

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ARLINGTON REDEVELOPMENT BOARD

The Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) is the planning board for the Town and fulfills those functions envisioned by the State for local governments to assist in and regulate the development of the town. The ARB is charged with planning for the orderly development of residences and businesses and the streets and infrastructure needed to serve them. This function takes on different appearance in different towns. In Arlington, the Redevelopment Board's planning responsibilities take the form of conducting planning studies, recommending zoning regulations (to Town Meeting), and issuing special permits.

Arlington's planning board differs from most in that it is also a redevelopment authority. Arlington was the first town in Massachusetts to create a combined planning board and redevelopment authority. As a redevelopment authority, the ARB is authorized to own property and to create urban renewal projects such as the Symmes Hospital site. The Board also owns and manages a number of Town buildings which it leases.

The planning board's role in the town is to provide for the orderly development of property and anticipate needs and problems that development or population change or change in economic conditions may bring. The ARB carries out this responsibility by reviewing all significant development projects, commissioning studies, and marshalling grant funds for the development of public facilities to compliment other public development funded by the Town budget. It is the planning studies and the Zoning Bylaw that provide the guidance for how Arlington develops. The documents constitute a policy plan for the Town and instruct the ARB in its issuance of special permits. The Zoning Bylaw lists the uses for property that are allowed in town and specifies where each use is allowed. Certain uses are allowed only by special permit and special permit uses that are of a certain size and location qualify for environmental design review before the Redevelopment Board.

The Department of Planning and Community Development serves as staff to the Redevelopment Board, operates the town's community development program, oversees the home Rehab and weatherization programs and manages the eight buildings under the jurisdiction of the Redevelopment Board.

Personnel Changes

Alice Norman, who worked for the Town of Arlington for twenty-five years and has been the "face" of the Planning Department for many of those years,

dealing with the public, with tenants, with vendors and others, always with humor and diligence and civility and always making us laugh, retired this year. She is missed but we wish her a happy retirement.

Two members of the Redevelopment Board left this year. Nora Mann, who served on the Board for eight years, decided it was time for her to leave in late 2004 but stayed on through the permitting of the Symmes medical office building to provide continuity through that process. Ms. Mann, an attorney by trade, brought her considerable skills to play in dealing with the complex issues that the Board has engaged over the years of her tenure. She also served on several committees as an ARB representative including the Symmes Advisory Committee and the Affordable Housing Task Force.

Barry Faulkner moved out of state and had to resign his position on the Board after nineteen years of service. Mr. Faulkner is a transportation planner and became a lawyer while serving on the Board. His breadth of knowledge from his consulting experience and his years on the Board gave him a perspective that often provided the missing piece in the puzzle the Board needed to solve. Mr. Faulkner left Arlington in the fall to open a law practice in New Hampshire.

At year's end, the Board had acquired one new member. Andrew West, an architect, joined the Board in June. Mr. West has lived in Arlington eleven years and has two children in the Arlington schools

Special Permits

The issuance of a special permit in the environmental design review process usually involves months of meetings with the developer to hone their proposals into something that meets the eighteen criteria against which it must be judged. In 2005, the Board issued a permit for one communication antenna and denied the permit for a second. The denial of a permit is unusual in that the applicants are aware of the criteria against which the permit must be evaluated. In the case of this denial, the applicant failed to change the proposal sufficiently to meet the criteria. The Board also issued permits for a new savings bank in East Arlington, for the renovation of St. Paul's Church, and for the redevelopment of the Symmes Hospital site in two parts. The Board first held eight hearings on the medical office building finally granting the permit in June. Subsequently, the Board held five hearings on the residential portion of the development, granting that permit in September.

The Symmes Story

At the beginning of 2005, the Redevelopment Board proposed that the zoning change passed in September contained a problem introduced by a floor amendment at Town Meeting. The language stated that the zoning district must contain a medical use. Zoning districts are defined by the uses they allow, but

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cannot require a particular use. The language created a stumbling block for financial institutions that refused to finance a building on which the restriction applied. Accordingly, the Board asked the Town Meeting to remove the requirement. Just before Town Meeting, the developer applied for the required special permit to allow the rehabilitation of the former nurses building into a medical office space.

After much debate, the Town Meeting reaffirmed its instructions to the Redevelopment Board to redevelop the site for housing and medical use as it had instructed in 2003 and at a special Town Meeting in 2004.

The Board did not expect the developer to request the special permits for the project in two parts, therefore, when the developer first requested a permit for the medical office building, the Board insisted that the impacts of the entire project must be assessed. All analysis had been done on the basis of the entire project and the Board didn't want a part of the project permitted without consideration of the entire project and any mitigating measures that might be necessary. During the hearings on the medical office building, therefore, the traffic, utilities burden, stormwater system, and such for the whole project (that is, including the proposed residential redevelopment) were evaluated. The Board held eight hearings and granted the permit for the medical component on June 13. The Board wishes to thank the Transportation Advisory Committee and especially its Symmes Subcommittee for the extraordinary effort and the high quality of work as it evaluated the traffic impacts of the Symmes redevelopment.

Hearings on the residential portion began on July 11th and continued through the summer. The Board held five hearings before closing the public comment period and then deliberated for one and one half sessions on the required findings and on conditions it put on the permit, finally granting the permit on September 12th. The two permits allowed the construction of a 26,100 square foot medical office building and 245 residential condominiums. The development was required to provide seven and three quarters acres of open space protected with a conservation easement and maintained according to a specific plan by the developer. A \$35,000 fund was provided by the developer to make improvements to the area. The developer was required to make repairs and improvements in the sewage system in neighborhoods near the site worth \$160,000. The developer was required to install a traffic signal where Hospital Road meets Summer St., construct a sidewalk along Woodside Lane, and make other traffic improvements on neighboring streets worth up to \$300,000.

The construction on the site must be conducted in accordance with a Neighborhood Protection Plan which was created by a consultant working with the

neighborhood and funded by the developer. The plan requires the monitoring of sound and dust and the installation of solid wood fencing around the site to minimize the impact on the neighborhood. In the process of the application and permit process, the size of the residential development was reduced from 258 units to 245 units.

In early October, the permit was appealed by some neighbors to the site – actually two separate appeals. Any permit can be appealed by persons who are aggrieved. When an appeal is filed, the development cannot proceed until it is somehow resolved either through the court or by a settlement agreement between the appellants and the developer. At the close of year, the developer had been unsuccessful in arranging a discussion with the appellants.

The appeal of the permit has significant impact on the Town's financial goals. The goals to make the project revenue neutral and to keep the cost of the project off the tax rolls are both seriously jeopardized by the appeal, which means that the timetable by which the developer had to abide is tolled (frozen) until the appeal is resolved. During this time, the Town must continue to pay the carrying cost of the indebtedness and the costs of insuring and maintaining the property. To these costs are added the legal expenses necessitated by defending the Board's permit. Every month of delay costs the Town over \$45,000 directly and delays the realization of tax revenues estimated to be over \$100,000 per month when the project is finished. If the appeal goes to court, the proposed schedule shows its conclusion in December of 2006. Hopefully a settlement agreement can be reached, but the Town cannot avoid a serious financial setback because of the appeal.

