

# 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, 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.

### Planning Dialog

Prior to the start of the year, the Planning Department began interviewing community groups and committees to determine what people valued about Arlington and what issues gave people concern. At the beginning of the year the Department received a Smart Growth Technical Assistance grant to further the process. The

planning staff at the Metropolitan Area Planning Council was hired to assist. A survey was developed to build on our earlier dialogs and 178 responses were received. Using the results, the Redevelopment Board developed a statement of vision for Town.

### Vision of Arlington

Arlington's business centers will provide many opportunities for professional employment, for shopping, and for entertainment; streetscape and storefronts will be attractive and inviting; travel through town will be quick and safe; more and varied housing types will meet the needs of all residents, particularly first-time and moderate income home buyers, and seniors living on fixed incomes; and recreational and open spaces will be evenly dispersed throughout the town, and will be well-maintained. The vibrant commercial nodes in Arlington Heights, in the Town Center, and in East Arlington will underpin improvements throughout the community. In the three nodes parking will be configured to serve commercial development and enhanced transit service, and buildings will host a mix of commercial and residential uses. Modeled on regional and national examples of concentrated "smart" growth, the three nodes of development will support public and private investment, and will incorporate "green" technologies that promote aesthetically pleasing surroundings.

In response to the information gathered, the Redevelopment Board has initially focused on the commercial areas, recognizing their unique and important contribution to Arlington life. The Board surveyed the physical appearance of the commercial centers and decided to offer design assistance to businesses to improve their signage and storefront display areas. Local banks were asked to participate and some have offered advantageous loan programs to help.

The Board also looked at other measures to achieve the Arlington vision. Parking is often cited as a problem in commercial areas and the Board looked at ways to alleviate it and ways to make it more attractive for those who don't want to drive to utilize Arlington businesses. The discussion has caused the Board to look more closely at how our commercial areas look and will change. This discourse will continue into the new year and may lead to further initiatives.

### Massachusetts Avenue Corridor

At the beginning of the year a selection committee chose a design consultant to design the first phase of the Mass. Ave Corridor project which will eventually reconstruct the street and streetscape along Mass. Ave from Cambridge to the High School. The first phase runs from Cambridge to Pond Lane, just east of the Center. The Planning Department and the Redevelopment Board are heavily involved in the project which

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includes representatives from the Selectmen, Town Manager, Transportation Advisory Committee, citizens, and Public Works.

After selecting Faye, Spoffard & Thorndike as consulting engineers and working with the Waterfield Group as design engineers, the funding, generously provided through Congressman Markey's office, had to endure several levels of review which dragged on all the remainder of the year. With the review successfully completed, the design process which will involve several public meetings to gain citizen input will begin in early 2008.

In other transportation related issues, the department worked closely with the Transportation Advisory Committee to participate in the process that may extend the MBTA Green Line to Medford near Arlington, and monitored a study about the traffic passing through the Alewife area into Cambridge. The department successfully shepherded a change in the Zoning Bylaw through Town Meeting to allow shared rental vehicles such as Zip Cars in Arlington. The department passed the first round of review for a grant application to develop a traffic demand management plan for use of the Parmenter School and other nearby offices.

## **Affordable Housing**

The department maintained its participation in the Town's Affordable Housing Task Force and together brought a Zoning Bylaw change to Town Meeting to lower the rents of affordable housing. The department completed documents to regulate the affordable housing at the Symmes site which includes housing for people making 120% of median income as well as the more usual affordable housing for people making 80% of median income. An application to place the 80% units on the State inventory of Arlington's affordable housing was approved by the Selectmen and submitted.

The lottery for the four affordable units at Minute-man Village on Brattle Street was conducted and the units were sold before the end of the year.

## **Symmes Project**

Prior to the beginning of the year, the project was reduced in size: the tallest buildings were reduced in height by thirty three feet and the size of the project which had been 258 units was capped at 200 units. This meant that the sales agreement had to be changed. The Town had to accept less money for the property. The developer was required to submit final plans for the project for ARB approval within six months. When the time came to submit the 100% plans, the developer was not ready. The agreement was again amended to allow the developer more time to develop the plans and fix the time by which the developer would begin to pay carrying cases, independent of the plan submittal.

An error in the settlement agreement forced the

developer to redesign one of the buildings to reduce its size thus missing the deadline for submission of the 100% plans. The developer began paying carrying costs in January 2007. The final plans were submitted to the Board and approved on March 19, 2007.

Also at the beginning of the year, the developer began talking with an equity partner. The housing market had slowed so sufficiently that it was almost impossible to obtain financing for a condominium project. The developer realized that it would have to finance the housing as a rental project. After a protracted negotiation, E. A. Fish reached agreement with JPI Development Services, LP to become a partner in Symmes Redevelopment Associates. The Arlington Redevelopment Board approved the equity partner on June 13, 2007.

The fact that the project was now to be a rental project meant that the Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) had to be amended. Compensation in the existing LDA was dependent in several places on the sale of condominium units and therefore a new arrangement had to be made to accommodate the rental units. This too was a difficult negotiation because the Town had made concessions in the past based on the ability to recoup funds through the property tax that would be generated by the completed project. A rental project would generate significantly less tax revenue. Agreement was eventually reached with the developer making an increased payment to compensate for some of the tax revenue loss.

With the agreements made, the Town moved quickly to closing and sold the property to the developer on June 29, 2007.

The developer held a couple of community meetings to inform the neighborhood of the schedule for the immediate future and began meeting with the Board to seek permission to demolish the former nurses residence which is the location intended for the medical office building (MOB). The Redevelopment Board holds a mortgage on the MOB site and has not been paid for the property, therefore the Board had to consider if the demolition of the building would enhance or decrease the value of the property. The Board decided that the demolition was desirable and granted permission for the developer to demolish the building and otherwise prepare the site for new development.

The developer then began remediating the buildings in preparation for their demolition. Demolition of the existing buildings began in December. Site work and construction of the residential units is to begin immediately after demolition is complete in early 2008.

## **Community Development Block Grant**

In March the Town received 1.3 million dollars in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds which were distributed to six public facility projects, fifteen public service projects, housing programs and

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several planning studies. CDBG funds helped purchase eighteen units of housing for affordable rentals and rehabilitated thirty housing units occupied by eight very low income, eleven low income, and eleven moderate income households. The public services programs brought a variety of services to 1,871 persons of whom almost all were low income and more than half were extremely low income. The block grant program continues to serve the less fortunate Arlington residents and add to the quality of life in Arlington.

## Redevelopment Board Properties

The Redevelopment Board manages over 200,000 square feet of commercial building space in Arlington - mostly former school buildings. This year saw many major improvements made to some of them. The Central School building behind Town Hall had extensive work done to repair and replace most of the gutters and soffits on the hundred year old structure. The former Dallin Library building on Park Avenue received roof repair, new air conditioning compressors and concrete work to correct drainage problems. The former Gibbs School building had steam traps replaced to conserve on energy costs, had walkway and exterior stairs replaced and added a safety feature in the elevator. Twenty Three Maple Street, the former school administration building, located in an historic district is being rehabilitated. It received a new roof and gutters, new electrical system, repairs to the chimneys and the aluminum siding was removed in preparation for historically consistent re-siding.

