Board's proposed warrant articles; instead the Select Board will provide review.

Mr. Benson moved to approve the Public Hearing Schedule for 2022 annual Town Meeting as submitted, Mr. Lau seconded, Approved 5-0.

The Chair introduced the second agenda item, Committee Updates. Mr. Lau said that the Community Preservation Act Committee reviewed 13 submitted projects and will meet next month to finalize which of the projects will be fully funded and/or scheduled for next year. Mr. Lau said that all of the proposed projects are good projects for the town and the projects fall into the three following categories: Community Housing, Open Space and Recreation, and Historic Preservation.

Mr. Benson said that the Zoning Bylaw Working Group met last week to review proposed warrant articles. Pam Heidell, from the Conservation Commission, reviewed her paper regarding Zoning for Resilience. Ms. Heidell's paper includes suggestions for the town regarding making changes in the future to account for additional flooding due to climate disruption. Mr. Benson said that there might be a proposal within a year to modify the flood zones in town.

Ms. Raitt notified Ms. Tintocalis that the Master Plan Implementation Committee has not met since last year and the next meeting is scheduled for February 17th.

Mr. Revilak said he will be able to provide updates for two working groups. The first is the Zoning Bylaw Working Group; Mr. Revilak said that a challenge with the flood plain updates is to determine which flood model to use. Ms. Heidell's memo is a good summary of what has been done in other communities and what Arlington could consider doing in the future. Mr. Revilak also attends the Housing Plan Implementation Committee which endorsed the Housing Production Plan by a vote of 3 to 1.

The Chair attends the Economic Recovery Task Force meetings where they have been discussing how to streamline processes for businesses, including opening a new business in town. Ms. Raitt said that this issue was high on the list of projects discussed at an all Board meeting. Updates to the current processes will cost money and will require project management to start the process. The Chair's second committee update was for the Arlington Heights' Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Committee which had a walk through the district to identify current issues to focus on. It was determined that those issues are signage, improvements for bike parking, and connections to the bike path. The most active of the Chair's committees is the Remote Participation Study Group, which is exploring how the Town will approach hybrid meetings going forward. The draft report to Town Meeting which suggests a pilot program to launch hybrid meetings is being presented to the Select Board.

Mr. Lau said that the Marijuana Study Group had their last meeting and reviewed the last potential site for a marijuana retail location in town based upon the maximum number set in the Zoning Bylaw. Ms. Raitt said that the Marijuana Study Group will be inactive until there are any additional reviews or to provide additional information to the Select Board regarding Host Community Agreement (HCA) reviews. The company, Calyx Peak, was granted the last HCA and still needs to

complete state regulatory and licensing processes and Board of Health review. Calyx Peak is expected to come before the Board for a Special Permit in June or July.

Mr. Revilak said that he is thrilled to hear that there is an effort to streamline the permitting process.

The Chair asked Ms. Raitt if the Open Space Committee and Envision Arlington could be invited to an upcoming meeting to provide updates for the Board. Ms. Raitt said it is important to get an update from the Open Space Committee because that committee is working to complete the Open Space Recreation Plan, which the Board will provide feedback and may want to endorse the plan. Ms. Lynema said that the target completion date for the Open Space and Recreation Plan is in May.

The Chair introduced the third agenda item, Meeting Minutes (1/3/22).

Mr. Benson approved the 1/3/22 meeting minutes as amended, Mr. Lau seconded, approved 5-0.

The Chair introduced the last agenda item, Open Forum, and opened the floor to public comment.

Don Seltzer said as we being to discuss Warrant Articles it is important to work with a common understanding of the basic facts regarding Arlington's diversity in our housing. Arlington has 20,461 housing units and 39% are single family and 61% are two family or more. Mr. Seltzer said Barrett Consulting miscounted more than 1,000 townhouses and duplexes, classifying them as single-family homes. Single-family homes in R0 and R1 comprise 1,240 acres which is only 38% of Arlington's land area. A significant portion of land in R0 and R1 districts have other uses such as schools, playground, churches, cemeteries, and municipal buildings, ultimately there are more than 600 multifamily homes in these districts. Arlington has another 645 single family homes in the R2 districts that can already be rebuilt as two families by right. This gives us insight into what would be built if we rezone our single family districts. The Board was provided recent sales data for those homes that have been purchased, torn down, and replaced with condo duplexes. Mr. Seltzer said that it shows which income group is being served by this development and if any affordable housing is being built.

Mr. Benson moved to adjourn, Mr. Lau seconded, approved 5-0.

Meeting adjourned.



## Town of Arlington, Massachusetts

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### Correspondence Received

#### Summary:

D. Seltzer 02282022

#### ATTACHMENTS:

	Type	File Name	Description
▢	Reference Material	Correspondence_from_D._Seltzer_received_02282022.pdf	D. Seltzer 02282022



From: Don Seltzer <timoneer@gmail.com>  
To: Eugene Benson <EBenson@town.arlington.ma.us>, "KLau@town.arlington.ma.us" <KLau@town.arlington.ma.us>, "MTintocalis@town.arlington.ma.us" <MTintocalis@town.arlington.ma.us>, Rachel Zsembery <rzsembery@town.arlington.ma.us>, Stephen Revilak <srevilak@town.arlington.ma.us>  
Cc: Jenny Raitt <jrait@town.arlington.ma.us>  
Date: Mon, 28 Feb 2022 15:43:50 -0500  
Subject: MBTA District data

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For the Board's consideration during this evening's discussion of the MBTA district I offer the attached map, which superimposes the half mile radius district on a map of the currently defined FEMA 100 year flood plain and wetlands. Nearly all of the District is located southwest of Mass Ave, with only a small section of about 7.5 acres to the northeast. About half of that smaller section is a B2A Major Business district.

I have analyzed the larger contiguous portion of the proposed district in detail and can provide the Board with the following summary facts:

There are 656 developable lots, comprising 61.9 acres.

Average lot size is 4113 square feet. It is worth noting that more than 90% of the homes in this neighborhood are on undersized, nonconforming lots.

There are currently 1062 housing units on these lots.  
84% are in 2 family/duplex homes.

Housing density is 17.15 units per acre, exceeding the stated goal of the law. However, the DHCD has gone beyond the wording of the law by adding an additional condition that Arlington, because of its current housing density, must create a zoning district with the potential to build 5115 units by right. To accommodate the entire number within the half mile district would imply a potential density of 82.6 units per acre.

The DHCD guidelines also go beyond the wording of the law to allow some of the housing to be located elsewhere, but at least half of the units (2558) must be within the half mile radius of Alewife Station.

This would require rezoning of this neighborhood to allow a density of at least 41.3 units per acre.

This cannot be done by simply allowing 3 family units by right. There are only 656 lots. It would be necessary to allow at least four unit apartment buildings on every lot, by right, to reach the minimum 2558 units.

Looking at it another way, new zoning would be required to allow 1 housing unit for every 1000 sf of lot.

I would be glad to provide a more detailed breakdown of the data and answer the Board's questions at this evening's discussion.

Don Seltzer