Affordable Housing

Early in the year, a resident proposed to the Board of Selectmen that the Town should be exempt from the requirement to consider a Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit for housing projects that have at least 25% of the housing affordable under State guidelines. Such a housing project is exempt from local zoning. The resident noted that the State regulations state that if a town devotes 1.5% of its developable land area to affordable housing, it is exempt from the requirement to consider a comprehensive permit project. In other words all projects would have to comply with zoning.

The Selectmen asked the Department to confirm the figures presented by the resident. Unfortunately, the resident had counted one affordable project twice in his calculations so the Town's total land area devoted to affordable housing fell short of the desired 1.5%. To confirm the initial conclusion, the department used its computerized geographic information system (GIS) to independently determine the percentage

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devoted to affordable housing. Using the GIS and the Assessor's data attached to the mapping system, the department determined the amount of land not covered by water or used for streets and subtracted land that is undevelopable by virtue of being publicly owned (all according to the State's "Guidance for Interpreting 760 CMR 31.04(2) Computation of Statutory Minima pursuant to MGL c 40B General Land Area Minimum"). The resultant calculation produced the "total land area zoned for residential, commercial, or industrial use". Next the GIS totaled the area of land devoted to affordable Housing. Comparing the two figures showed that 1.17% of Arlington's land is devoted to affordable housing, falling short of the required 1.5%. The analysis also showed that in order to meet the 1.5%, seven acres of new affordable housing would have to be constructed.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

In 2005, the Zoning Board of Appeals heard and rendered decisions on twenty petitions as prescribed in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, The Zoning Act, and also further clarified by the Town's Zoning Bylaw.

The Petitions heard by the Board include variances, Special Permits and appeals of zoning decisions rendered by the Inspector of Buildings as well as interpretations of Zoning Bylaws.

The Zoning Board of Appeals has three members appointed by the Board of Selectmen who also appoint two associate members to attend Hearings when a member, or members, cannot sit for a particular hearing. All hearings are open to the public and are usually held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month in the Selectmen's Hearing Room on the second floor of the Town Hall or the conference room located on the second floor of the Town Hall Annex. All hearings are advertised in the Arlington Advocate for two consecutive weeks and posted on the Town Clerk's Bulletin Board at least three weeks before the hearing date. Hearings are also posted on the Town website. The Rules and Regulations of the Zoning Board of Appeals are on file in the Office of the Town Clerk and in the Zoning Board of Appeals' Office at 51 Grove Street.

	Granted	Denied	Withdrawn	In Process
Petitions for Variance	1			
Applications for Special Permits	17		1	
Appeal of Decisions of Inspector of Buildings	1			
Totals	19		1	
Total petitions filed with Town Clerk: 1				
Hearings continued by the Board while in session: 3				

ARLINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

The need to provide more affordable housing continues to be a significant challenge for the Town of Arlington. The Arlington Housing Authority is proud of its distinction of being the largest single provider of affordable housing in the community.

This year marks the Arlington Housing Authority's fifty-seventh year offering affordable housing to low and moderate income persons either through direct housing in government-owned developments or subsidized housing in privately owned dwellings.

The Arlington Housing Authority manages 1,156 housing units: 520 units for elderly and/or residents with disabilities, 176 units designated for family housing, a home for 13 mentally challenged residents, and 447 vouchers that help participants live in privately-owned dwellings throughout the community.

The Authority is a quasi-governmental agency that administers these programs sponsored by the State or Federal government. Properties owned by the Authority are exempt from local property taxes, yet the Authority annually pays the maximum "in lieu of" taxes as allowed by state statute.

Board of Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners of the Authority is the policy making body of the agency. The five members of the Arlington Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners are: *Chairman* Nicholas Mitropoulos, *Vice-Chairman* John Griffin, and *Members* Richard B. Murray, Dr. Patricia Worden, and Teresa J. Walsh. Ms. Joan Pippin serves on the Board as Tenant Representative for the Section 8 Program (Federal Rental Assistance) and Ms. Merceita Johnson serves as the Alternate Tenant Representative for that program.

Dr. Worden continued her service as the Authority's designee to the Symmes Advisory Committee and Affordable Housing Task Force. Mr. Mitropoulos continued his service on the Housing Corporation of Arlington, Inc.'s Board of Directors. John Griffin served as the Authority's representative on Arlington's Affordable Housing Task Force and serves with Ms. Walsh as the Board's liaisons to the five local tenant organizations (LTO's).

The Executive Director, Franklin W. Hurd, Jr., is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and manages the day to day operations of the Authority.

Year in Review

In 2005, the Arlington Housing Authority continued making improvements to its properties, completed Phase III of its four phase building security initiative, continued its tenant services support, and continued its offerings of affordable housing programs.

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Properties

In 2004, a major kitchen and bathroom modernization project awarded for Menotomy Manor by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The architectural firm ABACUS was selected and has conducted an extensive review of all 176 units. The Authority successfully received Town Meeting approval in 2005 for zoning changes that would permit the addition of three additional units in Menotomy Manor 200-2 in conjunction with the handicap modifications required for this project.

It is estimated that handicapped accessible units will add over \$1 million to the cost of the project. The most recent cost estimate for this project is \$7,993,593. An additional \$998,282 in electrical upgrades is being considered. Funding will be provided by DHCD by state bonding for modernization projects associated with stated-aided public housing programs.

The AHA was also awarded \$840,000 in emergency funds from DHCD for the upgrades to the elevators in Chestnut Manor (667-2), Hauser Building (667-4, and Cusack Terrace (667-5).

The Authority continued took advantage of the Community Work Program (CWP) sponsored by the Middlesex Sheriff's Office. For the fifth year in a row, inmates under the supervision of correctional personnel assisted the AHA maintenance staff in its spring and fall cleanup efforts. In 2005, the Authority expanded CWP projects by adding painting to the provided services performed by the inmates.

Security - Phase II

Based upon its 2003 security review of its facilities, the Authority continued its implementation of a four phase security initiative. In 2005, Phase III was completed. Security cameras and fob access devices were installed in the 144-unit Hauser Building located at Drake Village. Included in this work, automatic door openers were installed to assist those with mobility difficulties. When coded, fob access will activate automatic door openers for tenants who require assistance.

Completion of Phase III means that cameras are now installed at all four Chapter 667 developments and attached to digital recorders that are being used to help monitor common areas, hallways, entrances, and the outside grounds and parking lots.

Phase IV will be directed towards security initiatives in Menotomy Manor 200-1 and 200-2. Due to the unique layout of these locations, detailed study will be required to formulate a proposed solution for this phase.

Tenant Services

Tenant Support

Sue Culhane, Tenant Service Coordinator, continued her active participation in the bi-monthly meetings of the Geriatric Providers Group. This group, consisting of representatives from over twenty outside agencies, meets regularly to insure communication between these agencies and providers for the benefit of our elderly tenants.

One such benefit of Sue's participation in the group lead to the selection of Drake Village for a 12-week exercise class Winchester Hospital's Community Health Institute made possible by a grant through Minuteman Senior Services. The class, which will begin in early 2006, is based on the Federal Government "Eat Better and Move More" which is part of the "You Can! Steps to Healthier Aging Campaign. The program at Drake Village will focus on the exercise part since the Hauser Building is also a "Meals on Wheels" luncheon meal site.

Janet Doyle, AHA Office Manager, continued her work on the Youth Watch program through monthly meetings with members of various agencies in the community to monitor the activities of troubled youths. The group cooperatively works on ways to help provide assistance to local "at risk" juveniles.