This work is done in addition to regular maintenance of the seven buildings under the jurisdiction of the Board. The one staff member dedicated to building maintenance is backed up by the Town's properties division. Lease renewals were begun on two of the buildings and on some of the tenants at one additional building.

## Support for Town Activities

The Planning Department provides staff support or otherwise participates in many Town committees. Department staff participated in over 200 evening meetings, helped the Bicycle Advisory Committee install seven new bike racks on Town property, helped record responses to the Vision 20/20 census questionnaire, played an important role in the updating of the Open Space and Recreation Plan, worked on the Burial Space Committee and Fire Station Study Committee, and worked with the Affordable Housing Task Force, the Commission on Disabilities, the Spy Pond Committee, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Transportation Advisory Committee to mention a few.

## ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

In 2007, the Zoning Board of Appeals has heard and rendered decisions on seventeen 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 and are held in 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.

Petitions Heard by Zoning Board of Appeals				
	Granted	Denied	Withdrawn	In Process
Petition for Variance	5			
Applications for Special Permits	11	1		
Appeal of Decisions of Inspector of Buildings				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>		
Total Petitions filed with Town Clerk	17			

## 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-ninth 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, six one bedroom condominium units 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

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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 Executive Director is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and manages the day-to-day operations of the Authority. Board member Teresa J. Walsh serves as the Board's liaison to the five local tenant organizations (LTO's). Board member John J. Griffin continued his service as the Authority's designee to the Town of Arlington's Affordable Housing Task Force.

## **Year in Review**

In 2007, 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.

## **Properties**

### *Menotomy Manor*

In 2007 a major kitchen and bathroom modernization project awarded for Menotomy Manor by the Department of Housing and Community Development was amended to include all new electrical services to our 176 unit development. Included in this project will be a number of handicap accessible family units. This additional work will add over \$3 million to the cost of the project. The most recent cost estimate for this project is \$11,180,000. The Authority put this modernization project out to bid in September 2007 and construction will begin in January 2008.

### *Drake Village - Hauser Building – Chestnut Manor*

The Arlington Housing Authority was awarded a modernization grant from the Department of Housing And Community Development for the complete replacement of the two elevators in the Hauser Building and the two elevators in Chestnut Manor. The job was awarded to 3Phase Elevators Corp. and replacement of the elevator are expected to begin in February 2008.

### *Cusack Terrace*

A new second elevator will be added to the Cusack Terrace Development. Cusack Terrace has operated since opening in 1978 with one elevator. The Arlington Housing Authority was awarded a modernization grant from the Department of Housing And Community Development for a new second elevator. The job was bid in September and construction will to begin in March 2008.

### *Supportive Housing for Aging in Place at Drake Village*

In 2007 the Board of Commissioners of the AHA voted to create a partnership with Minuteman Senior Service for its first Supportive Housing for aging in Place at a Housing Authority. This exciting project places a coordinator on site and is creating an affordable assisted living option for the 200+ residents of Drake Village, including in-home services, meals, on-site social activities and healthy aging programs all designed to support aging in place. The Housing Authority built new offices for the program and completely remodeled the kitchen for the meal service program. The AHA looks forward to emulating this program in its other senior developments.

The Authority continued to take advantage of the Community Work Program (CWP) sponsored by the Middlesex Sheriff's Office. For the seventh year in a row, inmates under the supervision of correctional personnel assisted the AHA maintenance staff in its spring and fall cleanup efforts. In 2007, the Authority expanded the CWP projects by adding painting to the provided services performed by the inmates.

## **Security - Phase III -IV**

Based upon its 2003 security study of all AHA facilities, the Authority continued the implementation of a four phase program. In 2005 (Phase III) the Authority installed security cameras and fob access devices in the 144-unit Hauser Building located at Drake Village, and automatic door openers were installed as part of the fob access system to assist those with mobility difficulties. When coded, fob access will activate automatic door openers for tenants who require assistance.

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 include a security review of the Menotomy Manor development tentatively scheduled for 2008. It will involve more complex security surveillance in Menotomy Manor. The program will include cameras, fobs, and recordings. As an added bonus, disabled residents now have "smart" fobs that release automatic door openers to gain access to their building.

## **Tenant Services**

### *Tenant Support*

The Tenant Service Coordinator, continued 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 participation in the group lead to the selection of Drake Village for a 12-week exercise

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class at Winchester Hospital's Community Health Institute made possible by a grant through Minuteman Senior Services. The class, began 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.

The AHA Office Manager, continued 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 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.

Through the direction of the AHA Board of Commissioners a new evening program for the children of the Menotomy Manor Development was begun during the summer of 2007. This program, modeled after the parks and recreation program of years ago, offered park instructors who gave direction to the children with arts and crafts as well as supervised games in the evening at the Thompson School Playground. Many of the Board members also participated in the games. The AHA would like to thank the Arlington Boys and Girls Club, the Town of Arlington's Recreation Department and the Arlington Police Department for participating in this new and exciting summer program.

## *Annual Cookouts*

The annual cookouts for the elderly and disabled residents were held in each of our four elderly/handicap developments. The "Summer Cooler" theme was a complete success. The AHA salutes the following 2007 "Tenant of the Year" award recipients: Ann Mansfield (*Drake Village*), Lois Hagen (*Chestnut Manor*), Regina Deshler and Peter Szerlag (*Winslow Towers*), and Lorraine Donovan (*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 - New Units**

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.

## *New Units*

Thanks to the Board of Selectmen, the AHA was awarded a \$75,000 CDBG grant for the acquisition of additional affordable housing in Arlington. With a combination of CDBG funds and housing authority operating funds, the AHA purchased a one bedroom unit to add to its family housing program. This is the only one bedroom unit in the family housing program. This has allowed the housing authority the ability to move overhoused tenants currently living in a two bedroom unit to a unit of appropriate size freeing up the two bedroom units for other families in need.

The AHA worked in partnership with the Housing Corporation of Arlington in trying to create new units of affordable housing. The partnership studied and identified the Chestnut Street property as an ideal site for new units of affordable housing. After extensive work and planning by both groups it was decided the best use of the property would be for the Housing Authority to create new units of housing for people with disabilities. Although it was decided the partnership did not work at this site, The Arlington Housing Authority would like thank the Housing Corporation of Arlington for its assistance and looks forward to working in partnership with it at other sites in town.

The Arlington Housing Authority has begun the process for the creation of 10 new units of housing for people with disabilities. In Partnership with the Department of Mental Retardation (DMR) and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) a new group home will be built on Medford Street. This will be the first of its kind housing, combining a five-bedroom group home with five individual apartments for people who can live independently. The home will be supervised 24/7 and funded through the DHCD and DMR. The AHA already operates another Chapter 689 group home, the Donnelly Building, and has found this program to be extremely safe and successful. All AHA owned properties will remain as affordable into perpetuity.

Family self-sufficiency continues to be a major focus for the AHA Board in the Housing Choice Voucher program, (formerly called the Section 8 program). In 2007 the AHA hired a family self-sufficiency coordinator to begin setting up the FSS Program. This will create new opportunities for the participants in the FSS program giving them the work skills and educational opportunities to become self sufficient in five years.

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](http://www.arlingtonhousing.org), is now available and provides valuable information to those wishing to learn more about the AHA and its programs.

