

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT BOARD

### Redevelopment Board

The Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) is both the planning board under MGL Chapter 41 section 81A and the urban renewal authority for the Town under MGL Chapter 121 (b) and is the Board of Survey, with authority to approve the design of ways for the purposes of ensuring that new building lots can meet zoning frontage and access requirements. As the permit granting authority for projects that fall under Environmental Design Review, the board spends considerable time reviewing applications for certain development projects to ensure that specific zoning standards are met.

### Planning & Community Development

The Department of Planning & Community Development prepares and implements long-term and short-range plans related to the Town's natural and built environment. This includes land-use, transportation, economic development, housing, open space and recreation, natural resources, historic preservation, and plans and projects that preserve and enhance Arlington's community character. The Department also administers the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and other grant programs, oversees the day-to-day operations of the Redevelopment Board buildings and other Town-owned, leased buildings, and supports the efforts of Town boards, committees, and commissions charged with planning-related responsibilities.

The Department is staffed by three full-time planners, a part-time planner, a grant administrator and a support staff of one. The staff supports over twenty-four Town committees and boards, plus Town initiatives. The Department administers five times as much value in federal revenue for Town services, not including the federal Weatherization and home rehabilitation programs, as it costs the Town to run the Department.

### 2010 Highlights & Initiatives

During 2010 the Department focused on the Massachusetts Avenue Corridor Project, the ARB and the Department focused on the successful Green Communities designation for the Town, the Environmental Design Review for a new apartment building, including 17 affordable housing units, at 30-50 Mill Street (the former Brigham's site), completing the Commercial Development Study, and actively pursued developers to acquire the Symmes redevelopment project with the current owner, JPI and the bank holding the mortgage. The Department also submitted a North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant application in coordination with the owner of the Mugar property in east Arlington in the Alewife area. Funds had been designated in the settlement of a pollution case for ex-

penditure in the Mystic River Watershed, of which the Mugar land is a part. The funds were to be distributed through NAWCA, and the Department was encouraged that the owner had indicated a willingness to sell a large portion of the land to the Town with the grant proceeds for conservation and flood control purposes. Although NAWCA ultimately did not fund the grant application, the Department is investigating other funding sources. The Department managed \$1.4 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds that were allocated for fifteen public services, nine public facility projects, and for housing and planning activities. The Department manages seven Town-owned properties controlled by the ARB, Town Manager or the Board of Selectmen, representing twenty-three tenants and approximately \$1 million in rents. Details of these highlights and initiatives are included in this report.

### Massachusetts Avenue Corridor

The Town received funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for improvements to Massachusetts Avenue in East Arlington, from the Cambridge city line to Pond Lane. This grant came to the Town as a result of longstanding concerns about pedestrian safety on Mass. Ave. The goals of the project are to make Mass. Ave. a safer and more attractive street that improves safety and mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users; to maintain motorist mobility and create a safer and more orderly traffic flow; and to improve the business environment by enhancing the streetscape and improving parking efficiency.

The project is being managed by the Town Planning Department and Department of Public Works, with guidance from a Project Review Committee made up of Arlington residents and business owners. Following a public informational session held in June, the 25% design review plans were submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation in November. Additional design, engineering, and public hearings are planned. Construction is anticipated in 2012.

### Environmental Design Review – 30-50 Mill Street

A significant Environmental Design Review special permit was granted by the ARB for a new 116 unit apartment building and retail/office buildings at the former Brigham's Ice Cream headquarters on Mill Street. This development will add 17 units of affordable housing to the Town's inventory of subsidized affordable housing, the first units created under the Town's current inclusionary zoning bylaw.

### Symmes

JPI, the entity that controls the site, and PNC Bank, its lender, accepted proposals from developers to purchase the site and assume redevelopment of the Symmes project. A developer proposed a smaller project

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

---

of townhouses in 2010, but would not meet the requirements of the affordable housing bylaw, and withdrew. The ARB then met in December with a developer selected by JPI and PNC Bank and awaits the developer's plans for the site to determine whether their redevelopment proposal meets the redevelopment criteria for the site.

To further encourage redevelopment of the Symmes site, 2010 Town Meeting voted to expand the possible uses of the Medical Office Building site, including possible residential development.

## Community Development Block Grant

Arlington received \$1.4 million dollars in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds that were allocated for fifteen public services, nine public facility projects, and for housing and planning activities.

## Affordable Housing

The Town continued to increase the number of affordable units in Arlington during the past year. Working closely with the non-profit Housing Corporation of Arlington, 10 new units of affordable rental housing were completed and occupied during 2010. The development, known as Forest/Peirce, was purchased, renovated and de-leaded. The Peirce Street property is on the Arlington Historical Commission's significant property list. The renovation included energy conserving improvements, including increased efficiency in the heating system, and new windows. A second property was also purchased during 2010 for affordable rental housing, to be known as the Capitol Block, for its location near the Capitol Theatre. That project will contain 32 units of affordable, green, rental housing. Among the goals met by the project are that it will reduce energy use and carbon emissions, it complies with Smart Growth Principles due to its location near public transit and existing infrastructure, and restores historically significant structures. The Town supported both these projects with an allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds.

During the past year the Arlington Redevelopment Board permitted 116 rental units at the former Brigham's factory site, at 30-50 Mill Street. Of those units, 17 (15%) will be affordable. Also during the last year, the Department oversaw the resale of a two bedroom affordable condominium at Russell Place. The new owner is a local teacher, who lives there with her son.

## Leased Properties

The Redevelopment Board (ARB) manages three buildings and the Planning Department is responsible for day-to-day management of four additional buildings owned and leased by the Town for the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen. These seven buildings have over 180,000 gross square feet of commercial space

valued at over \$20 million, housing twenty-three tenants paying over \$1 million in rents. The seven buildings consist of four former schools, one former library, and two historic houses. 2009 was the third year of a focused effort to define and implement a comprehensive maintenance and capital plan for the buildings after a long period of relative inactivity.

In addition to these major capital and maintenance projects, routine maintenance is completed on a daily basis by the Department's Building Craftsman, primarily at the Central School building, the Gibbs School building, the Jefferson Cutter House, and 23 Maple Street. Most routine maintenance at the Crosby and Parmenter School buildings and at the Dallin Library building is performed and paid directly by the tenants of those buildings. The Town's facilities maintenance staff also helps the Department's Building Craftsman maintain the buildings.

## Acknowledgements

After nearly fifty years of combined experience and dedication to the Town, Arlington Redevelopment Board members Ed Tsoi and Roland Chaput decided not to seek reappointment in 2010. Mr. Tsoi, principal in the architecture and design firm Tsoi Kobus & Associates, joined the Redevelopment Board in 1974. He served continuously for 36 years. Roland Chaput, an engineer, serves on many Arlington boards and committees, including the Open Space Committee, the Conservation Commission, and Friends of Robbins Farm Park, and is a volunteer at the Brackett School. Mr. Tsoi and Mr. Chaput's talent and devotion to the Town are deeply appreciated.

## PERMANENT TOWN BUILDING COMMITTEE

The Permanent Town Building Committee (PTBC) was established by Town Meeting to oversee the design and construction of new buildings and major renovations for Town of Arlington properties. The committee is comprised of citizen members, appointed jointly by the chairs of the Selectmen, Finance Committee, and School Committee in addition to the Town Manager, Superintendent of Schools, and Director of Public Works or their designees.