The Authority worked cooperatively with the volunteer teachers from the Ottoson Middle School in supporting the highly successful "Operation Success" Program. The program offers onsite tutorial and homework assistance, and computer training to the middle school students of Menotomy Manor in the evenings throughout the school year. We salute these dedicated volunteer teachers.

Annual Cookouts

The annual cookouts for the elderly and disabled residents were held in each of our four elderly/handicap developments. The "Mardi Gras" theme was a complete success. The AHA salutes the following 2005 "Tenant of the Year" award recipients: Joan Camarano (*Drake Village*), Nella Robichaud (*Chestnut Manor*), Eileen Gay (*Winslow Towers*), and Grace Burgess (*Cusack Terrace*). Tenants balloted for the winners in their respective building. The success of this outing was the direct result of the combined efforts of both Maintenance and Administration Staff personnel.

Affordable Housing

The Authority continues its efforts to deal with the problem of high fair market rents in Arlington. Items have been printed in our local newspaper as a means of outreach to residents letting them know about its programs.

Thanks to the Arlington Board of Selectmen, the AHA was awarded a second \$75,000 CDBG grant for the acquisition of additional affordable housing in

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Arlington. Unlike others such as non-profit organizations, all AHA owned properties remain affordable into perpetuity.

The Authority continues its participation in the MassNAHRO Centralized Section 8 Wait List program. The list is now open to all daily. Arlington residents are given a preference.

The AHA's website, www.arlingtonhousing.org, provides valuable information to those wishing to learn more about the AHA and its programs.

Recognitions

The Authority would also like to recognize our oldest tenant in residence, Ms. Catherine "Kitty" Junas, who is 103 years young and is still an active tenant who resides in Winslow Towers.

The Arlington Housing Authority would like to thank all its employees for their dedication throughout the year.

VISION 2020

In June of 1992, Town Meeting created the Vision 2020 Standing Committee as an official Committee of the Town to..."ensure the long range planning process initiated by the Town in 1990 ...also, to create, implement, monitor and review methods for open, town-wide public participation in the Vision 2020 process." This followed a two-year process under the direction of town leadership exploring goals for the Town and ultimately creating the task group structure to support those goals which Vision 2020 follows to this day.

Town Goals, or Articles of Our Common Purpose, were enacted as a bylaw in 1993 for the areas of Business, Communication, Community and Citizen Service, Culture and Recreation, Diversity, Education, Environment, Fiscal Resources, and Governance. Since then, three groups have formed under the Environment Task Group: the Spy Pond, Reservoir, and Sustainable Arlington Committees.

Working in a partnership of townspeople, town committees, Town employees, and leaders through its standing committee and task groups, Vision 2020 attempts to bring the Town closer to the intent of its Town Goals. These efforts often are awareness pieces, designed to inform, and to create an appreciation for town features. Others are short or long-term projects, planning sessions, forums, practices, research projects, publications, tours, celebrations, warrant articles, and surveys.

Notable Activities in 2005

- Created, tallied, and analyzed 1,721 Arlington household responses to the 2005 Vision 2020 Annual Census Insert Survey with its principal focus on Access Issues in Arlington; reported a summary of these responses to the 2005 Annual

Town Meeting, and provided a detailed summary of the response data to the departments and committees affected; (Abstracted Charts of these responses can be found the text of this section)

- Helped the Town secure and begin to implement a State section .319 Storm Water Grant, which will be used to install deep-sump leaching catch basins along Route 2; this grant will be shared with Belmont;
- Monitored wetland invasive growth at both Spy Pond and the Arlington Reservoir ;
- Organized and conducted the first Spy Pond Trails Weekend in May that

involved about seventy-five volunteers over the two days and additional Appalachian Mountain Club trail experts leading volunteer crews in the construction of three stone trails leading to the pond; also accomplished significant pruning and tree removal to create vistas of the pond from the path along Route 2; removal of invasive plants and removal of the years of accumulated trash along the path and the area adjacent to the fence along the Rte 2 access road;

Secured grants and donations from area businesses and foundations and discarded curbing from Arlington's DPW to accomplish the Trails Weekend work;

- Distributed flyers to the entire Spy Pond Watershed on practices that affect weed growth and poor water quality in the pond;
- Researched and presented the Peer Communities Study Report, available at the library and on the Vision 2020 web site. Using eighteen quantitative criteria, this document compares Arlington to its neighbors and the 102 cities and towns in the Metropolitan Area Planning Council area after examining the demographic, geographic, governance, educational, and economic data of these communities. Concluding that the existence of a standard set of peer communities for Arlington is doubtful, it cautions careful choosing of communities when comparisons to Arlington are made;
- Researched and produced Retrospective Appropriations Analysis: Arlington FY 91 to FY 04; this report reviewed those Town-budgeted appropriations made in the fourteen years since the first successful Proposition 2.5 operating override in 1990, and concluded that current spending is less than it was in FY91 in real, inflation-adjusted dollars;
- Both the Peer Communities Study Report and the Retrospective Appropriations Analysis, produced by the Fiscal Resources Task Group, can be

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found on the fiscal resources link to the Vision 2020 website www.arlington2020.org/;

- Studied Arlington demographics to learn how our aging population may affect Arlington businesses;
- Established an insurance website: www.communitybasedinsurance.com
- Spoke at the State League of Women Voters Conference on the Value of the Community-based Health Insurance perspective;
- Authored a Resolution passed by the 2005 Annual Town Meeting which recognizes that Arlington should obtain, without violating individual privacy, aggregate health data specific to the Town from health care system providers, including the insurance industry and public health agencies, on the most prevalent health problems in Arlington so Arlington will have a basis for instituting an informed proactive culture of prevention;
- Worked with the Town to plan and implement the Reservoir Dam Remediation Project which ensures dam safety without losing large numbers of trees or sacrificing swimming and aesthetics, still maintains recreational and habitat values, and satisfies the states mandate to stabilize the earthen dam;
- Contributed to the construction of two boardwalks at Arlington's Great Meadows;
- With the Board of Selectmen, produced the Fifth Annual State of the Town Address and Reception on the opening night of the 2005 Annual Town Meeting;
- With the League of Women Voters of Arlington, the Office of the Town Clerk, and the Board of Selectmen organized both Candidates Night in preparation for Town elections, and the Warrant Review to ready Town Meeting Members and townspeople for the Annual and Special Town Meetings;
- Continued to provide participation on the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Diversity; also continued to advocate for minority hiring for the schools and all town positions;
- With the libraries, schools, and other Arlington groups, expanded October Diversity Month to a year-long calendar of events to be celebrated at various Town sites in Fiscal Year 06 starting with the Town-wide book read of Pete Hamill's Snow in August;
- With the School Department, co-sponsored Arlington's second Open House for minority applicants to potential teaching and administrative positions in the Arlington Public Schools;
- With the help of a Tufts University intern, continued to work on a comprehensive Sustainability Action Plan for the Town;
- Explored options and opportunities for using wind power as an energy source in Arlington; produced a public forum based on a Sustainable Arlington-produced video of the Hull, MA municipal wind power installation;
- Conducted bird walks at the Arlington Reservoir and Spy Pond as well as cleanups and flyer distributions to promote the use of low or no phosphorous fertilizers;
- Created displays and interactive exhibits for Vision 2020's booth at Town Day;
- Augmented participation in the Vision 2020 task groups; and,
- Formulated two warrant articles for the 2005 Annual Town Meeting: the first requesting an appropriation for remediation of invasive weeds at Spy Pond and the second asking for a committee to study revising the Town's fiscal organization.