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## Recognitions

The Authority would also like to recognize Franklin W. Hurd for his thirteen years of service as the Executive Director of the Arlington Housing Authority. Mr. Hurd retired at the end of 2007. The authority welcomes John Griffin as its new Executive Director beginning in 2008.

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

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE

The Affordable Housing Task Force (AHTF) was established by unanimous vote of Town Meeting on May 3, 1999. The purpose was to quantify the need for affordable housing in Arlington, and find solutions that work. An important part of the Task Force's work is to help the Town move closer to fulfilling the statewide goal of having 10% of the units in all municipalities affordable to low and moderate income households. During this past year, the Task Force worked on the following initiatives.

### Inclusionary Zoning Changes

The Task Force proposed changes to the "Affordable Housing" section of the Zoning Bylaw to change the way prices are set for affordable condos, and rents set for affordable rental units, such that the units will be affordable to people with lower incomes. Currently all prices are set to be affordable to households at 80% of median income (\$59,550 for a family of 3). The amendment changes the pricing such that condos will be affordable to households at 70% of median income (\$52,106 for a family of 3) and rental units will be affordable to households at 60% of median income (\$44,663 for a family of 3). This amendment was adopted unanimously by Town Meeting in April, 2007.

### Affordable Housing at Symmes

With the redevelopment of the Symmes Hospital site Arlington will get its biggest addition of affordable housing in decades. The anticipated 200 units of new housing will include thirty affordable units (15%), and an additional ten "Middle Income" units, (affordable to households at 81% to 120% of median income). This past year the plan for affordable housing at Symmes was approved by the State, for inclusion in our Inventory of Affordable Housing. The developers have offered an additional \$150,000 to subsidize the low and moderate income renters at Symmes, thanks to the efforts of the Affordable Housing Task Force.

### Affordable Housing Trust Fund

The Task Force has proposed the creation of an Affordable Housing Trust Fund, which will be on the

warrant for the 2008 Town Meeting. The Trust Fund, if established, will be able to receive and distribute funds for affordable housing.

### Affordable Condos

During the past year, the Town and developer held a lottery for purchasers of four affordable units at "Minuteman Village", on Brattle Street. More than 100 people applied for the affordable condos, priced at \$175,000 for a three-bedroom unit.

## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Arlington Conservation Commission (ACC) is required by state and local laws to protect and preserve wetlands and waterways and their surrounding areas. The ACC is comprised of seven appointed volunteer Members and one volunteer Associate Member, and a part-time, paid administrator. At meetings twice a month and through on-site visits, commission members work to ensure that all construction and development projects, residential and commercial, that may alter any wetlands, floodplains, rivers, streams, ponds and/or lakes are in compliance with state and local regulations. The ACC also protects and manages the Town's Conservation Lands and natural resources.

### Regulatory Activities

The ACC is mandated to protect wetlands, waterways, water supplies, fisheries, wildlife and wildlife habitat as well as regulate activities in a floodplain through its administration of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Arlington Bylaw for Wetlands Protection. ACC members regularly seek continuing education to ensure legal compliance with frequently changing regulations and to assist applicants through the regulatory process.

In the year 2007, the ACC convened twenty-four public meetings, and provided coordination, monitoring, permit review and consultation on numerous property residential and municipal redevelopments around town. The board issued four Orders of Conditions, one Amendment, Extension, two Certificates of Compliance, and eight Determinations of Applicability.

### Conservation Activities

#### Land Stewards

Our volunteer citizen organization, Arlington Land Stewards (ALS) has assisted in managing twenty-four Town-owned conservation lands comprising approximately thirty acres. Land stewards monitor, coordinate and maintain with permission from the ACC conservation land of their choice, often in their immediate neighborhood or sometimes elsewhere in Town. Each land steward is provided with a stewardship handbook listing

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the location of conservation lands, conservation land regulations as well as problem/solution management information. The handbook is available online at [http://town.arlington.ma.us/town/concom/LS/concom\\_LS\\_01.htm](http://town.arlington.ma.us/town/concom/LS/concom_LS_01.htm). Activities in 2007 included the following items.

### *Land Stewards Meeting*

An Ecological Landscaping Forum was held as the annual spring event for the Arlington Land Stewards. The program featured a panel discussion addressing the principles of ecological landscaping and habitat gardens, birding and invasive species. The panel was composed of the following Arlington residents: Sandy Vorce, Property Manager, Mass Audubon's Habitat Education Center and Wildlife Sanctuary; Karsten Hartel, Menotomy Bird Club; and Russ Cohen, author of "Wild Plants I Have Known ...And Eaten." On display was "A Visual Journal of the Arlington Reservoir Tree Replacement Project", photographs and watercolors by Cathy Garnett.

### *Conservation Land Signs*

DPW provided new Arlington Conservation Land signs which have been installed in a number of locations by volunteers.



*Conservation Land Sign at Mt. Gilboa*

### *Arlington Conservation Stewardship Fund (ACSF)*

The Arlington Land Trust (ALT) in partnership with the ACC in 2005 established a new tax-deductible fund to support land stewardship activities in Arlington. Monies from the ACSF were used in 2007 to purchase materials for native plantings at the Stone Road conservation area.

### *Arlington Reservoir*

The ACC sponsored another year of an ongoing multi-year project to control water chestnuts at the Arlington Reservoir that were choking out wildlife and impairing water quality. This year again required only minimum hand removal of plants from the waterway by the contractor, Aquatic Control Technologies, Inc., rather than by mechanical harvesters as needed in the first several years.

The Reservoir Dam rehabilitation project commenced work in April of 2005 and was completed (except for some landscaping) by December 2006. A small area of reconstructed wetland was installed to replace some areas that were lost because of the dam repair work. The ACC will continue to monitor its development.



*Wetland restoration area at the Arlington Reservoir, May 2006*

In compliance with the ACC's wetlands regulations for tree replacement, new trees were planted in late October and more will be planted in the spring of 2008 in compensation for those removed as a result of construction. Fifty trees were donated to the Town's recently formed Tree Committee and were planted throughout town as part of the Town's Adopt-A-Tree program.

By Spring 2008, even more plant varieties will invite visitors to walk along the woodland path encircling the 65-acre water body. Cathy Garnett, a landscape architect, member of the Arlington Conservation Commission and Vision 2020 Reservoir Committee, prepared a landscape plan to accommodate more than 100 trees

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to replace those removed during the dam construction project. The majority of the tree species selected were native species and range in size and age class. The species were selected to attract birds, butterflies and other wildlife.

## *Arlington's Great Meadows*

In 2007, the Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows (FoAGM) continued with their Japanese Knotweed control project along the bikeway and sponsored a number of nature walks. In addition students from the Brackett School participated in a vernal pool program at AGM. The annual report and other information is available at [www.foagm.org](http://www.foagm.org).

## *Spy Pond*

Reconstruction of the Spy Pond Park between Linwood Circle and Pond Road continued, and was completed in Fall 2006. A project to reconstruct the path along the Route 2 side of the pond has been partially completed, and is designed to include new stabilized access points to the water while closing and restoring badly eroded sections of the shoreline.

## *Meadowbrook Park and Mystic Valley Parkway*

In June 2007, land stewards, ACC members and others carried out an extensive and successful cleanup of the conservation area. This park collects many items that wash down Mill Brook.