## PTBC 2010 Activities

1. Community Safety Building Phase 1 (improvements to the terrace deck): Project approximately 95% complete. Work remaining includes: installation of pergolas on the deck, surface applied waterproofing in small areas of slab on grade, punch list, and closeout. Completion expected early spring 2011.

2. Community Safety Building Phase 2 (envelope repair of Community Safety Building): Schematic Design Report completed and forwarded to Capital Plan-

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ning Committee. PTBC requests \$232,000 to prepare Construction Documents and bid the job at 2011 Town Meeting and \$2,432,000 for construction related costs to follow. PTBC requests construction funding be available in late fall 2012 so construction can begin early spring 2013 and avoid winter conditions which can increase cost and decrease quality.

3. Central Fire Station Phase 1 (emergency envelope repairs): Project approximately 75% complete. Work remaining includes: water test of the roof, parapet repair, masonry wash down, punch list, and closeout. Completion expected late spring 2011.

4. Central Fire Station Phase 2 (interior renovation): PTBC request for funding of Final Design and Construction Documents forwarded to Capital Planning Committee. Project will start when funding approved by Town Meeting.

5. Highland Fire Station (envelope repair and interior renovation): Project on-going with some schedule slippage due to winter conditions. Project approximately 60% complete. Work remaining includes: completion of new stair tower, roofing (90% complete), interior, punch list, and closeout. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver Certification is being pursued. Completion expected summer 2011.

6. Stratton School Phase 1 (new roof, new transformer, electrical upgrades, and interior improvements): project completed February 2011.

7. Stratton School Phase 2 (new windows, new boiler and interior improvements): supplemental funding being sought through the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Green School Repair Program. Construction start spring 2011 and expected completion fall 2011.

8. Thompson School (feasibility study): The PTBC along with other Town officials, School Department officials and Thompson community representatives comprise the Thompson School Building Committee in conformance with regulations promulgated by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). A feasibility study for a new school was approved by the MSBA in January 2011 and the project will move into schematic design in spring 2011.

## ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

In 2010 the Zoning Board of Appeals as prescribed in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, The Zoning Act, and, also, as further clarified by the Town's Zoning Bylaw, heard and rendered decisions on twenty-two petitions. Since its inception in 1946 the Zoning Board of Appeal has heard and rendered decisions on over 3,300 appeals. Petitions heard by the Board include Variances, Special Permits, Appeals from the Decision of the Building Inspector, and comprehensive permits (Chapter 40B).

The Zoning Board of Appeals is comprised of five regular members: The Chair and four appointees. For any decision to be granted the vote of the five-member board must carry a super majority. All Hearings are open to the public and are generally held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, as needed. The meetings are usually 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 prior to the hearing date. Hearings are also posted on the Town's website and abutters to the property are notified by mail. To receive Zoning Board of Appeal Notices (Agendas) by email please subscribe online at [arlingtonma.gov/subscriber](http://arlingtonma.gov/subscriber). 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 ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS- 2010			
	Granted	Denied	Withdrawn / In Process
Petitions for Variance	13	0	2
Applications for Special Permits	12	0	3
Appeal of Decision of Inspector of Buildings	1	0	0
Amendments to SP/ Variances	2	0	0
Comprehensive Permits	1	0	1
<b>Totals</b>			
Total Petitions filed with Town Clerk	34		
Total Hearings continued by the Board	0		
Total Petitions withdrawn	5		

## ZONING BYLAW REVIEW COMMITTEE

### Background

The Zoning Bylaw Review Committee (ZBRC) was formed as a result of a 1999 Town Meeting Vote *that the Town establish a committee to review the zoning by-law to determine, among other things, if there were sufficient differentiation among the different zones, if size restrictions were appropriate, if sufficient protection was provided to our historic and open spaces, and that the by-law met the requirements of recent regulatory and*

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

*judicial standards...the committee shall propose and report suggested changes to improve the zoning by-law to subsequent town meetings.*

The ZBRC consists of ten members, one representative from each of the following: Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB), Department of Planning and Community Development, Arlington Historical Commission, business community, real estate community, as well as two lawyers and three Town Meeting Members. All members are appointed by the Town Moderator.

The Committee met several times in the winter and spring of 2010 to study, comment, and vote on warrant articles for the 2010 Town Meeting. The Zoning Bylaw Review Committee has temporarily revised its meeting schedule to focus on review of proposed zoning-related warrant articles for the upcoming 2011 Town Meeting. In addition, the Committee has discussed other zoning matters it would like to focus on, including the commercial zoning districts and possibly solar and wind related matters. The Committee does not at this time have any proposed changes to the zoning bylaw. The Committee will review and seek out further suggested improvements to the Zoning Bylaw throughout the year.

## Acknowledgements

In 2010 our Chairman, Greg Flaherty retired. Greg was a tremendous asset to the Committee and worked diligently to understand the zoning matters and make positive suggestions. Jim Doherty accepted the role of Chairman. The Committee would also like to acknowledge Joey Glushko, who has helped coordinate the meeting schedules and provided background on the objectives of the Planning Board and the ARB relating to various zoning matters.

## 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 (7) volunteer Members and one (1) or more volunteer Associate Members, who are appointed by the Town Manager with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, 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, wa-

terways, 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 General 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 2010 the ACC convened twenty-four (24) public meetings, and provided coordination, monitoring, permit review, and consultation on numerous property residential and municipal redevelopments around town. The board issued sixteen (16) Permits/Orders of Conditions, one (1) Extension, one (1) Amendment, and three (3) Determinations of Applicability.

## Conservation Activities

*Land Stewards* – Our volunteer citizen organization, Arlington Land Stewards (ALS) has assisted in managing twenty-four (24) Town-owned conservation lands comprising approximately thirty (30) 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 the location of conservation lands, conservation land regulations as well as problem/solution management information. The handbook is available online at [arlingtonma.gov/conservation](http://arlingtonma.gov/conservation).

*Elizabeth Island* – The ACC contributed \$22,000 of its dedicated Land Conservation Fund to the permanent protection of the two-acre island in the center of Spy Pond. With Massachusetts Audubon, the ACC will hold a Conservation Restriction on the Island sold to the Arlington Land Trust.

*Arlington Reservoir* - The Commission continues to monitor the approximately 100 trees planted around the reservoir as part of the Reservoir Dam rehabilitation project. A small area of reconstructed wetland was installed to replace some areas that were lost because of the dam repair work. A native plant habitat garden is planned for 2011 by the Arlington Vision 2020 Reservoir Committee.

The ACC is looking for funding to treat the invasive plants (water chestnut, Eurasian watermilfoil and curlyleaf pondweed) that plagued the Reservoir again this past summer.

*Cooke's Hollow* - The Conservation Commission along with the Cemetery Commission and Planning Department joined together to develop a restoration plan for Cooke's Hollow. In the Fall of 2009 the Waterfield Design Group was hired to evaluate current



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

---

conditions and to assist in the development of those plans. Preliminary design options were presented to the public in the Spring of 2010 and the Waterfield Group is incorporating comments into the final recommended design plans which is expected early in 2011.

*Mill Brook Linear Park* - The Arlington Open Space Committee with involvement of the ACC and others organized a group to study the Mill Brook area with the goal of enhancing the public use and awareness of this natural and historical resource. Planning for Mill Brook goes back to the 1920's but there is still much to do. This project also ties into Cooke's Hollow, a pocket park next to Mystic Street which contains a section of the brook.