Vision 2020 is exceedingly grateful to Patricia Watson for her fourteen years of service to both the Standing Committee and Diversity Task Group. Patricia's editor's eye, her innate sense of justice and fairness, along with her experience with group process and consensus building has facilitated many productive discussions. Although he hasn't left the task group, Vision 2020 gratefully acknowledge Allen Reedy's eleven generous and productive years as Chairman of the Fiscal Resources Task Group. The new chairman of this group is Gordon A. Jamieson, Jr. Also, Vision 2020 notes with regret that Barry Faulkner, a member of the original steering committee and recent representative to Vision 2020 from the Arlington Redevelopment Board, has moved to New Hampshire. His institutional memory and planner's perspective will be missed.

Vision 2020 is appreciative of all who contribute to this project, now almost 16 years old. Their skills and expertise, opinions, suggestions, persistence, research, hours of data entry, flyer distribution, grant writing, note taking, web posting, program creation, and creative ideas all offered generously have truly enabled Arlington's Vision 2020 to assist the Town in trying to address current and future needs.

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May 2005, Vision 2020 Preliminary data based on 1,721 Census Insert Returns

TABLE 1: # of People in households

Raw data

Total # in HH	Survey Count	% of non-blanks
Blank	39	
1	424	25.2%
2	638	37.9%
3	259	15.4%
4	265	15.8%
5	77	4.6%
6	12	0.7%
>6	7	0.4%
<i>total</i>	1721	100.0%

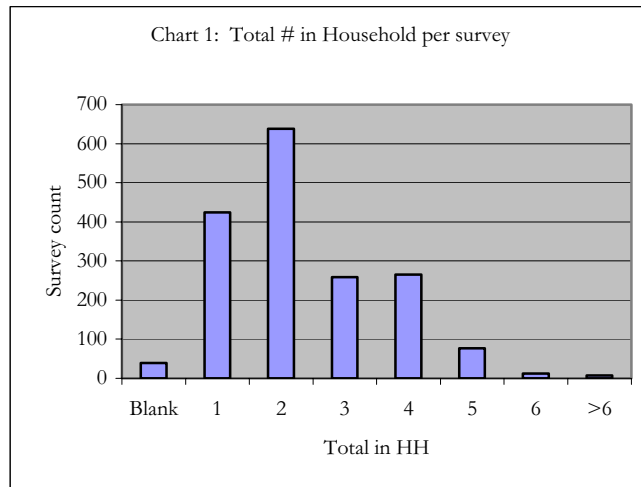


Table 2: Medicare Information

If you have medicare, would you please tell us if you:

	# of surveys	% of surveys
Medicare A -basic	54	3.1%
Medicare A & B	257	14.9%
Had to give up Medicare B	1	0.1%
Had to w/draw from a supplementary program due to cost	10	0.6%
Other, please specify ***	41	2.4%
Blank (nothing checked)	1358	78.9%
	1721	100.0%

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May 2005, Vision 2020 Preliminary data based on 1,721 Census Insert Returns

Table 3: Precincts Represented in Surveys

Precinct #	Count	Percentage of Valid responses
1	29	2.8%
2	53	5.2%
3	49	4.8%
4	48	4.7%
5	31	3.0%
6	46	4.5%
7	39	3.8%
8	60	5.9%
9	47	4.6%
10	69	6.7%
11	49	4.8%
12	51	5.0%
13	41	4.0%
14	61	6.0%
15	50	4.9%
16	59	5.8%
17	44	4.3%
18	45	4.4%
19	61	6.0%
20	41	4.0%
21	50	4.9%
blank	698	
TOTAL	1721	100.0%

Table 4: Total # of Registered Voters represented

# of Voters in Household	Count of Surveys	Total Voters
0	13	0
1	448	448
2	782	1564
3	89	267
4	31	124
5	5	25
blank	353	
TOTAL	1721	2428

Table 5: Demographics and Ages within Households Responding

Adults aged 18-64 with no children	516	30.0%
Adults aged 18-64 with children	775	45.0%
Adults aged 18-64 and Adults 65 years old +	258	15.0%
Adults aged 65 years and older only	88	5.1%
Blank information in survey	84	4.9%
Total Surveys	1721	100.0%

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May 2005, Vision 2020 Preliminary data based on 1,721 Census Insert Returns

Table 6: Access for Those with Disabilities

1. In your opinion regarding those with a disability, please rate:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know/ No Opinion	Blank	Total
a. Accessibility of Arlington restaurants & businesses	147	491	226	43	609	205	1721
	16.2%	54.1%	24.9%	4.7%			100%
b. Active recruitment/involvement of disabled residents on Arlington's town committees/org/clubs	36	79	79	42	1255	230	1721
	15.3%	33.5%	33.5%	17.8%			100%
c. how well Arlington schools do in educating children with disabilities alongside more typical students	84	160	96	24	1129	228	1721
	23.1%	44.0%	26.4%	6.6%			100%

2. How important is it to you that Arlington aggressively enforces the by-law requiring:	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important		Don't Know/ No Opinion	Blank	Total
a. Clearing snow and ice from sidewalks in front of your home/business	964	425	123		46	163	1721
	63.8%	28.1%	8.1%				100%
b. Removal of overhanging shrubs along residential and commercial walkways	645	604	209		79	184	1721
	44.2%	41.4%	14.3%				100%

3. How many people in your HH would define themselves as having a disability?	None	One	Two	Three or More		Blank	Total
	1299	202	26	3		191	1721
	84.9%	13.2%	1.7%	0.2%			100%

Table 7: Transportation Advisory Committee - Mass Ave/Rte 60/Pleasant St./Mystic St. Intersection

DEMOGRAPHICS Relevant to TAC	Zero	1	2	3	4	>4	Blank	Average of non-blanks
	# of DRIVERS per household	33	490	971	100	32	9	86
# of CARS per household	33	607	794	88	17	3	179	1.65
Drivers per Car:	Average	Median	Minimum	Maximum				
	1.15	1	0.5	3				

1. How many times per week do you pass through this intersection?	Zero	1-4 times	5-9 times	10+ times		Blank	Total
As a motorist	83	694	401	435		108	1721
	5.1%	43.0%	24.9%	27.0%			100%
As a bicyclist	874	307	41	21		478	1721
	70.3%	24.7%	3.3%	1.7%			100%
As a pedestrian	411	820	139	75		276	1721
	28.4%	56.7%	9.6%	5.2%			100%

2. How would you rate the ease of use of this intersection	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know/ No Opinion	Blank	Total
As a motorist	231	652	485	160	70	123	1721
	15.1%	42.7%	31.7%	10.5%			100%
As a bicyclist	61	150	227	227	616	440	1721
	9.2%	22.6%	34.1%	34.1%			100%
As a pedestrian	169	469	409	223	201	250	1721
	13.3%	36.9%	32.2%	17.6%			100%

4. As a motorist, have you used other routes to avoid this intersection?	Yes	No	Blank	Total
	869	511	341	1721
	63.0%	37.0%		100%

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May 2005, Vision 2020 Preliminary data based on 1,721 Census Insert Returns