## *Mystic River and Alewife Brook*

In the Fall of 2007, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued a draft revised floodplain study draft for the Mystic River watershed, including Alewife Brook. It is under review by the community, town officials and engineers.

## **2008 Goals and Beyond**

The ACC will continue to encourage, support, and assist the various volunteer and environmental advocacy groups that are dedicated to better preserving the Town's precious conservation lands and other open spaces within its immediate borders as well as those directly adjacent to it. These groups include, among others: Arlington Land Stewards, Arlington Land Trust, Open Space Committee, Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows, Friends of Alewife Reservation (FAR), Mystic River Watershed Association, Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions.

The ACC will work actively to support all efforts directed at preventing raw sewage from entering Alewife Brook. The ACC would like to see the Alewife Brook restored to a healthy, fishable and swimmable waterway in the very near future. To do so, will be a significant challenge for the many parties involved in the betterment of Alewife Brook. Yet the ACC believes this goal

is attainable.

The ACC, in working with the Open Space Committee and the Arlington Land Trust, hopes to identify and, when available, acquire additional open space as protected "conservation land" to benefit residents of the Town. Notably, Vision 2020 survey results from a 2001 polling showed the "acquisition of open space" as a top-ranked concern in residents' priorities for Arlington.

## **Thanks**

The ACC sincerely thanks all individuals and organizations that contributed directly or indirectly to the activities of its fortieth year.

Many special thanks go to the scores of volunteers who came out for cleanup projects, assisted as land stewards or participated in the many Friends groups that work to preserve our natural resources and heritage.

## **In Special Tribute**

One of our longest-serving members, Judy Hodges retired from the Commission in October. Her endurance, in serving the community, is something to be praised and, hopefully, emulated. We especially thank her for caring for and monitoring our smallest Conservation land parcel at 53 Rear Park Avenue.

## VISION 2020

By the end of the 2008 Annual Town Meeting, Vision 2020 will be a project that has involved and served the town for eighteen years.

## **Background**

Inaugurated in June of 1990 to address a need for broad, long-range planning, the Vision 2020 Steering Committee began a two year exploration process of goals, strategies and actions involving town leadership, employees and townspeople.

On June 8, 1992 Town Meeting created the Vision 2020 Standing Committee as an official committee of the Town. With the motto *A Proud Past, A Focused Future*, the committee was charged 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." The Standing Committee and its goal-supporting task group structure follows to this day.

Enacted as bylaw at the 1993 Annual Town Meeting for the Town to consider as it conducts its business, Town Goals cover the areas of Business, Communication, Community and Citizen Service, Culture and Recreation, Diversity, Education, Environment, Fiscal Resources, and Governance. Three focus groups have formed since under the Environment Task Group: the



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Spy Pond, Reservoir, and Sustainable Arlington Committees. Another committee includes student representation at Arlington High School.

Vision 2020 continues to endeavor to bring the Town closer to the intent of these goals by partnering with townspeople, town committees, town employees, and leaders through its task groups and standing committee. These efforts run the gamut from awareness and appreciation pieces on town's resources, planning for improvement of Town practices, research and development of Town Meeting warrant articles, forums, publications, and physical improvements to town-wide surveys.

## Notable Activities for 2007

- Employing the concept that *while you are being counted, your opinions count too*, Vision 2020, for the seventeenth time, created, tallied, and analyzed responses received from 17 % of all Arlington households solicited to the 2007 Vision 2020 Annual Census Mailing Insert Survey. This year's principal focus was on Arlington as a Welcoming Community and opinions, concerns and planning for its Open Spaces. Using a new scanning tool, Vision 2020 processed the 3,394 household responses received by April 1, 2007. A summary and analysis was reported to Town Meeting, Town officials and departments in May, and is reprinted in this report (see page 106). Data gleaned from this survey was useful to the Town in updating its Open Space Plan;
- Updated My Tax Dollars, an interactive spreadsheet allowing taxpayers to learn their household's contributions to each Town service by using FY2007-8 information posted it on the Town's website;
- Following a request by the Fiscal Resources Task Group(FRTG), the Board of Selectmen arranged a presentation and report by the MWRA to explain how the agency uses Arlington's contribution. This presentation was attended by FRTG members and others and copies of the report were posted on the Town website;
- With the Board of Selectmen(BOS), sponsored and organized the Annual State of the Town Address and Reception on the first night of the 2007 Annual Town Meeting. The address was given by incoming BOS Chairman, Anne La Court;
- Organized and presented a sustainability forum titled *Arlington: You Can Fight Global Warming – What Families Can Do* with Kevin Knobloch, President of the Union of Concerned Scientists as the featured speaker.

This forum was attended by 200 people of all ages and introduced ASAP, *Arlington's Sustainability Action Plan, Part I*, as well as practical and sustainable hints, practices and products;

- Participated on the Town's new Energy Working Group which focuses on implementing the recommendations of the *ASAP, Part I*;
- Participated in the town's early efforts to explore the No Place for Hate Program; now continuing under the program title Arlington Common Threads;
- Helped plan the book selection for the *2007 Community Read*, choosing Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mocking Bird* and participated in community discussions on its enduring value;
- Sponsored a report/reception by Reservoir Committee member Cathy Garnett on her Arlington Cultural Council grant project featuring her photographs, paintings and charts of the planning and progress of the Town's Reservoir Dam Remediation Project. Her presentation also included three additional speakers, all Arlington residents: Sandy Vorce, site manager for Habitat in Belmont, outlining ways to envision and plan for a habitat garden; Russ Cohen on edible plants; and Karsten Hartel on the 235 bird species that visit the Arlington Reservoir. A lively question and answer session with presenters and audience followed.
- With the League of Women Voters of Arlington, co-sponsored two Candidates' Nights: the first in preparation for the Town's Annual Spring Election, and the second before the November Primary Election to replace the State Senate seat vacated by the resignation of former Senator Robert Havern;



Measuring for the bench at the shore of Spy Pond

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



*Preparing to dig into Spy Pond hillside for the bench*

- Conducted the Third Annual Spy Pond Trails Day at the Route 2 path abutting the southern shore of Spy Pond. With the help of the Appalachian Mountain Club trails crew and Town-discarded curbing, a total of 52 volunteers built three more granite trails from the path to the pond. This third year effort brings the total number of stone paths to nine (each with 10 to 29 steps) encouraging fishermen and other visitors to use the steps to the pond's edge rather than breaking new trails and eroding the banks. A pond-side granite-curbing bench was also installed enabling spectacular vistas of the pond. Additional volunteer crews accomplished tree pruning, invasive plant and trash removal;



*Enjoying the completed bench at Spy Pond shore*

- Again secured grants and donations from area businesses and foundations, as well as Arlington DPW's discarded curbing and its delivery to the trail sites, to accomplish the Trails Day work;
- Planned and conducted the *Spy Pond Splash*

as an adjunct activity to the Town's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Family Day celebration on September 29<sup>th</sup>. With the help of Still River Outfitters, their instruction, outfitting and supervision, more than 200 folks enjoyed Spy Pond from the water in canoes and kayaks. A demonstration water polo team also displayed its skills. Shoreline activities at the boat launching area of the renovated Spy Pond Park included musical renditions provided by the New Orleans Jazz Band, children's activities of flag making to adorn the water-borne craft, as well as constructing toy model birch bark canoes. The Friends of Spy Pond Park presented additional information about the park and its Friends Group. A parade of boats circling the pond's north basin flying their child-constructed flags completed the celebration of this marvelous Arlington resource.