*Arlington's Great Meadows* - In 2010 the Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows (FoAGM) continued to sponsor regular public nature events. The major activity of the year was the restoration of several acres of upland meadow land with the help of many volunteers including Arlington Cub Scouts and their parents. Information about FoAGM's activities and their annual report is available at [www.foagm.org](http://www.foagm.org).

*Meadowbrook Park and Mystic Valley Parkway* - In May 2010 land stewards, ACC members, and others carried out two days of cleanup of the conservation area. This park collects many items that wash down Mill Brook each year.

*Mystic Lakes-Mid-Lakes Dam Project* - The ACC reviewed reconstruction of the dam located between Upper and Lower Mystic. The fish ladder was installed and opened in 2010. It seems to be working better than designed to link these waterway habitats together and allow expanded spawning of anadromous species. The annual bucket brigade may be out of business.

*Alewife Reservation Greenway Project* - Construction began in 2010 on the new pathway and redesign of the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) parkland adjacent to Alewife Brook. This long-awaited project includes new stormwater gardens, landscaping and pathways, and will hopefully foster further attention and care to the Alewife Brook.

*Walking Book* - Now out of print, the ACC is revising this popular guidebook to open spaces and walking tours in Arlington.

*Revised FEMA Floodplain Maps* - After public comment, FEMA released its final draft floodplain map revision study for Arlington and surrounding Towns. The ACC reviewed the extensive modeling and map

revisions to help ensure it accurately reports the conditions and provided comments to the engineering consultant hired by the Town to review the study and provide comments. The revised maps are now final, having been approved by the 2010 Arlington Town Meeting.

*Spy Pond phragmites control project* - The ACC worked with the Spy Pond Committee and the waterfront property owners to coordinate a program for control of the Giant Reed which is currently populating many areas of shoreline around the pond. This approach will involve a multi-year program including controlled spraying by a licensed applicator, Aquatic Control Technology and volunteer winter cutting events. The program must balance the plant control with protection of the threatened Englemann's Sedge and creating a healthy shoreline environment with a diverse and sustainable plant community.

## 2011 Goals and Beyond

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, Mystic River Watershed Association, and the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions.

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.

## Acknowledgements

The ACC sincerely thanks all individuals and organizations that contributed directly or indirectly to the activities of its forty-fifth (45th) 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.

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

---

## Memberships

The ACC welcomes Curt Connors, as its newest member. The ACC would like to thank Ezra Benjamin, William O'Rourke, and Brian Thomas for their service and helpful input and work on the ACC.

## 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 main purpose is to enhance communication and coordination among those entities that do have ownership and 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, monitor its provisions and goals, and document accomplishments. The current Plan originally covered the period 2007–2012 as approved in December 2007 by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) Division of Conservation Services (DCS). In February 2010 the state approved the extension of an amended Action Plan (Chapter 9) until 2014. 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 is available on the Town Web site at [arlingtonma.gov/openspace](http://arlingtonma.gov/openspace).

The acquisition of Elizabeth Island has been a long-standing goal in the Open Space Plan. In 2010 the Arlington Land Trust negotiated the purchase of this privately owned island in Spy Pond and mounted a fundraising campaign to ensure its permanent protection with a state-approved conservation restriction to be co-held by the Arlington Conservation Commission and Mass Audubon.

### Site Management Plans

The committee regularly reviews and updates site management plans for key open space and recreation properties. The statewide guidelines for these site plans are part of the standard Open Space and Recreation Plan document. Committee members have worked with appropriate Town department staff, commission members, Friends groups, and other stakeholders for each

of these sites, and plans are now completed for the following properties: 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, Town Hall Gardens, and Old Burying Ground. Additional sites that have been identified for future management plans include Hill's Hill, Wellington Park, the Crusher Lot, and water bodies such as Alewife Brook and Mill Brook that are not part of other sites.

### Mill Brook Initiative

In a major special initiative, an ad hoc committee of OSC and other Town committees has been meeting since March 2009 to study the feasibility of developing a Mill Brook Linear Park. The brook is an important ecological and historical feature of the Town that travels nearly three miles, parallel to both Massachusetts Avenue and the Minuteman Bikeway. Enhancement of and improved access to existing open spaces are key goals of the Open Space and Recreation Plan, and in 2009 projects at Cooke's Hollow and Wellington Park brought renewed interest to the brook and the linear park concept. These are just two of the Town-owned facilities that abut Mill Brook, thus offering public entry points for greater access to the corridor. Other properties are the Arlington Reservoir, Hurd Field, Arlington High School and fields, Buzzell Field, Mt Pleasant Cemetery, and Meadowbrook Park.

In April 2010 the Mill Brook Linear Park Study Group produced a report that outlined current conditions, challenges, and opportunities for seven sections along the Mill Brook corridor. The report proposed linking these properties together in a greenway with pedestrian facilities and other improvements to help restore the environmental and visual qualities of Mill Brook. This work involved reviewing parcel lines, lot ownership, and current uses, as well as photo-documenting the conditions of the brook and its nearby built neighborhood. There are 109 parcels of land along Mill Brook. The Town owns sixteen parcels, accounting for about thirty-five percent of the land abutting the brook; the other sixty-five percent is in private ownership with a variety of residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

The Mill Brook group distributed both printed and electronic versions of the report to many Town officials, departments, and commissions for reference as a policy planning document when issues related to the brook arise. In April and May several group members led walks of the Mill Brook corridor to introduce this often unseen natural resource to interested Town officials and abutters.

The group is continuing to work closely with the Planning Department and Redevelopment Board in conjunction with their ongoing efforts to enhance eco-

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

conomic development opportunities and overlay zoning revisions in Arlington. The former Brigham's site offered opportunities for OSC members to attend ARB meetings about that site in order to reinforce attention to the brook and adjacent parklands as part of the redevelopment process.

## Other Activities

The committee continued to monitor and contribute to a wide range of open space projects that affect the Town and its residents' quality of life, including: the recently implemented program for "Off-Leash Dog Areas in Arlington Parks," which will include a fenced dog park at Thorndike Field supported with private grant funding; the state Department of Conservation and Recreation's proposed Alewife Greenway Path as part of the larger Alewife Reservation Master Plan; the Cemetery Expansion Committee's explorations of alternative burial options and locations and the related Cooke's Hollow Feasibility Study that looks at engineering, landscaping, historic interpretation, and maintenance issues, as well as possible use as a memorial park; and the development of a "habitat/nature" garden at the Arlington Reservoir, funded in part by a private donation.

Other timely issues addressed by the committee included Sustainable Arlington's efforts to have Arlington designed a "Green Community" under a state-sponsored program (which was approved at Town Meeting); planning and construction of the Summer Street Playground; the management of phragmites in Spy Pond; and the Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows project to restore upland meadows with a work project in the fall of 2010.

The sale of Busa Farm to the Town of Lexington in 2009 created special concern about the future uses of the land because it abuts the Arlington Reservoir, a natural resource and recreation area, and could affect the water quality of the beach. OSC members wrote letters during the year and spoke at a public forum held in Arlington in October by Lexington's Busa Land Use Proposal Committee to gather feedback from Arlington officials and residents. The strong consensus from the Arlington meeting was for the land to be maintained as farmland with opportunities for educational and community involvement.