TABLE 8: Access to DPW Services

1. Have you experienced any change in the level of service for trash collection and recycling?	Positive	Negative	No Change	No Opinion	Blank	Total
	464	89	865	181	122	1721
	29.0%	5.6%	54.1%	11.3%		100%
2. Do you prefer the new yard waste collection schedule?	Yes	No	Indifferent	Haven't Noticed	Blank	Total
	572	93	327	593	136	1721
	36.1%	5.9%	20.6%	37.4%		100%
3. Assuming the same level of funding for road improvements, would you prefer the use of asphalt overlays (vs. chip seals - pea stone sprayed with asphalt) even if it means that fewer roads are improved per year?	Yes	No	Indifferent	Need Information	Blank	Total
	520	178	198	661	164	1721
	33.4%	11.4%	12.7%	42.5%		100%

Table 9: Access to Bicycling Opportunities for Children

1. When you were a child, were students allowed to ride their bicycles to get to and from school?	Yes	No	Don't Know	Blank	Total
	906	213	242	360	1721
	66.6%	15.7%	17.8%		100%
2. In Arlington today, how important is providing students with the choice to ride a bicycle safely to and from Arlington Public Schools?	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Blank	Total
	610	516	187	408	1721
	46.5%	39.3%	14.2%		100%

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May 2005, Vision 2020 Preliminary data based on 1,721 Census Insert Returns

Table 10: Access to Activity and Fitness Opportunities

Do you or any household members use ARLINGTON-based structured activity programs for exercise?

	Yes	No	Blank	Total
Arlington Recreation	251	1025	445	1721
	<i>14.6%</i>			
Boys and Girls Club	260	1017	444	1721
	<i>15.1%</i>			
Fidelity house	55	1111	555	1721
	<i>3.2%</i>			
Council on Aging	47	1135	539	1721
	<i>2.7%</i>			
Arlington Public Schools	213	1028	480	1721
	<i>12.4%</i>			
Private Health/Fitness Club	414	879	428	1721
	<i>24.1%</i>			
Organized team sports	187	1034	500	1721
	<i>10.9%</i>			

Do you or any household members use these facilities or resources for exercise?

	In Arl.	Out of Arl.	Both (In and Out)	Blank	Total
BikePath	404	11	763	543	1721
	<i>23.5%</i>	<i>0.6%</i>	<i>44.3%</i>	<i>31.6%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Private home or health/fitness club	396	261	94	970	1721
	<i>23.0%</i>	<i>15.2%</i>	<i>5.5%</i>	<i>56.4%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Community Education	69	91	67	1494	1721
	<i>4.0%</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>3.9%</i>	<i>86.8%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Beaches/Pools	124	321	173	1103	1721
	<i>7.2%</i>	<i>18.7%</i>	<i>10.1%</i>	<i>64.1%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Dance/Aerobic/Yoga center	151	117	35	1418	1721
	<i>8.8%</i>	<i>6.8%</i>	<i>2.0%</i>	<i>82.4%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Ice Skating/Roller Skating Rink	177	62	63	1419	1721
	<i>10.3%</i>	<i>3.6%</i>	<i>3.7%</i>	<i>82.5%</i>	<i>100%</i>

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May 2005, Vision 2020 Preliminary data based on 1,721 Census Insert Returns

Table 11: Access to Arlington Information

QUESTION 1: How do you obtain information about our Arlington Community? (Check ALL that apply)
 % of checks is reported below

	Newspaper	Website/E mail	Cable TV	Visit town Bldg	"Word of Mouth"	Other
Government Services						
General Information/Contacts	64.1%	36.9%	9.6%	11.0%	35.8%	6.3%
Rules/Regulations/by-laws	39.9%	31.2%	3.9%	10.7%	22.7%	5.4%
Schedules/calendars	56.8%	33.8%	5.8%	6.0%	21.1%	8.9%
Meeting discussions/minutes/reports	45.0%	24.6%	8.3%	3.8%	17.6%	3.7%
Arts/Entertainment/Sports/Rec.						
Programs/facilities/locations	59.5%	27.1%	4.8%	4.5%	24.2%	7.6%
Schedules/Calendars/hours	57.2%	29.0%	4.1%	4.8%	19.4%	6.1%
News and Events						
Community Safety/Public Notices	60.4%	20.2%	6.2%	3.2%	18.0%	4.5%
Related to community Organizations	54.2%	20.3%	4.6%	2.8%	18.7%	3.4%
Education						
Contact/General Information	40.9%	22.8%	4.2%	4.6%	20.4%	6.6%
Schedules/Calendars/Events	40.8%	22.3%	3.9%	4.1%	18.1%	7.0%
Policies/Rules/Regulations	34.6%	20.4%	3.3%	4.6%	16.9%	6.6%

QUESTION 2: How would you rate the information about Arlington that you obtain for each source?
 % of each

	Newspaper	Website/E mail	Cable TV	Visit town Bldg	"Word of Mouth"	Other
Completeness						
Excellent	14.1%	8.1%	1.7%	8.4%	4.3%	3.1%
Good	38.6%	21.0%	7.1%	10.2%	13.9%	3.6%
Fair	12.9%	10.8%	5.9%	4.0%	16.4%	1.3%
Poor	2.7%	2.3%	4.1%	0.8%	5.3%	0.5%
Don't Know/No Opinion	7.0%	15.3%	29.8%	24.5%	15.4%	12.8%
Blank	24.7%	42.4%	51.4%	52.1%	44.7%	78.7%
Timeliness						
Excellent	12.0%	11.3%	1.6%	6.9%	4.3%	2.5%
Good	28.9%	16.3%	5.5%	8.3%	13.2%	3.3%
Fair	15.6%	8.2%	5.1%	3.8%	12.6%	1.5%
Poor	2.0%	2.2%	2.7%	0.9%	3.8%	0.3%
Don't Know/No Opinion	7.1%	13.8%	27.0%	22.6%	14.6%	11.7%
Blank	34.3%	48.1%	58.1%	57.6%	51.5%	80.7%
Reliability						
Excellent	15.7%	9.2%	2.1%	9.6%	3.7%	3.0%
Good	29.1%	17.6%	6.7%	7.3%	12.9%	3.2%
Fair	8.7%	8.0%	3.5%	2.9%	14.0%	1.0%
Poor	1.6%	1.2%	2.0%	0.4%	3.9%	0.2%
Don't Know/No Opinion	9.4%	15.4%	27.9%	22.8%	14.4%	11.9%
Blank	35.7%	48.5%	57.6%	56.9%	51.1%	80.7%

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QUESTION 3: Does your household have high-speed Internet access (cable modem/DSL/broadband?)

	Count	Percentage
Yes	1120	65.1%
No	522	30.3%
Blank	79	4.6%
Total	1721	100.0%

QUESTION 4: How often do you or household members use e-mail?

	Count	Percentage
Daily	1224	71.2%
Every few days	175	10.2%
Weekends Only	12	0.7%
Have an Address but rarely check	28	1.6%
No on-line access	110	6.4%
All Blank	172	10.0%

QUESTION 5: Please check any local "e-list" to which you or your household members subscribe:

	Count	Percentage
Arlington e-list	257	14.9%
Public School e-list	204	11.9%
Arlington Parent e-list	161	9.4%
Community organization e-list	121	7.0%
Other e-list (specify)	74	4.3%

QUESTION 6: Do you use the web to pay any of your bills?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	728	42.3%
No	885	51.4%
Blank	108	6.3%
Total	1721	100.0%

QUESTION 7: Were you aware that property assessments are viewable on-line?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	493	28.6%
No	1084	63.0%
Blank	144	8.4%
Total	1721	100.0%

QUESTION 8: Do the children in your household use the web more or less often than you do?