- Began the planning for a native plantings habitat garden at the newly renovated Arlington Reservoir which will complement that project's installation of the replacement trees;
- Continued to participate on the School Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Diversity; advocating for recruiting and hiring of minority staff for both the schools and all Town positions;
- Began to collaborate with the Town's Disability Commission on a joint project of a Disability Job Fair for the fall of 2008;
- Gathered data for a resource Guide / Directory of Arlington Recreational and Cultural Entities with contact information available on the web and in hard copy;
- With the help of Arlington High School's Workplace students, distributed flyers to residences in the entire 748 acre Spy Pond Watershed warning of the impact of high-phosphorous fertilizers on weed growth at Spy Pond or any waterbody, and informing of environmentally friendly planting classes and workshop opportunities; and,
- Prepared to resubmit the waterbodies warrant article, successfully passed by the 2006 Annual Town Meeting, which asked the Board of Selectmen to file Home Rule legislation to establish a special fund into which money may be appropriated and available for maintenance, treatment and oversight of all the Town's waterbodies. As in 2006, the 2008 warrant article would ask for a \$15,000 appropriation again to be available for the same maintenance, treatment, oversight purposes whether the legislature acts favorably or not because the Town needs this sum raised from

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

general tax to address, at least minimally, waterbody issues.

## Recognitions

Regrettably, Vision 2020 notes the resignation of two long-time Task Group Representatives to the Vision 2020 Standing Committee: Sherry Miller of the Governance Task Group (GTG) and Eugene Benson of the Environment Task Group (ETG). Both have had a significant impact on Vision 2020 practices and programs. Sherry and the GTG oversaw the first evaluation of Town services survey in the 90's which generated more than 3,600 responses. She also helped author *Settling In, an Introductory Guide to Arlington*, now in its fifth edition and much valued by newcomers. Another program that she influenced was the Annual Warrant Review. Gene Benson helped the ETG grow three individual committees: Spy Pond, the Reservoir, and Sustainable Arlington. He also guided the Town's adoption of Goals for Spy Pond and Goals for the Reservoir, LEED standards for building programs, the most fuel-efficient vehicle purchases when the Town does go out to purchase vehicles, as well as shaping the scope of the Open Space Committee. Vision 2020 applauds and appreciates Sherry and Gene's many contributions to making Arlington a better place.

Thankfully, Elizabeth Karpati, active birder and enthusiast on all three Environment committees, has been appointed to represent the ETG to the Vision 2020 Standing Committee.

With sadness, Vision 2020 notes the death of long-time GTG member Ralph Sexton, always helpful to the GTG efforts listed above, and whose informative and gentlemanly introductions to the Warrant Review put that evening's work into the appropriate historic and current context. He will be missed.

Vision 2020 appreciates all who contribute to this program. Their skills and expertise, research, opinions, persistence, grant writing, note-taking, web posting, physical labor, planning, program creation and creative ideas – all offered generously – have truly enabled Arlington's Vision 2020 to strive to assist the town in preparing for its current and future needs.

## OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

The Open Space Committee (OSC) was established by Town Meeting in 1996. Members include concerned citizens and representatives of key Town departments and commissions. The committee meets monthly to exchange ideas and discuss ways to protect and maintain the Town's open space and recreation 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 protection, stewardship, and appropriate uses of the Town's open spaces.

## Open Space Plan

The committee's primary responsibility 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. During 2007 the committee's major task was to update and rewrite the 2002–2007 Plan. The new document, for 2007–2012, was approved conditionally in December 2007 by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) Division of Conservation Services, pending a few small changes made in early 2008.

Printed copies of the Plan are available 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.arlingtonma.gov/Public\\_Documents/ArlingtonMA\\_BComm/OpenSpace\\_Folder/OpenSpacePlan](http://www.arlingtonma.gov/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_BComm/OpenSpace_Folder/OpenSpacePlan)).

In anticipation of needing to update the plan during 2006 and 2007, the committee submitted an application for Community Development Block Grant funds of \$15,000 to hire consultants to help with preparation of the new plan. Town Meeting in 2006 approved that request, and OSC subsequently selected Ralph Willmer of VHB in Watertown to spearhead the public participation process and to help the committee prepare the final report to the Town and the state. Mr. Willmer is an Arlington resident who has extensive experience as a planner, and in particular has worked with the state and many other communities on open space planning.

The Vision 2020 survey that accompanied the annual Town Census mailing in January 2007 was a key element in assessing residents' concerns about open space and recreation issues. In addition, OSC and Willmer conducted two public forums, in February and June 2007, in order to present aspects of the plan to the public and to obtain feedback on various goals and priorities. The committee also met with and shared draft documents with town officials, leaders of Friends and volunteer groups, and other citizens in order to incorporate their concerns into the final draft plan.

## Other Activities

The committee 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 during the year were the proposed Green Dog Program and policies for off-leash times and locations; preparation of a letter expressing the committee's support for and concerns about the state De-

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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partment of Conservation and Recreation's proposed Alewife Greenway Path as part of the larger Alewife Reservation Master Plan; and the Cemetery Expansion Committee's explorations of alternative burial options and locations.

In January 2007, former member Adam Pachter announced that he would not seek reappointment to the committee as a "citizen" representative, so the opening was publicized. Several people expressed interest, and Jane Auger was appointed to join the committee in April.

OSC participated in Town Day in September 2007, displaying maps of 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.

## Goals for 2008:

During 2008 the committee will begin to address specific elements of the Five-Year Action Plan outlined in the new 2007–2012 Open Space and Recreation Plan. Some early projects that committee members will work on include collaborating with the Town's Disability Committee to document access issues in various parks and recreational facilities; coordinating educational programs on invasive plants with the Arlington Garden Club, Land Stewards, and other groups; working with the Mystic River Watershed Association on enhancing the Mill Brook corridor and other watershed issues; and contributing to a Conservation Commission's evaluation of Cooke's Hollow as a possible site for a memorial garden for cremains, in conjunction with the Cemetery Expansion Committee.

In addition, the committee will work with representatives of various Town departments and commissions and the volunteer groups that manage or monitor the twelve sites for which management plans were prepared in prior years: 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. These site plans need to be updated every few years, and new sites will be identified for future management plans.

The committee will continue to collaborate with other Town entities and community groups to advocate for the proper maintenance and management of the Town's valuable open space and recreation resources. In particular, the committee will continue to monitor the situations regarding Elizabeth Island and the Mugar land, both significant privately owned natural resources that are priorities for conservation protection through acquisition or other means.

## 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 on town roadways and the Minuteman Bikeway -- from recreational riding to using the bicycle for transportation and errands.