OSC participated in Town Day in September 2010, as it does each year, displaying maps of local open spaces, copies of the Open Space and Recreation Plan and the Mill Brook report, flyers about the Conservation Commission's Land Stewards Program and invasive plants, and a sign-up sheet for residents interested in getting more involved. Committee members also were involved with the EcoFest ecological gardening event at Town Hall in May 2010.

## Goals for 2011

The committee will continue to address specific elements of the Action Plan outlined in the updated 2007–2014 Open Space and Recreation Plan. Some activities will be educational programs on invasive plants and ecological gardening with the Arlington Garden Club, Land Stewards, and other groups; continue work on enhancing the Mill Brook corridor and other Mystic River watershed issues; and contribute to future plans for the Busa land project. The committee will also 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.

## TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The goal of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) is to improve the quality of life in Arlington by improving safety and mobility for people using all modes of transport, as well as contributing to improving 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 Traffic Authority for Arlington is the Board of Selectmen. The TAC was established by the Board of Selectmen in the spring of 2001 to advise them on transportation matters.

The TAC continues to be very concerned by the limited Police resources for traffic and parking enforcement. Transportation management requires the Three "E"s: Engineering, Education and Enforcement. All three are essential to maintain a high quality of life in Arlington. Enforcement is by far the weakest at this time.

## 2010 Major Initiatives

*Arlington Schools* - The TAC continues its multiyear plan to improve traffic and pedestrian safety around schools. Phase 1, providing inexpensive safety improvements (paint and signs) for the public elementary schools, is complete. This effort included designating and improving preferred walking routes, minimizing conflicts between students and autos at drop-off and pick-up periods, and designating 20 MPH School Zones. Phase 2 is underway and requires more expensive infrastructure improvements such as adding or repairing sidewalks and handicap ramps along the preferred walking routes, and improving traffic flow for drop off. We are seeking some funds from the Town for these items. The Dallin School was selected as one of the first five elementary schools in Massachusetts to receive infrastructure improvements (sidewalk, handicap ramps, and paint and signs) as part of the Federal Safe Routes to School Program. Next on the agenda for 2011 is improving the pedestrian

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

---

environment and traffic flow for the Ottoson Middle School. A working group was formed late in 2010.

In the spring of 2010 it was learned that there would be many fewer school traffic supervisors for the public schools. The TAC launched an intensive effort to further improve signage and crosswalks prior to the start of school in September.

*Massachusetts Avenue Corridor* - Phase 1 of this project is an upgrade of Massachusetts Avenue between the Cambridge city line and Pond Lane for safety and streetscape improvements. Federal and state funds were released for design work, which got underway in 2009. The Town's consultant, Fay, Spofford & Thorndike, conducted extensive traffic analyses and then developed a plan for a more organized roadway that balances the needs of pedestrians, motorists, bicyclists, and transit users. The 25% design, which describes the basic roadway and signal layout has been submitted to MassDOT Highway Division. The TAC supports this project. Members of the TAC serve on the Review Committee for the project.

*Downing Square* - After a long public process, a conceptual design was recommended to, and voted by the Board of Selectmen in 2009. A formal engineering design is currently underway by BSC Engineering.

*Green Line Extension* - Working with the Planning Department, the TAC is an advocate for the Green Line Extension terminating at Route 16 where it can be most useful to residents of Arlington. We continue to participate in the public process for this project.

*East Arlington Commercial Parking Study* - The TAC formed a working group consisting of several East Arlington businesses, Police, Planning, and three TAC members. The goal of the study was to recommend to the Board of Selectmen specific actions to improve parking availability for customers of local businesses. The Board approved six specific recommendations. Currently, the TAC is conducting a study of parking turnover and occupancy in the Capitol Square area to monitor the impacts of the recommendations.

*Clean Air and Mobility Grant (CLAMP)* - Working with the Planning Dept. and DPW, a proposal was made to MassDOT under the Clean Air and Mobility Program (CLAMP) for funds to improve safety and mobility for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians at the intersection of Route 60 and Mass Avenue. A funding commitment from the State has been made to the Town, and a preliminary design contract should be awarded in early 2011. Short-term paint and signage improvements were installed at this intersection in 2010.

*Guidelines for Traffic Calming in Arlington* - During the year, a working group of the TAC prepared guidelines and recommended a process for the application of traffic calming measures in Arlington. This document was approved at the TAC's December meeting.

*Bicycle Safety* - In cooperation with the Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC), the TAC developed education, engineering, and enforcement recommendations to improve bicycle safety. Part of this effort was the development of a brochure, directed to both cyclists and motorists, on sharing the road safely.

## Reports

TAC studied and made recommendations to the Board of Selectmen or the Arlington Redevelopment Board on the following:

- Highland/High Haith safety issues
- 30-50 Mill Street Special Permit traffic mitigation (recommendations to Redevelopment Board)
- Eustis traffic calming
- Stratton School traffic circulation
- Dallin School Phase 1b circulation
- East Arlington Commercial Parking Study
- Walking to School Improvements for the Elementary Schools
- Marathon and Waldo safety issues
- MBTA Bus Shelters
- New Thompson School: traffic and pedestrian safety study (recommendations to Thompson School Building Committee)
- Oakland Avenue/Gray Street initial safety improvements (did not require BOS approval)

## Outreach

The TAC participated in transportation meetings and events conducted by the Boston MPO, MBTA, Boston Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Arlington Board of Selectmen, Arlington Redevelopment Board, and Massachusetts Dept. of Conservation and Recreation. The TAC maintains a website containing all formal reports submitted to the Board of Selectmen, committee agendas and minutes, and other transportation resources at [arlingtonma.gov/tac](http://arlingtonma.gov/tac).

## BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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 Committee promotes all forms of safe bicycling on Town roadways and the Minuteman Bikeway, from recreational riding to using the bicycle for transportation and running errands.



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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

ABAC meets monthly, usually the first Monday night of the month, to discuss bicycle-related topics and issues in Town. If you are interested in local bicycling matters please attend an upcoming ABAC meeting. Meetings are posted in advance and open to the public. 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 [tonkinc@comcast.net](mailto:tonkinc@comcast.net).

## 2010 Highlights

Over the last year the Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee has worked on the following:

Overhauled the Committee's Rules for Governance. This reflects changes that have occurred in the makeup of the Committee and their terms of service, as well as other streamlining of the Rules. There were extensive discussions as to the composition of the Committee in terms of how long officers should hold their positions, the number of members, and whether or not to allow out-of-town members to serve. The reviewed Rules have been approved by the Committee, sent to Town counsel, and approved by the Selectmen.

The Committee has been active in recruiting sites for the installation of the new bike racks that were obtained through the MAPC Bike Parking Program. These racks have been well received and utilized.

The Committee has been involved in incorporating the new Bike Lanes on Park Ave. and other areas in Town, including the Rt.2 access road.

The Committee has been involved in placing the new "Share Arrows" on Mass Ave. and around the Center Bikeway Crossing, working closely with the Transportation Advisory Committee.