	Count	Percentage
More	90	20.0%
Less	248	55.0%
Same	113	25.1%
N/A	944	
Blank	326	
Total	1721	100.0%

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May 2005, Vision 2020 Preliminary data based on 1,721 Census Insert Returns

QUESTION 9: Please check any local websites you or your household members visit:

	Count	Percentage
Live from Arlington	180	10.5%
Arlington Town website	754	43.8%
Child's school website	217	12.6%
Other e-list (specify)	78	4.5%

QUESTION 11: Which on-line services would you like the Town to offer?

	Count	Percentage
Look up or pay: Tax Bills	484	28.1%
Look up or pay: Water Bills	465	27.0%
Look up or pay: Fines	342	19.9%
Email Notifications: CRT Collection @DPW yard	574	33.4%
Email Notifications: Town Day applications	240	13.9%
Email Notifications: Street Sweeping Schedule	536	31.1%

If there were a service fee levied would this prevent you from using the service?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	993	57.7%
No	181	10.5%
Blank	547	31.8%
Total	1721	100.0%

QUESTION 12: Do you think more should be done to show meetings and events on our local channels?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	508	29.5%
No	433	25.2%
Blank	780	45.3%
Total	1721	100.0%

QUESTION 13: What cable programs would interest you most? (Check all that apply)

	Count	Percentage
Meetings	380	22.1%
News Analysis	328	19.1%
Arts/ Music/ Entertainment	558	32.4%
Sports	202	11.7%
Education for all ages	337	19.6%
Other (please specify):	73	4.2%

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OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

The Open Space Committee (OSC) was established by Town Meeting in 1996. Members include concerned citizens and representatives of key Town entities (including the Park and Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Cemetery Commission, Redevelopment Board, and the Departments of Planning and Community Development, Public Works, and Human Services). The committee has met regularly over the past ten years to exchange ideas and discuss ways to protect the Town's open space resources.

The committee serves an oversight function but does not have direct management responsibility for Town properties. Its primary purpose is to enhance communication and coordination among those entities that do have management authority. In addition, the OSC seeks to raise broad-based community concerns and to advocate for the planning, stewardship, and appropriate uses of the Town's open spaces.

Open Space Plan

One of the committee's main responsibilities is to prepare the Town's official Open Space and Recreation Plan every five years and to constantly monitor and document its provisions and goals. The current plan, for 2002–2007, was approved in April 2003 by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) Division of Conservation Services. The final published plan was presented to the Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting in May 2003. Copies are available for reading in the Robbins Library, Planning Department, Town Clerk's office, and certain other Town offices. The entire plan, including numerous maps and photographs, is available on the Town Web site (http://www.town.arlington.ma.us/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_BComm/OpenSpace_Folder/OpenSpace_Plan)

Site Management Plans

The committee's primary focus for this year was to prepare specific site management plans, as outlined in the Open Space Plan. The following sites were chosen for the first set of plans: Arlington Reservoir; Minuteman Bikeway; Arlington's Great Meadows; Robbins Farm Park; Spy Pond Park and the Route 2 Path next to Spy Pond; Menotomy Rocks Park; Mt. Pleasant Cemetery; Meadowbrook Park; McClennen Park; and the Town Hall Gardens and Old Burying Ground. Other sites will be documented in future years.

Committee members prepared these management plans in collaboration with representatives of various Town departments and commissions and volunteer groups that manage or monitor each site. A standardized template permits

each site to be documented in a consistent manner. The template includes such information as the site location, size, boundaries, history, ownership, management entities, Friends groups, natural resources, basic maintenance and capital improvement needs, and financial considerations. The plans provide a record of current practices and also serve to facilitate communication among the interested parties. The plans will be incorporated into the next edition of the Open Space Plan and will be available for regular updating by the relevant Town departments and Friends groups.

Town Events

The OSC again participated in Town Day in September 2005. Among the display materials and handouts were maps identifying local open spaces, information about the Open Space Plan, flyers about the Conservation Commission's Land Stewards Program, and a sign-up sheet for residents interested in getting more involved. The committee sponsored the sale of daffodil and crocus bulbs salvaged from the Symmes site to raise funds for special projects. Unsold bulbs were donated to the Reservoir Committee for planting in a visible area near the new dam pathway.

Other Activities

The OSC continued to monitor a wide range of open space concerns that affect the Town and its residents' quality of life. Some of the issues that came before the committee for discussion during the past year were residential and commercial encroachments on the Minuteman Bikeway; a proposed change to the Town bylaw regarding the Open Space Zone, which would invoke the ARB or ZBA special permit process to determine if parking creation or expansion is acceptable for land in that zone; a proposal to establish a dog park on Town property; and curfew schedules at Town parks. The committee also remains vigilant about opportunities to acquire and protect the few remaining undeveloped parcels in Town, as prioritized in the Open Space Plan.

Goals for 2006

During 2006 the committee will continue to collaborate with other Town entities and community groups to advocate for the maintenance and management of the Town's valuable open space and recreation resources, in accordance with the goals and priorities outlined in current Open Space and Recreation Plan. Having completed the first round of site management plans, the committee will begin the extensive task of updating the entire Plan, which must be completed by the summer of 2007.

In addition, the committee will continue to provide input into the planning and implementation of the Symmes redevelopment plan, in particular the

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conservation restriction (CR) that will provide permanent protection for the open space portions of the site. Other areas of attention will be the Reservoir dam project, possible scenarios to protect the Mugar land, and ongoing policy discussions about the use of existing Town parks and open spaces.

ARLINGTON BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Background

The Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC) was appointed by the Board of Selectmen in 1996 to advise the town on improving local bicycling conditions for both residents and visitors. The all-volunteer Committee promotes all forms of safe bicycling in town -- from recreational riding on the Minuteman Bikeway to using the bicycle for transportation and errands on town roadways.

ABAC's annual events include the ABAC Winter Social in February, the BIKE-Arlington Tour in May, and ABAC's Bicycling Information booth at Arlington Town Day in September.

ABAC meets monthly to discuss bicycle-related topics and issues in town. Meetings are posted in advance and open to the public. ABAC's website address is www.abac.arlington.ma.us.

Recent Highlights

In the past year, ABAC has organized a number of annual events and worked on a wide range of projects and initiatives:

- Hosted the well-attended ABAC Winter Social at the Whittemore-Robbins House in February, featuring a slide-show presentation by local author David Herlihy on the history of the bicycle as well as presentations on bicycle touring.
- Organized the 8th annual BIKE-Arlington Tour, a casual-paced bicycle tour around town in May.
- Hosted a Bicycling Information booth at Arlington Town Day, where ABAC members distributed bicycle-related information and discussed local bicycling issues with the community.
- Hosted instructional Bicycling Skills classes in Arlington to promote safer, more efficient bicycling in the area.
- Researched and developed a report on traffic/safety issues at bikeway intersections in Arlington, specifically Arlington Center, Lake Street, and Mill Street, at the request of the Board of Selectmen. This report is available on ABAC's website.
- Met with concerned parents and Town officials on bicycling to school issues in Arlington. This year's Vision 2020 Survey results indicate that 86% of

survey respondents support providing students with the choice to ride a bicycle safely to and from Arlington Public Schools.