ABAC's annual events include the ABAC Winter Social, the BIKE-Arlington Tour, 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](http://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:

- Advised on the trial program for snow-plowing the Minuteman Bikeway in Arlington this past winter.
- Coordinated installation of several new bicycle-parking racks in town, funded by a state grant from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC).
- Welcomed the installation of bike racks on MBTA buses serving the Arlington area.
- Hosted the well-attended ABAC Winter Social at the Whittemore-Robbins House in February, featuring an informative presentation on bicycling facilities in Portland, Oregon, by Arlington resident and professional urban planner Phil Goff.
- Organized the 10th annual BIKE-Arlington Tour, a casual-paced bicycle tour around town in May, which concluded with refreshments at Spy Pond Park.
- Hosted a Bicycling Information booth at Arlington Town Day, where ABAC members distributed bicycle-related information and discussed local bicycling issues with the community.
- Organized a Tri-Town Bikeway Community meeting to discuss common bikeway issues with representatives from Arlington, Lexington, and Bedford.
- Hosted instructional Bicycling Skills classes in Arlington to promote safer, more efficient bicycling in the area.
- Continued to discuss and plan various improvements to Massachusetts Avenue in Arlington that would benefit both pedestrians

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and bicyclists, related to the proposed street redesign project.

- Worked with the Department of Public Works to provide basic maintenance on Arlington's 3-mile stretch of the Minuteman Bikeway, including organizing a bikeway cleanup day in early May. For more information on the Minuteman Bikeway, see the website at [www.minutemanbikeway.org](http://www.minutemanbikeway.org).
- Represented Arlington at the annual 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 2008, including the ABAC Winter Social (March 13), the BIKE-Arlington Tour (May 18), Bicycling Skills classes hosted in Arlington, and an informational booth at Arlington Town Day in September. ABAC is currently working to install additional bicycle-parking racks in Arlington's commercial districts, funded by a grant from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). ABAC is also continuing to work on common bikeway issues with representatives from Arlington, Lexington, and Bedford. 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](http://www.abac.arlington.ma.us), contact the Department of Planning and Community Development at 781-316-3090, or e-mail [jack-johnson@alum.bu.edu](mailto:jack-johnson@alum.bu.edu). ABAC usually meets on the first Monday night of the month in Town Hall.

## TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

The Transportation Advisory Committee's goal is to improve the quality of life in Arlington by improving the safety for all modes of transportation while balancing safety with mobility, equity, the environment, and public health. In this effort, the TAC, Arlington Police Department's Traffic Division, the Public Works Department, and the Planning Department work closely together.

The TAC was established by the Board of Selectmen in the spring of 2001 to advise the Selectmen on transportation matters for the Town. The TAC was honored in November 2007 by the Town of Arlington with

the 200th Anniversary Year Good Citizen Award. Major activities of the TAC in 2007 included the following projects.

### Massachusetts Avenue Corridor

During the past year, a consultant was selected to work with the Town on redesign of Massachusetts Avenue between the Cambridge city line and Pond Lane. Redesign will include both roadway and streetscape improvements when complete. While both Mass Highway and the Federal Highway Administration have committed design funding, the actual release of funds and the start of design activities awaits passage of the state transportation bond bill.

### Westminster Avenue

Following a fatal accident on Westminster Avenue in the spring, the TAC, working with other town officials and neighbors, proposed immediate short-term improvements for Westminster and Lowell Street. These recommendations were voted by the Board of Selectmen and enacted by DPW in a matter of weeks. Consideration of further improvements for the neighborhood was initiated shortly afterwards, and those that are in Arlington will be recommended this winter for installation in the spring. A few improvements are also under consideration for recommendation to the town of Lexington, where Westminster and Lowell intersect beyond the Arlington border.

### Schools in Arlington

Following successful pilot projects with the Hardy and Dallin Schools, the TAC is pursuing similar activities for the remaining elementary schools, including the establishment of school zones where appropriate. The model used in the pilot has the school principal leading the effort, with contributions from parents, Safe Routes to Schools, Stand for Children, APD, and DPW. Work was initiated at Stratton School in July and paint and sign improvements were made before the start of school. Work began on Thompson School in October. The issue of safe transport to school was raised at a joint meeting of the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen in late November. The TAC proposed a working concept to address all schools in Arlington, both public and private, that addresses both operational improvements and capital improvements such as sidewalks. Because of the need for capital improvements and the large number of schools in Arlington, this will be a multi-year program. Both the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen voted to endorse this plan in January 2008. This will be a major activity of the TAC in 2008.

Three private schools residing in town buildings have been studied this year because of significant traffic issues in their vicinity: Arlington Children Center, In-

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ternational School of Boston, and Dearborn Academy. Recommendations have been voted by the Board of Selectmen to improve the traffic circulation, and will be implemented in 2008.

## **Parking**

In early 2007, the TAC developed, and the Selectmen adopted, procedures for dealing with resident and public safety requests for one-side parking and time limits in residential neighborhoods.

## **Downing Square**

This six-way intersection of Park Ave, Lowell St, Park Ave Extension, Bow St and Westminster Ave is a very difficult intersection. Several alternatives have been identified by the TAC working with DPW and are now undergoing analysis and measurement by a consulting firm. This work was delayed for the appointment of a new Director of DPW and Town Engineer, which occurred in 2007. We expect the alternative analyses to be completed in the winter, and design to begin in the spring.

## **Symmes Development**

In 2007 the TAC reviewed the drawings submitted by the developer and identified several areas where the requirements of the special permit clauses for transportation had not been addressed. Working with the Planning Department, these issues have been identified and are now being addressed by the Town Manager.

## **Green Line Extension**

Working with the Planning Department, Senator Marzilli and the Board of Selectmen, the TAC is advocating for the Somerville/West Medford Green Line Extension to come as far as Route 16 where it can be useful to residents of Arlington. Station alternatives will be under study during 2008. ([www.greenlineextension.org](http://www.greenlineextension.org))

## **Neighborhood Projects**

The TAC responded to requests from Arlington residents for transportation improvements ranging from simple situations to major safety issues. Examples include: Webster Street parking, crosswalks on Warren Street, Ravine, Academy, and Irving among many others.

## **Outreach**

The TAC participated in transportation meetings and events conducted by the Boston Area MPO, MBTA, Arlington Schools and School Committee, Massachusetts Dept. of Conservation and Recreation and the Summer Street Neighborhood Association. The Mass Ave Corridor project and schools were featured at the TAC's 2007 Town Day booth. The TAC maintains a web-

site ([tac.Arlington.ma.us](http://tac.Arlington.ma.us)) containing all formal reports submitted to the Board of Selectmen, committee agenda and minutes, and other transportation resources for Town residents.

The TAC continues to be very concerned by the limited Police resources for traffic enforcement. The staff for the Traffic Division was drastically reduced for fiscal year 2004 because of budget issues, and has not been replaced four years later. Traffic enforcement is a very important part of maintaining the quality of life in Arlington. We need drivers to approach Arlington with the thought, "I'll be careful because I could be ticketed here." It takes sustained enforcement to attain this position, and the benefits are increased public safety and quality of life. We were on this path before 2004, but we are very far from it as we start 2008.