The Committee has commented on several major projects in the community, including:

- The old Brigham's site and the possible effects it will have on the adjacent Bikeway, as well as the Mill Street crossing.
- The Mass Ave. redesign and construction project in East Arlington.
- The review of the Bikeway crossing in Arlington Center, and ways of mitigating the current difficulties of cycling from one end of the Trail to the other end, while ensuring the safety of cyclists and pedestrians. This has involved the production of a safety leaflet, signage, and reviewing upcoming engineering changes. Members of the Committee have been involved in reviewing CLAMP (Clean Air and Mobility Program) proposals at Arlington Center Crossing and have selected two candidates to interview further.

Held its Winter Social at the Whittemore-Robbins House, which was attended by about 40 people who heard a talk presented by Livable Streets Alliance.

Arrangements have been made for the 2011 Winter Social to again be held at the Whittemore-Robbins House with a talk from about the East Coast Greenway, which is a proposed trail from the Canadian Boarder down the East Coast to the Florida Keys.

Again manned a booth at Town Day where we talked to the visitors about issues affecting cycling in Arlington and Massachusetts and the possible placement of new bike racks. We also endeavored to recruit new people to the committee (we currently have two vacancies). With a potential candidate for one of the open positions.

## Future Objectives

The Committee hopes to fill our vacant positions. We intend to get involved in the designation of Arlington as one of League of American Cyclists' Bike Friendly Communities. As part of this process we hope to develop a Bike Plan for Arlington.

## ARLINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Arlington Housing Authority (AHA) is proud of its distinction of being the largest single provider of affordable housing in the community.

The Housing Authority manages 1,156 housing units: 520 units for elderly and/or residents with disabilities, 180 units designated for family housing, a home for 13 mentally challenged residents, and 442 vouchers that help participants live in privately-owned dwellings throughout the community.

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

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*, Brian R. Greeley, *Vice-Chairman*, Nicholas Mitropoulos Treasurer, Richard B. Murray, and *Members* Brian J. Connor, Teresa J. Walsh.

## 2010 Highlights

In 2010 the Housing Authority continued improve-

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ments to its properties, the expansion of its tenant services support programs, and worked on creative partnerships with many housing groups and service providers in the community.



*Arlington Housing Authority Board of Commissioners*

## Properties

The Authority completed its final phase of its modernization of our 179 unit family housing development Menotomy Manor. This modernization project was funded through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the 2002 Housing Bond Bill. All 179 units were renovated with new kitchens, baths, plumbing, electrical upgrades as well as painted and had new floors installed. Because there were no handicapped family housing units in Arlington, the Authority created 10 new units of handicapped wheel chairs accessible family housing units. The total renovation cost came to just over 13 million dollars.

The 144 unit, seven story Hauser Building at Drake Village received a new gas fired hot water system replacing the original 2,400 gallon electric Megatherm system. Gas was brought into the Drake Village Development as part of our energy efficiency efforts. The 72 cottage units now all have gas lines brought to the buildings and we are planning on replacing the original nine oil burners that presently heat the units with energy efficient gas units. Sixteen (16) new parking spaces were added as well as a new Gazebo and awnings. New energy efficient lighting was completed in all our building and we are looking forward to the saving ahead.

The Authority continues to work on energy conservation efforts in all our properties. In 2010 all new energy efficient lighting was installed at Chestnut Manor, Winslow Towers, Cusack Terrace, and Drake Village. 100 five gallon flush toilets were replaced with new low flow toilets at Drake Village. A new gas fired hot water system is being installed at our 100 unit Chestnut Manor Development.

The Authority would like to recognize the Arlington Board of Selectman and the Town Manager for their work in securing \$200,000 from the CDBG-R federal stimulus funds given to the Town of Arlington. Those funds were used for the modernization of the hot water system at Drake Village and at Chestnut Manor. Although the housing authority applied for over \$8 million dollars in stimulus funds through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the only money the AHA received was from the CDBG-R funds allocated through the Town.

## Community Partnerships

2010 was a great year in expanding our partnerships with a number of community service program providers. The Authority continued to take advantage of the Community Work Program (CWP) sponsored by the Middlesex Sheriff's Office. For the tenth year in a row, inmates under the supervision of correctional personnel assisted the AHA maintenance staff in its spring and fall cleanup efforts.

Minuteman Senior Services has been very successful at our Drake Village location by providing services to our seniors and a meals program. The AHA Board of Commissioners, along with Minuteman, has agreed to expand the program to all our other facilities in year 2011.

The AHA and Minuteman Senior Services worked together and are now providing an emergency senior domestic violence unit in one of our properties. This unit is to provide a safe harbor for elderly residents who were subject to domestic violence.

The Arlington Boys and Girls Club and Fidelity House continued afternoon programs in our Menotomy Manor Development that provides homework help, games, and programs for our young residents of Menotomy Manor. This program has been extremely successful with a large number of residents participating.

The award winning evening program, Operation Success, continues to be a major factor in improving grades by providing homework help and guidance for the residents of Menotomy Manor. In 2010 they have expanded the program to include college level participants. Janet Maguire and Peggy Regan run this program with a large group of young volunteers.

The Arlington Housing Authority Board would like to thank all our partners for their hard work and we look forward to many new and exciting ideas being put into action in the coming year.

## 2010 Menotomy Manor – Police Substation

In 2010 the AHA in partnership with the Arlington Police Department opened the first of its kind community police substation in our Menotomy Manor Development. This has had a very positive effect and the residents of Menotomy Manor and the neighbors around

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Menotomy Manor have seen a large decrease in crime and expanded services to the area. The AHA and the police celebrated by cosponsoring the very successful National Night Out Cookout.

## Challenges Ahead

The Authority has been successful in maintaining our buildings and operation and looks forward to the coming years in expanding our programs and modernizing our buildings. In 2010 the AHA received notice that they will receive \$1.4 million dollars over the next few years for needed modernization work. The estimated work needed on our buildings over the next few years is about \$15 million dollars. The continued lack of modernization funds available will soon have a negative effect on our aging properties. Many of our 520 elderly disabled housing units were built in the 1950's, 60's and 70's and are in desperate need of modernization and energy efficient systems as well as roofs, windows, kitchens and bath upgrades. The majority of them are heated by electricity, with the Authority paying all the utilities while the tenants pay 30% of their income towards rent, in accordance with state regulations. With many of our residents living on Social Security or having little or no income, there is little hope that the Housing Authority will be able to make the necessary modernization needed in the coming years without help.

Wait Lists	
<b>Stated-Aided Elderly/Handicap One Bedroom Units</b>	
Arlington Applicants	9
Non-Arlington Applicants	203
<b>Total</b>	<b>212</b>
<b>State-Aided Family 2-Bedroom Units</b>	
Arlington Applicants	29
Non-Arlington Applicants	232
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>
<b>State-Aided Family 3-Bedroom Units</b>	
Arlington Applicants	1
Non-Arlington Applicants	142
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>
Section 8 Wait List	430
Arlington Applicants	*430
*Because Arlington is on a centralized wait list, the Section 8 wait list is extremely long, therefore, only Arlington residents are listed for this program.	

State Program Rents	
Average Elderly/Handicap Monthly Rent	\$380/month (includes heat and lights)
Average Family Monthly Rent	\$469/month (tenant pays utilities)

Because the AHA serves the lowest of income residents, 95% of them would not be able to afford the rent in the new affordable housing units being constructed in Town. The AHA has over 100 residents paying less than \$100 per month for rent that includes heat and hot water. On our current waitlist 88% of the applicants have incomes below \$10,000 and many of them receive only temporary assistance in the amount of \$3,000 per year.