- Discussed various improvements to Massachusetts Avenue in Arlington that would benefit both pedestrians and bicyclists, related to the proposed street redesign project. Also conducted bicyclist counts in Arlington Center to collect supporting data on bicycling activity.
- Worked with the Department of Public Works to provide basic maintenance on Arlington's 3-mile stretch of the Donald R. Marquis Minuteman Bikeway. For more information on the Minuteman Bikeway, see the website at www.minutemanbikeway.org.
- Participated in various events hosted by the Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition (MassBike), including Massachusetts Bike Week and Bike Night.
- Represented Arlington at the National Bicycle Summit in Washington, D.C., organized by the League of American Bicyclists in March. Met with U.S. Representative Edward Markey to encourage support for federal Transportation Enhancements funding for local-area bicycling, pedestrian, and transit improvements.

Future Plans

ABAC is planning to organize a number of community events in 2006, including the ABAC Winter Social, the BIKE-Arlington Tour (May 21), several Bicycling Skills classes hosted in Arlington, and an informational booth at Arlington Town Day in September. Starting in 2006, ABAC members plan to develop and publish a regular "Bicycling in Arlington" column for the *Arlington Advocate* newspaper, which will feature local bicycling topics. In addition, ABAC continues to work on many items listed in the previous section of this report.

If you are interested in local bicycling matters, please attend an upcoming ABAC meeting. For more information, visit our website at www.abac.arlington.ma.us, contact the Department of Planning and Community Development at 781-316-3090, or e-mail jackjohnson@alum.bu.edu. ABAC usually meets on the first Monday night of the month in Town Hall.

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Transportation Advisory Committee's (TAC) goal is to improve the quality of life in Arlington by increasing safety for all modes of transportation, while balancing safety with mobility, the environment, and public health. In this effort, the TAC, Arlington Police

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Department's Traffic Division, the Public Works Department, and the Planning Department work closely together.

Transportation Advisory Committee activities in 2005 included the following:

- **Mass. Ave. Corridor:** We are very pleased that our activities since 2002 on the Mass Corridor Project, working with town officials, are finally leading to Federal funding under the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Approximately \$1.6M is expected, which will enable the Town to initiate design work. The project will fund improvements in East Arlington and Arlington Center. See 2004 Town Book for more details.
- **Schools:** In conjunction with the Dallin school reconstruction, the TAC reviewed the school layout and recommended transportation safety improvements including crosswalks, curb cuts, sidewalks, traffic flow, and the conversion of George Street from private to public way, with the abutters support, in order to facilitate pedestrian safety improvements.. This work is continuing for other schools in conjunction with the School Committee.
- **Symmes Transportation Issues:** Early in 2005, a working group of the TAC supported the Redevelopment Board's Special Permit process by providing an independent review of the potential transportation issues for Arlington and made an extensive set of recommendations that were adopted in the Special Permit.
- **Downing Square:** This is the six-way the intersection of Park Ave, Lowell St, Park Ave Extension, Bow St and Westminster Ave. It is a very difficult intersection. The TAC, working with neighbors, has been proposing possible solutions to this area and the roadways leading into it. In the fall, an experimental design was tested in the square using paint, sandbags, and a temporary raised crosswalk. The results are under evaluation and specific recommendations will be made in 2006.
- **Crosswalks:** Critical crosswalks have been designated based upon traffic volume, visibility, and pedestrian use. Additional thermoplastic crosswalks were placed in 2005.
- **Outreach:** The TAC has a website <http://tac.Arlington.ma.us> that continues to be a resource for Town residents, and has an informational table at Town Day.

In addition to the above Transportation Advisory Committee activities, several additional requests were analyzed and recommendations made. These

included: a crosswalk at Jason and Norfolk, the intersections of Cedar and Waverley, Hutchinson Road, and the Lowell Street condo development. The Transportation Advisory Committee participated in Town Day, using that venue to provide education in local traffic matters, and also worked with other local transportation groups to host an Alternative Transportation Festival.

METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is the regional planning and economic development district representing 101 cities and towns in metropolitan Boston. In addition, the Council shares oversight responsibility for the region's federally funded transportation program as one of 14 members of the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization. The Council's legislative mandate is to provide technical and professional resources to improve the physical, social, and economic condition of its district, and to develop sound responses to issues of regional significance. The Council provides research, studies, publications, facilitation, and technical assistance in the areas of land use and the environment, housing, transportation, water resources management, economic development, demographic and socioeconomic data, legislative policy, and interlocal partnerships that strengthen the operation of local governments. More information about MAPC is available at www.mapc.org.

The Council is governed by 101 municipal government representatives, twenty-one gubernatorial appointees, and ten state and three City of Boston officials. An Executive Committee composed of twenty-five members oversees agency operations and appoints an executive director. The agency employs approximately thirty professional and administrative staff. Funding for Council activities is derived from contracts with government agencies and private entities, foundation grants, and a per-capita assessment charged to municipalities within the district.

In the past year, the Council has focused on initiatives that respond to regional challenges, some of which include:

MetroFuture -- Making a Greater Boston Region

State law requires that MAPC prepare, from time to time, a comprehensive regional plan. This planning process is now underway and is called the *MetroFuture* initiative. It started by asking the people of Greater Boston about their aspirations for the future of the region, and continues with a comparison between those visions and the future that will arise if our current trends continue unchanged. We are finding both exciting prospects and interesting

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challenges lie ahead if we continue our current pattern of growth and development. Here are just a few of the results, out to the year 2030:

- **Population will grow slowly, while the number of households will grow more quickly.** By 2030, the region's population will have increased by 10%, approximately a third as fast as the projected U.S. population growth (29%). The number of households is projected to increase by 19% for that same time period, at a greater rate than the population, due to a continued decline in household size.
- **Consumption of land continues apace.** Fifteen percent of land that was open in 2000 will be developed by 2030.
- **An older population will demand more homes and health care.** There will be declines in all age groups under 55 and substantial increases in empty-nesters and elders, creating demand for different housing and contributing to an expected near-tripling of health care costs from 2000 to 2030.
- **Water in short supply outside the MWRA.** Communities with public water systems not connected to the MWRA system will face serious water constraints by 2030; approximately half will exceed their permitted withdrawal rates.

These are among the results that will serve as a starting point for discussions across the region about alternative paths the region could take, beginning with a series of briefings early in 2006. Visit www.MetroFuture.org to learn more about the project, and contact MetroFuture@mapc.org to learn about how to host a briefing about the region's future.

Municipal Planning: MAPC continues to assist municipalities in implementing Smart Growth Principles through local zoning changes. Under the Vision 2020 program, MAPC provided zoning analyses or draft bylaws to the towns of Duxbury, Stoughton and Hanover. Through FY05 funding from Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grants, MAPC assisted Topsfield in developing a Low Impact Development storm-water and erosion control bylaw. Under funding secured through the Priority Development Fund, MAPC is developing mixed use or multi-family bylaws for the towns of Bedford, Stow, Millis, Southborough, and Stoughton. Just recently, MAPC received notice of approval of its application for Smart Growth Technical Assistance funds to assist the towns of Hopkinton, Ashland, and Southborough in examining alternative futures for the 900 acre Weston Nurseries property. MAPC also continues to provide information to municipalities regarding the Smart Growth Overlay Districts enabled under Chapter 40R.