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## VISION 2020 ANNUAL SURVEY RESULTS

### Respondents by Precinct

Precinct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Blank
# Respondents	101	150	127	152	132	147	129	183	127	183	133	174	132	155	145	164	118	113	164	124	167	374
% of Survey	3	4.4	3.7	4.5	3.9	4.3	3.8	5.4	3.7	5.4	3.9	5.1	3.9	4.6	4.3	4.8	3.5	3.3	4.8	3.7	4.9	11

### Respondents' household demographics

	None in Household		1 in Household		2 in Household		3 in Household		4 in Household		Greater than 4 in Household		Blank	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Adults aged 65 or older	2,225	65.6%	415	12.2%	332	9.8%	5	0.15%	4	0.12%	2	0.06%	411	12.1%
Adults aged 18 to 64	398	11.7%	729	21.5%	1,700	50.1%	226	6.7%	72	2.1%	17	0.5%	252	7.4%
Children 17 and under	1,800	53.1%	510	15.0%	512	15.1%	95	2.8%	12	0.4%	2	0.06%	459	13.5%

### Years in Arlington

Years in Arlington	Count	%
Less than 5	841	24.8%
5 to 15	979	28.8%
Greater than 15	1,371	40.4%
Blank	203	6.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,394</b>	

### Do you own or rent?

	Count	%
Own	2,464	72.6%
Rent	802	23.6%
Blank	128	3.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,394</b>	

### Describe your housing.

	Count	%
Single	1,841	54.2%
2 to 4 units	1,075	31.7%
5 or more units	329	9.7%
Blank	149	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,394</b>	

### Respondent's choices of statements which best describe Arlington as a welcoming and respectful community.

Count	Responses
2,397	Libraries, schools and government services are accessible and well-administered
2,256	Parks, playgrounds and open spaces are maintained and distributed throughout the town
2,184	I / We feel accepted
1,838	Local media (newspaper, cable, website, e-lists) help keep people up-to-date on town happenings
1,754	There are places where people can sit around casually and talk
1,546	Neighbors make efforts to know and help each other
1,536	Voting information is easy to find
1,142	Newcomers can easily find ways to participate in town life
1,132	A town resource directory is available
1,127	Town leaders and the culture of the community promote fairness and equality
937	Residents – new and long-term – feel their experiences and perspectives are valued
207	Blank

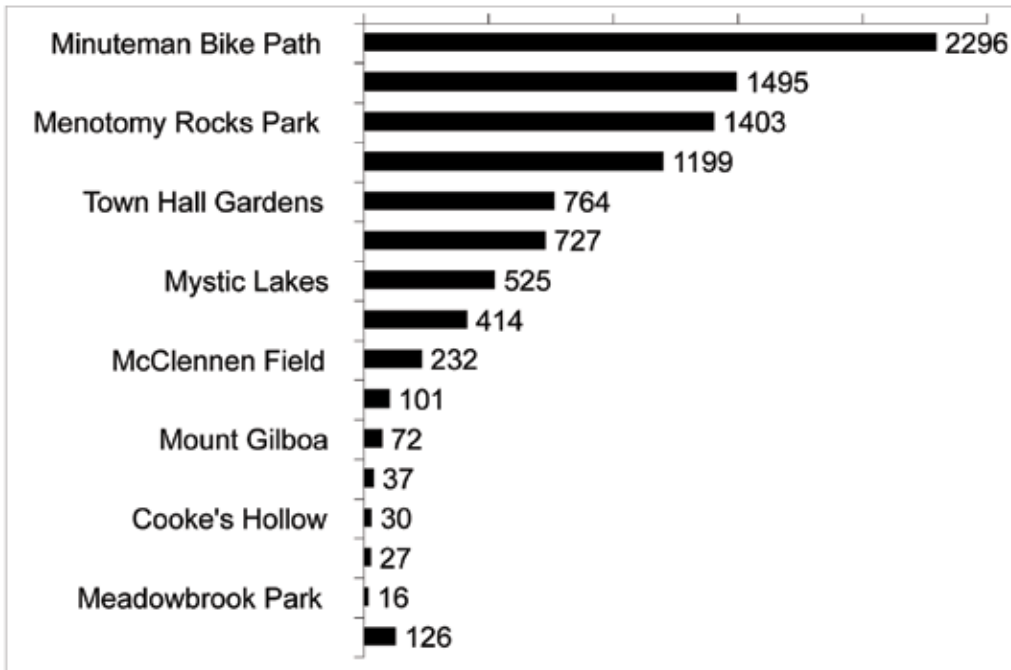
# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## VISION 2020 ANNUAL SURVEY RESULTS

**“Activate Arlington” Awareness of the 5-2-1 message about “5 fruits and veggies; less than 2 hours of screen time; and 1+ hour of exercise per day.**

	Yes		No		Don't Know		Blank	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Aware of message	742	21.9%	2,235	65.9%	262	7.7%	155	4.6%
Heard of " <b>Activate Arlington</b> "	607	17.9%	2,489	73.3%	157	4.6%	141	4.2%
Participated in " <b>Activate Arlington</b> "	365	10.8%	2,793	82.3%	103	3.0%	133	3.9%
<b>Total</b>	1,714		7,517		522		429	