## Administrative Services

The Authority continues to be a member of 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 provides valuable information to those wishing to learn more about the AHA and its programs and can be viewed at [www.arlingtonhousing.org](http://www.arlingtonhousing.org). You may also find the Arlington Housing Authority on Facebook.

## Tenant Services

Beth Hosman and Mary Maher, Tenant Service Coordinators, continued their 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 ensure communication between these agencies and providers for the benefit of our elderly tenants.

## Recognitions

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

## VISION 2020

### Background

June 2010 marked Vision 2020's twentieth anniversary.

Created to address a need for broad, long-range planning, the Vision 2020 Steering Committee began a two year exploration process of formulating goals, strategies, and actions with the help of Town leadership, employees, and townspeople.

Town Meeting created the Vision 2020 Standing Committee as an official Committee of the Town on June 8, 1992. 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."

Town Goals covering the areas of Business, Communication, Community and Citizen Service, Culture and Recreation, Diversity, Education, Environment, Fis-

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

---

cal Resources, and Governance were adopted as by-law at the 1993 Annual Town Meeting for the "...Town to consider as it conducts its business". These goals are supported by individual task groups which have representatives on the Standing Committee. Three additional groups have formed since under the Environment Task Group - the Spy Pond, Reservoir, and Sustainable Arlington Committees. The Standing Committee also includes Town leadership and may have a student representative from Arlington High School.

To this day these task groups continue efforts to bring the Town closer to the intent of these goals by partnering with townspeople. These endeavors run the gamut from awareness/appreciation pieces on Town resources, to planning for improvement of Town practices, to research and development of Town Meeting warrant articles, to forums on emerging issues, as well as publications, and actual physical improvements. The Standing Committee and its goal-supporting task groups are also responsible for annual town-wide surveys.

## **Notable Activities by the Standing Committee and its Task Groups for 2010**

*Vision 2020 Survey* - Employing the concept that *while you are being counted, your opinions count too*, the Vision 2020 Standing Committee, its Task Groups as well as Town Departments created, tallied, and analyzed resident responses to the 2010 Vision 2020 Annual Census Mailing Insert Survey from more than 26% of all Arlington households - the largest response ever received in its 20 year history. By summer's end the number of responses had grown to 5,000.

Titled *Looking Ahead: Services & Revenues in the Balance, We Invite Your Input*, this year's survey focused on the Town's financial challenges. Residents were asked to indicate their opinions as Desirable, Acceptable, or Unacceptable to specific ways by which the Town could reduce expenditures and/or raise revenues to address these challenges. Another survey topic concerned Parking in Arlington Center.

A summary and analysis of the 4,567 household responses received by March 15, 2010 was reported to Town Meeting, Town officials and departments in May under Article 2, is reprinted on the Town's website and at the end of this chapter. Data gleaned from this survey continues to be useful to Town officials and departments for planning and evaluation purposes.

*Water Bodies Fund* - Again sponsored a Warrant Article for the 2010 Annual Town Meeting to appropriate \$15,000 to the Water Bodies Fund for the purpose of maintaining, treating, and providing oversight of all the Town's water bodies. This account/fund may receive monies from the general tax, including the possibility of borrowing, gifts, or grants.

These monies are expended under the direction of the Town Manager who will report to each Annual Town Meeting on the revenues and expenditures of the fund, as well as a projection for future needs. This article received unanimous approval by Town Meeting on May 26.

*Spy Pond* - With the help of Arlington High School's Workplace students and many residents, distributed flyers to all residences in the entire 748 acre Spy Pond Watershed warning of the impact high-phosphorous fertilizers have on weed growth at Spy Pond or any water body, and announcing events affecting the area such as EcoFest and Spy Pond Trails Day.

Planned and implemented the Sixth Annual Spy Pond Trails Day at the pond's southern path abutting the Route 2 exit ramp, focusing on tree pruning, invasive plant and trash removal with help from community groups, neighbors and the Boston Area Appalachian Mountain Club.

Identified and re-mapped the areas of Phragmites (common reed) invasion around the water's edge at Spy Pond to assess the effectiveness of the previous fall's treatment; helped take down the dead treated plants; investigated the best method of diminishing the remaining presence of this invasive plant; raised funds to augment the Town's Water Bodies Fund to address this problem, and helped the Town develop a process for a late-summer/early-fall, 2010 phragmites treatment - all in consultation/cooperation with Arlington's Conservation Commission.

*Green Activities & Initiatives* - Helped the Town achieve Massachusetts Green Community status. Key to the process of becoming a MA Green Community, Arlington created the 2010 Energy Reduction Plan laying out steps to reduce the Town's energy use by 20% within the next five years, and committing to a program of increasing energy efficiency in municipal buildings and operations as well as reducing its use of fossil fuels. These commitments assisted Arlington in securing over \$200,000 in Massachusetts Green Communities grant funding for three energy efficiency projects (LED street lighting and energy upgrades at two schools). The Town also received five Big Belly Trash Compactors and recycling bins.

Assisted the Town in procuring bids for a 3 kW solar photovoltaic (PV) system for the Ottoson Middle School. Funding of approximately \$20k came from the Clean Energy Choice matching grant program.

Participated on the Town's Energy Working Group helping identify Town buildings to receive energy audits, track energy usage in municipal properties, and determine the need to install lighting controls in the high school.



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Worked with the DPW on a possible Pay-As-You-Throw program and on a plan for curbside food waste collection to further reduce the solid waste stream. Created a survey for DPW to assess resident support for separating kitchen waste for a new curbside collection program.

Presented the fall Windows on Water event to increase public awareness of and discussion about Arlington's water resources, including the Town's seven water bodies, its public water supply, and storm water management and flooding issues. This was a lead-up activity to EcoFest 2011: How YOU affect the Water that affects YOU.

Held a one-day 350.org "10-10-10" event at Global Gas Station on Mass. Ave., to remind the driving public that proper tire inflation saves gas. Provided service by checking tire inflation and adding air as needed.

Helped write a grant application to North East Grassroots Environmental Fund for rain garden and for which the Arlington Garden Club received \$1,000 funding. Now working with a Town committee to develop and implement the rain garden plan.

Met with knowledgeable horticulturists, residents and the DPW to construct a plan for the installation of habitat gardens around the newly constructed spillway at the Arlington Reservoir.

*Financial Activities-* After a two year study, prepared a *Retrospective Analysis Report on Arlington's Recently Completed Five Year Financial Plan* and presented it to the Town Manager and the Long Range Planning Committee. This study contains lessons learned that might be applied to a future plan.

Updated My Tax Dollars for FY 2010.

Began a study of ways to increase revenue from the former schools now rented out by the Town, and addressed Town Meeting on this subject.

After discussions with the Treasurer, convinced him to allow a buck slip insert (3"x8.5" flyer) to a water bill as an inexpensive way to get the word to all households about single stream recycling.

Persuaded the Finance Committee to revise the way it presents the Town's Insurance Budget to Town Meeting. The new presentation is more accurate, but doesn't affect the bottom line.

*Governance Initiatives* - With the League of Women Voters of Arlington, co-sponsored Candidates' Night.

Partnered with Arlington's League of Women Voters to bring diversity to Town Meeting membership and encourage citizens to run in the April election for the open Town Meeting seats.