Metro Mayors Coalition: MAPC works with the mayors and city managers of ten municipalities in the urban core on issues such as group purchasing, employee health insurance, regional public safety, and municipal public finance. Through this work, MAPC staffed the statewide Municipal Finance Task Force which reached consensus on a variety of public policy changes to reinvigorate the partnership between local and state government. It also formulated an \$11 million grant program to fund inter-local and multi-disciplinary approaches to stemming the tide of youth violence, drug use, and gang activities in the region. This program became law late in 2005.

The Metro Data Center, an official US Census affiliate, provides in-depth analysis of trends in the region and conducts research on emerging issues that will strengthen the Council's ability to plan for the future. The Center works to increase public understanding of and access to demographic, social, economic, and land use data and trends that affect the Boston metropolitan area. The Center also releases regular publications to maintain a general awareness about how growth continues to impact communities. The Center provides current accurate data to legislators, municipalities, public and private agencies, and the general public about growth trends in the communities and subregions of the greater Boston area.

Transportation planning: MAPC staff played an active role in helping to revise the MassHighway Design Manual, now known as the Project Development and Design Guidebook. As vice chair of the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization, MAPC worked to develop the annual Transportation Improvement Program, including transportation spending priorities for the region. We also developed population and employment projections to the year 2030, to be used in scenario modeling in the new Regional Transportation Plan and MetroFuture (see above) in 2006.

Legislative Advocacy: The Legislative Committee has worked to promote legislation that is of regional interest and is informed by smart growth principles (to view the list of principles, visit http://www.mapc.org/regional_planning/MAPC_Smart_Growth.html).

At the beginning of the legislative session the Committee recommended for endorsement a full legislative agenda, which was subsequently endorsed by MAPC's Executive Committee. Among many items, the priorities include reform of the state's surplus land disposition policy; recapitalization of the brownfields redevelopment fund; reform of the state's

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antiquated zoning laws; and repeat offender legislation. Contact Legislative Director Joel Barrera at jbarrera@mapc.org to learn more about the committee's priorities and how your community can get involved in regional advocacy efforts.

Metropolitan Highway System Advisory Board: MAPC staffs this board, established in 1997 by the Commonwealth, to advise the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority on issues relative to land use, air rights, zoning, and environmental impacts associated with development of land owned by the authority. In 2005, the Board reviewed a number of Requests for Proposals and development proposals for various parcels along the Central Artery surface.

Regional Services Consortiums: The Regional Consortiums Project collectively procured more than \$3,000,000 in office supplies for 32 municipalities, and highway maintenance services valued at \$16,000,000 for South Shore and MetroWest cities and towns. The project also facilitates collegial forums among members' chief administrative officers that focus on collective problem solving and resource sharing. MAPC, in partnership with the Greater Boston Police Council, assists over 300 units of local government in procuring police, public works, and general use vehicles, along with various public safety supplies.

Public Safety and Homeland Security: MAPC provides planning and fiduciary services to the Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council (NERAC), the Northeastern Law Enforcement Council (NEMLEC), and the Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council (METROLEC). Activities include procurement, research, and planning to enhance the delivery of public safety services and to ensure the region is prepared for either a terrorist attack or natural disaster.

Hazard Mitigation: *Pre-Disaster Mitigation* (PDM) plans help communities prepare for natural disasters such as floods, winter storms, wind, and geologic hazards. In 2005, MAPC completed PDM plans for 10 communities on the North Shore and 10 communities on the South Shore. MAPC is also developing PDM plans for 9 Inner Core communities, including Boston and neighboring communities, which will be completed in 2006. FEMA has awarded a grant to MAPC to develop PDM plans in 28 towns in the MAGIC, MetroWest, and North Suburban subregions, beginning in 2006.

495/MetroWest Water Resources Strategy: Working with the 495/MetroWest Corridor Partnership, MAPC completed three major components of a comprehensive water strategy for the corridor:

- the *Massachusetts Low Impact Development Toolkit*, available at <http://www.mapc.org/lid.html>, was published, and two regional workshops were held to present the toolkit to the public. The toolkit recently received the 2005 Outstanding Planning Project Award from the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Planning Association;
- *Once Is Not Enough*, a guide to water reuse in Massachusetts, was published. It is available at http://www.mapc.org/regional_planning/waterreuse.html; and
- two regional contracts for Leak Detection Services were developed for both the 495/MetroWest communities as well as the entire MAPC region. Learn more about leak detection services that are available to cities and towns in MAPC's January edition of the *Regional Record*, our electronic newsletter, located at www.mapc.org.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: Every five years, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council is responsible for developing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in partnership with the Economic Development Administration. The 2005 CEDS, *Insuring Greater Boston's Prosperity*, contains an analysis of economic trends and conditions and highlights five challenges to economic well-being. It sets a context for inviting regional participation that moves toward a regional response to the challenges. The report is included in the January edition of MAPC's *Regional Record*, available at www.mapc.org.

Wind Power: Using a grant from the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, MAPC recently completed a project to help ten North Shore coastal communities understand opportunities and obstacles to siting land-based wind turbines on municipally-controlled properties. The project helped the communities to identify regulatory barriers to wind and the environmental and financial impacts of a wind project. Area residents took part in a web-based energy survey and each community received wind information and siting maps. MAPC hosted two wind educational forums as part of the project, helped the city of Lynn to draft a wind turbine siting ordinance and facilitated the creation of Alternative Energy Committees in Gloucester, Swampscott, and Rockport to advance the siting of wind turbines in their communities. Information about the North Shore Wind Project is also included in the January *Regional Record* at www.mapc.org.

MEPA Project Reviews: MAPC reviews projects under the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) and submits comments on projects with significant regional impacts. In 2005, MAPC reviewed

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166 MEPA filings (Environmental Notification Forms, Environmental Impact Reports, and Notices of Project Change), and submitted comments to EOEA on 58 of these. One of the most significant reviews of the year was a "Peer Review" conducted by MAPC and the Old Colony Planning Council on the proposed *Village Center Plan* for the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station. To view our comments visit http://www.mapc.org/whats_new/SWNAS/SWNAS_Summary_Document.pdf.

Inner Core Committee (Arlington, Belmont, Boston, Braintree, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Holbrook, Lynn, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Milton, Nahant, Newton, Quincy, Randolph, Revere, Saugus, Somerville, Waltham, Watertown, Winthrop)

The Inner Core Committee held 8 regular meetings in FY 05 and hosted two special events – a Legislative Open House in June 2005 and a Commonwealth Capital Fund workshop in August 2004.

Actions taken by the Committee in FY 2005 include recommending projects to the MPO for inclusion on the UPWP and TIP, commenting to EOEA through MEPA for the Urban Ring Phase 2 Draft Environmental Impact Report and the BioSquare Phase 2 Final Environmental Impact Report, and commenting to EOT and DEP on the potential substitution of Central Artery Transit Commitments.

The Committee also engaged in discussions and had presentations on: legislation to recapitalize the Brownfields Trust Fund, the state's new Transit Oriented Development Regulations, Chapter 40R Smart Growth Zoning Districts, and the MBTA Capital Investment Program.