**Respondents’ three favorite open spaces, passive parks, or natural areas own by Arlington.**

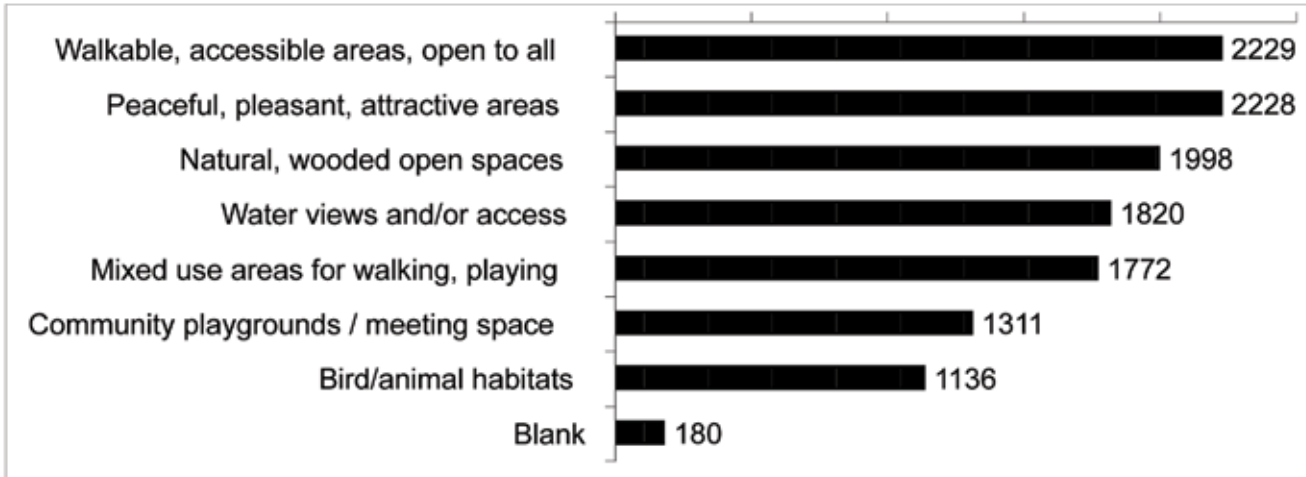




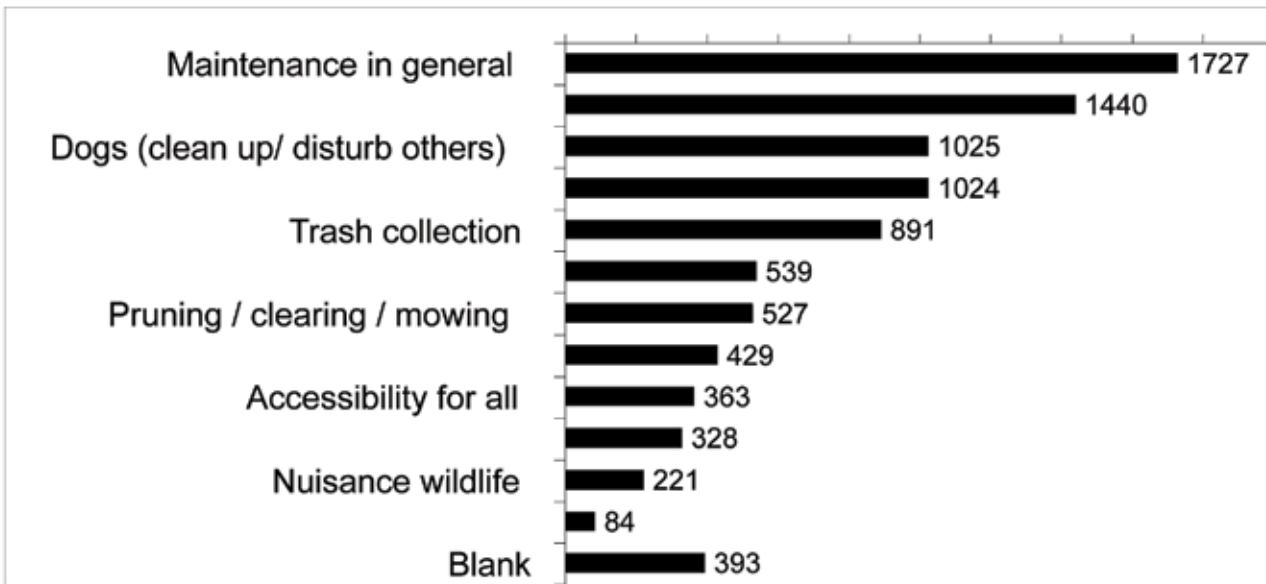
# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## VISION 2020 ANNUAL SURVEY RESULTS

### Features of open spaces, passive parks, or natural areas liked by respondents:



### Respondents' major concerns regarding the town's recreational and natural open spaces



### Respondents' support for dog parks and off-leash times:

	Yes		No		Don't Know		Blank	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Fenced dog parks in Arlington?	1,755	51.7%	696	20.5%	824	24.3%	119	3.5%
Designated off-leash times in specific areas of existing parks	1,356	40.0%	1,266	37.3%	647	19.1%	125	3.7%

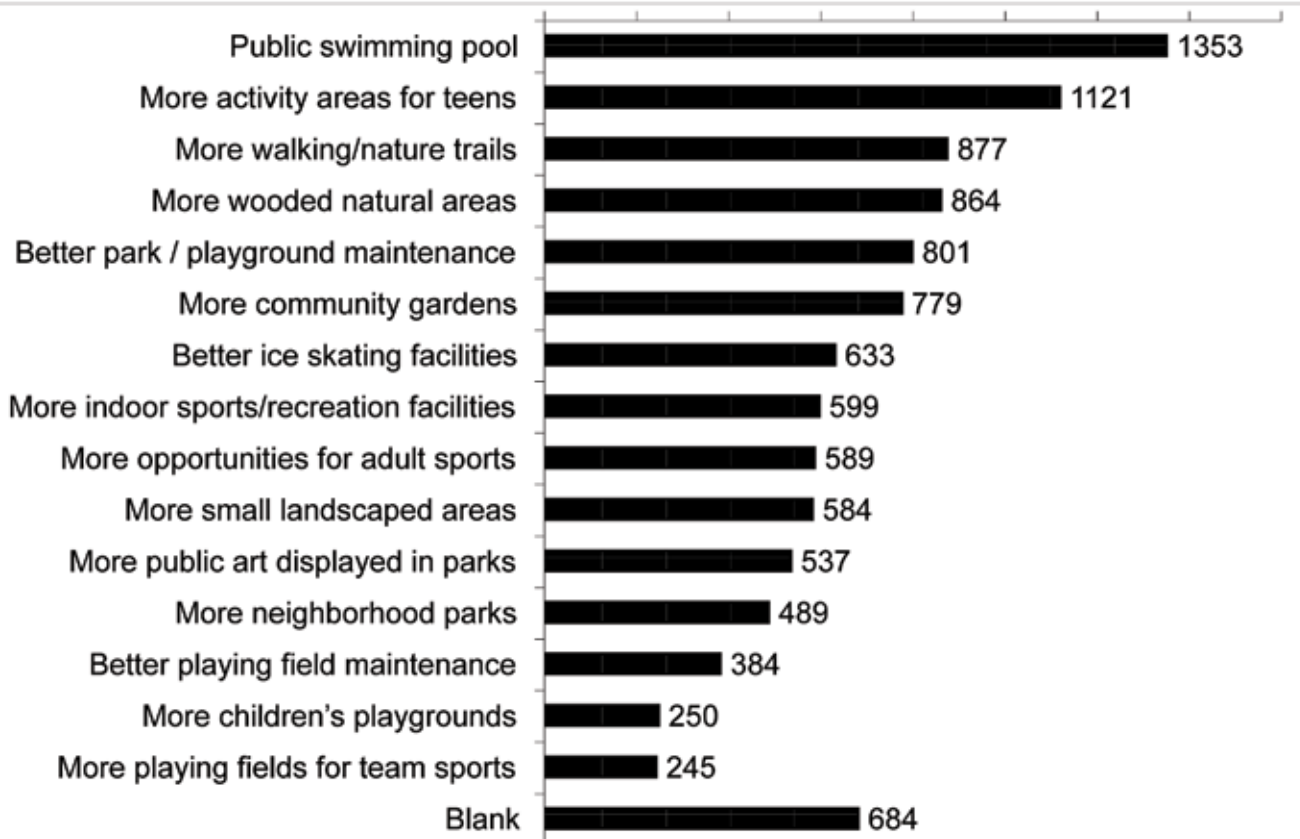
# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## VISION 2020 ANNUAL SURVEY RESULTS

Respondents' views on adequate amount of the following recreation facilities:

Facility	Adequate		Inadequate		No Opinion		Blank	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Outdoor/indoor swimming	595	17.5%	1,740	51.3%	843	24.8%	216	6.4%
Community gardens	650	19.2%	1,208	35.6%	1,226	36.1%	310	9.1%
Natural areas/nature trails	1,618	47.7%	1,077	31.7%	410	12.1%	289	8.5%
Dog parks	542	16.0%	1,022	30.1%	1,528	45.0%	302	8.9%
Tennis courts	1,011	29.8%	703	20.7%	1,387	40.9%	293	8.6%
Ice skating venues	1,262	37.2%	682	20.1%	1,139	33.6%	311	9.2%
Neighborhood parks	2,081	61.3%	651	19.2%	400	11.8%	262	7.7%
Walking/bike trails	2,414	71.1%	540	15.9%	205	6.0%	235	6.9%
Team playing fields	1,730	51.0%	364	10.7%	1,030	30.3%	270	8.0%
Children's playgrounds	2,191	64.6%	226	6.7%	755	22.2%	222	6.5%

Respondents' choices of up to five open space improvements:



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Respondents' choices of method of funding for up to five open space improvements (2,870 households responding):