Sampled new Town Meeting Members (TMMs) on why they ran, how they campaigned and how they learned to function in their new positions. The resulting *Report on Interviews with New Town Meeting Members*,

recommending further actions to attract and orient new TMMs, was sent to all participants, submitted to the Town, and published in The Arlington Advocate.

Planned for an Orientation to Town Meeting program to take place before the early spring 2011 election. This would be a collaborative effort of Arlington's League of Women Voters, the Town Meeting Procedures Committee and Vision 2020's Diversity, Governance and Standing Committees.

## *Additional Activities*

- Encouraged The Board of Selectmen to perpetuate the Annual State of the Town Address as part of Article 2 on the first night of the 2010 Annual Town Meeting. The address was given by incoming BOS Chairman, Diane Mahon.
- Joined other Arlington arts-focused entities to begin an effort to promote public art projects in Arlington.
- Continued to participate on the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Diversity, advocating for recruiting and employing minority staff for both Arlington's Public Schools and Town positions.
- Helped select titles for the 2010 Community Book Read, all on the topic of Autism. Among the titles were *Marcelo in the Real World* by Francisco Stork, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time* by Mark Haddon, and Temple Grandin's *Thinking in Pictures, My Life with Autism*.
- With the Commission on Disability, hosted the Second Annual Job Fair in the Town Hall Auditorium with 26 employers and 320 prospective employees attending. Also co-hosted a Stand Against Racism weekend program of events. And with the Human Rights Commission explored an ongoing series of initiatives to promote civil discourse in Town.
- Established a Facebook page: *Residents of the Town of Arlington* with an emphasis on diversity issues and information on diversity-sponsored activities.
- Again presented Vision 2020 and all its projects at Town Day hoping to engage new volunteers for its task groups and awareness of its overall mission.

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## Recognitions/Acknowledgements

Vision 2020 appreciates all who contribute to this program. Their skills and expertise, persistence, opinions, research, note-taking, grant writing, web posting, physical labor, planning, program creation and creative ideas – all offered generously - have truly enabled Arlington’s Vision 2020 to assist the Town in addressing its current and future needs. The Vision 2020 Standing Committee is most grateful to Nancy Barry for her support in promoting Arlington’s Goals for Cultural and Recreational activities in Town; and is truly appreciative for Greg Ames’ enthusiastic leadership of its Diversity Task Group and the very successful Job Fairs he initiated with the Disability Commission. Both have given up their Vision 2020 titles but will continue to advocate for these efforts.

## 2010 Vision 2020 Survey Results

*Looking Ahead: Services & Revenues in the Balance, We Invite Your Input*, this year’s survey focused on the Town’s financial challenges. Another survey topic concerned Parking in Arlington Center. These are the summary results. For detailed results please visit [arlingtonma.gov/vision2020](http://arlingtonma.gov/vision2020).

## Reductions in Expenditures

### Notes

Each question has three options: Desirable, Acceptable, Unacceptable. In the Positive/Negative summary, the Positive column includes both Desirable and Acceptable. The Negative column is only Unacceptable

Blank entries on each question ignored

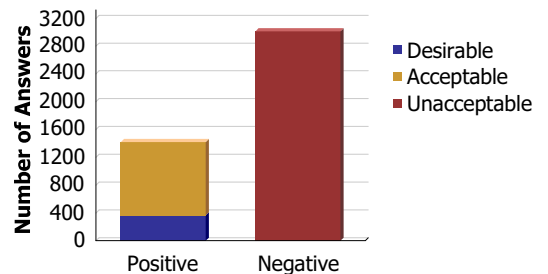
## Public Safety

### 1. Fire Department

Currently the Town operates an engine company at each of its three stations, as well as one(1) ladder truck, and one(1) ambulance. Eliminating an engine company for a portion of the year could save approximately \$200,000. However, when an engine is out of service, this reduction would have a negative impact on our response time to emergencies and overall fire fighting, our rescue services, and our mutual aid agreement.

#### Eliminate an engine company for a portion of the year (Save \$200,000)

Positive		Positive	Negative	
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable	
367	1052	<b>1419</b>	<b>3014</b>	
8.3%	23.7%	<b>32.0%</b>	<b>68.0%</b>	

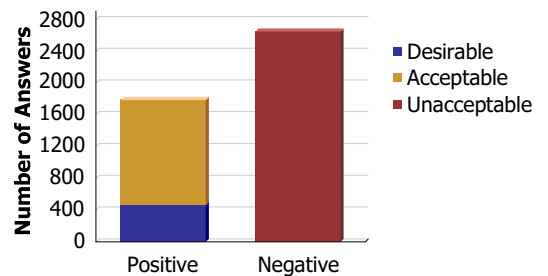


### 2. Police Department

The elimination of two police officer positions, at a savings of \$126,000, may result in slower response times to emergencies, and reduced/slower responses to crime/investigations.

#### Eliminate two police officers (Save \$126,000)

Positive		Positive	Negative	
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable	
466	1321	<b>1787</b>	<b>2648</b>	
10.5%	29.8%	<b>40.3%</b>	<b>59.7%</b>	



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

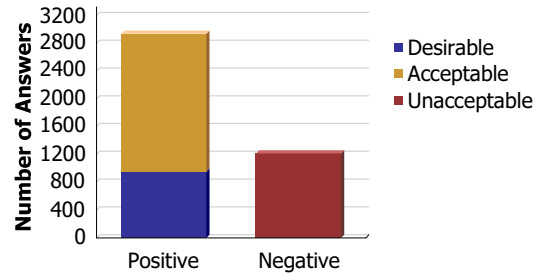
## Libraries

### 3. Reduce Services at Robbins and Fox Libraries

Arlington is a member of the Minuteman Library Network (MLN), a consortium of 42 libraries that allows residents to borrow and return materials at any location in the MLN. The Arlington libraries are open 63 hours per week. Cutting services by reducing the new book purchases or dropping below current hours would jeopardize our MLN certification, patrons' ability to borrow from any other library in the MLN system, and a loss of \$40,000 in state aid.

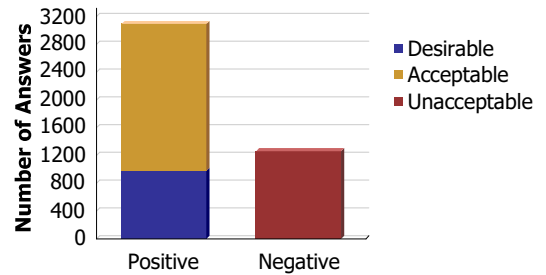
#### Close Fox Library 1 day and close Robbins' Children's Room 1 evening (Save \$29,000)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
956	1980	<b>2936</b>	<b>1213</b>
23.0%	47.7%	<b>70.8%</b>	<b>29.2%</b>



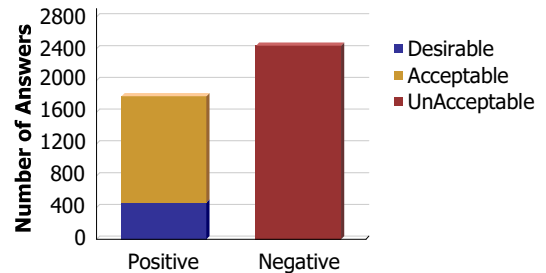
#### Close Robbins Library at 6pm one evening (Save \$29,000)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		UnAcceptable
978	2114	<b>3092</b>	<b>1262</b>
22.5%	48.6%	<b>71.0%</b>	<b>29.0%</b>



