



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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February 2008

VISION 2020 STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 12, 2008 MEETING

In attendance: Raquel Boudreau, Andrew Fischer, Bruce Fitzsimmons, Joey Glushko, Clare Gordon, Jane Howard, Elizabeth Karpati, Josh Lobel.

- The **minutes** of the January meeting were approved as presented.
 - Elizabeth Karpati has been approved by the Selectmen as the official Environment Task Group **representative** to the Standing Committee.
 - **Candidates' Night** will be held on March 27 before the April 4 Town election,
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- **Census Survey:** 1290 returns received to date, some have been scanned. Many are incomplete, some have to be rewritten for scanning. More volunteers for affixing bar code labels are needed.
 - **Warrant articles:** There is a hearing on home rule approval for the waterbodies article at the State House on February 20 at 11 a.m. The Fin Com will have a hearing on appropriations for it in March [8:30 pm on 3/10]. It held a hearing on the Fiscal Resources articles and voted "No Action" on the article requiring reports on Town services to nonprofits.
 - **Vision 2020 website:** Joey wants to make it "livelier." Clare recommended an e-mail to all task groups listing what their website or web page should include, e.g. the Town goal, current projects and coming events, and contact information. Joey will talk to Leslie Mayer, Communications chair, about this. Anything to be put directly on the Vision 2020 website should be given to Joey.
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- **Redevelopment Board** (Bruce Fitzsimmons): The ARB did a survey and visioning last year on how Arlington should grow, e.g. keeping open space vs. adding affordable housing. It is now focusing on four things: parking; signage; a commercial revitalization initiative; and improving Mass. Ave.
 - Parking: sharing spaces by entities with different hours, as an office by day and a restaurant in the evening; allowing seasonal outdoor tables without requiring additional parking.
 - Signage: permits now issued by building inspector, should also require approval of Planning Director. There is a warrant article for permitting neon and projecting signs with prior approval by ARB.
 - A project is under way to improve storefront design, using CDBG funds and involving architects chosen by the Town.
 - Mass. Ave. improvements will be done in three phases: Cambridge to Pond Lane, then to Mill Street, then to Arlington Heights; may include redesign of Broadway plaza.
 - **Symmes** news: Hospital demolition is nearly complete, blasting to follow. Meetings with neighborhood group are ongoing. Plans include two kinds of affordable housing, one for only 30 years; ARB is trying to turn it into permanently affordable housing.
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- Andrew reported on a meeting on **insurance** held 2/11. Small business owners complained that the new state law requires them to buy very expensive insurance and they have trouble getting advance information on costs because these vary according to circumstances.
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- **Environment Task Group:** Jane reported that the 3/11 Spy Pond Committee meeting will feature a speaker from Riverways, Rachel Calabro, on how to get stormwater to infiltrate instead of becoming runoff, e.g. by designing water gardens. She is also working on the kayak/canoe rental events for the summer; two possible dates are May 4 and September 4. The committee is planning a cleanup along the Rt. 2 path n May 10. At the Reservoir, most of the tree planting was done in the fall; some tenderer trees have to wait until spring; then the habitat garden can be designed. Sustainable Arlington is working on the "Energy Smackdown" project, which is to involve Arlington, Cambridge, and Medford; on starting "Low Carbon Diet" discussion groups, and on getting 50 new households to make contributions for green energy generation to earn a solar panel for an Arlington school.
 - **Fiscal Resources:** Gordon Jamieson has met with the Town Treasurer, who has saved the Town some \$400,000 in borrowing. The State of the Town address is scheduled for April 24.