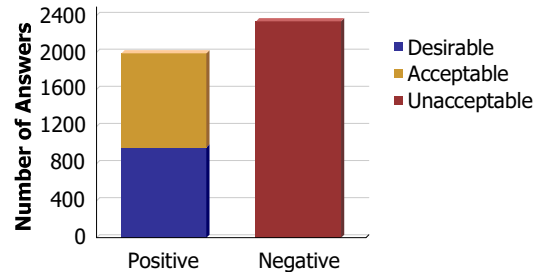
#### Reduce funding for books and periodicals by 30% (Save \$48,000)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
464	1337	<b>1801</b>	<b>2439</b>
10.9%	31.5%	<b>42.5%</b>	<b>57.5%</b>



#### Close Fox Library and building (Save \$140,000)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
977	1014	<b>1991</b>	<b>2336</b>
22.6%	23.4%	<b>46.0%</b>	<b>54.0%</b>



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## Schools

### 4. School Budget Adjustments

Over the past four years, the Schools have addressed budget deficits totaling over \$7 million through fee increases, restructuring, the use of one-time revenues, and wage concessions by the staff. At the same time, we have been able to preserve teaching positions, and maintain or even improve core programs.

Next year, however, the schools face an additional deficit of between \$2.6 and \$5.5 million, based on decisions at the state and federal levels. As things stand today, we will not be able to balance next year's budget without significant and painful cuts to core teaching staff and programs.

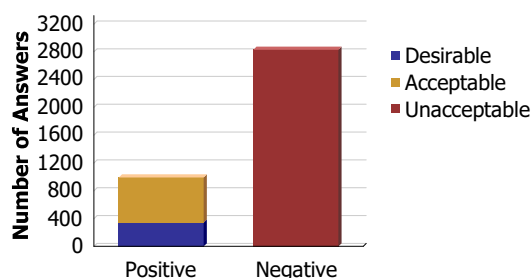
Closing a \$3 million deficit, for example, could require cuts of up to 60 positions, of which more than 50 would be teaching staff. This would mean 3 fewer teachers per elementary school (21 total), resulting in an increase in average class size (from 22 to 27); 15 fewer teachers at the middle school, and 15 fewer teachers at the high school. At the middle and high schools, teacher reductions will create larger class sizes and fewer curriculum hours.

New or increased user fees account for about \$1 million in additional revenues over the past four years. These fees cover some of the cost of the programs they support. For example:

Fees	Per Student	Total Raised	Percent of Program Cost
Instrumental Music	\$425/student	about \$120,000	covering 75%
Athletics	\$235/sport	about \$200,000	covering 25%
Full Day Kindergarten	\$2,400/student	about \$750,000	covering 40%

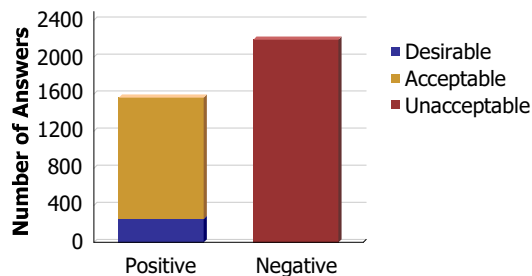
#### Leave fees as they are, eliminate 60 positions

Positive		Positive	Negative	
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable	
344	650	<b>994</b>	<b>2830</b>	
9.0%	17.0%	<b>26.0%</b>	<b>74.0%</b>	



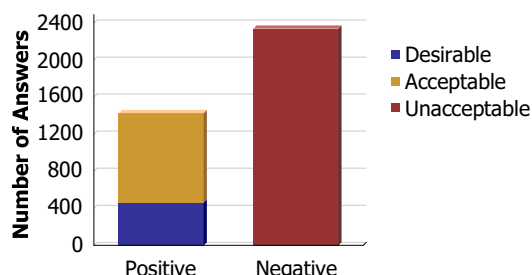
#### Increase fees by 50%, eliminate 50 positions

Positive		Positive	Negative	
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable	
254	1309	<b>1563</b>	<b>2188</b>	
6.8%	34.9%	<b>41.7%</b>	<b>58.3%</b>	



#### Increase fees by 100%, eliminate 40 positions

Positive		Positive	Negative	
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable	
464	963	<b>1427</b>	<b>2339</b>	
12.3%	25.6%	<b>37.9%</b>	<b>62.1%</b>	

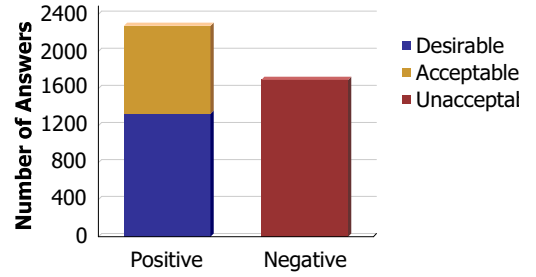




# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## Pass an Override (there is another question elsewhere relating to this) and maintain positions

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
1327	949	<b>2276</b>	<b>1692</b>
33.4%	23.9%	<b>57.4%</b>	<b>42.6%</b>

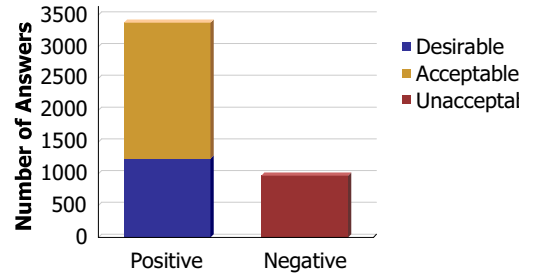


## 5. Redistricting Boundaries / Reconfiguring School Grades

As of 12/1/09, the largest elementary class is 27. If 21 elementary teachers are lost, class sizes could exceed 40. Although it is not likely to produce significant savings, reassigning students among the elementary schools would produce more consistent class sizes. With redistricting, or reconfiguration (e.g K-2,3-5), the largest class would be around 32.

## Adjust school district boundaries or reconfigure grades to reduce class size variability

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		UnAcceptable
1236	2140	<b>3376</b>	<b>971</b>
28.4%	49.2%	<b>77.7%</b>	<b>22.3%</b>



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

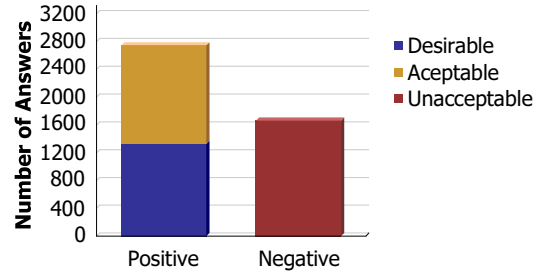
## Department of Public Works

### 6. Snow Removal

Recently the Town has added sidewalk and corner clearing at key locations, as well as bikepath plowing. The cost of snow removal often exceeds \$1million annually. Currently the Town pre-treats all road surfaces with a salt mixture in an effort to get the roadways down to bare pavement as soon as possible after a snowfall. If the Town were to stop pre-treating side roads and instead increase the use of sand, we could save \$500,000 annually with the probability that some side roads will have persistent ice or snow pack, causing possible safety issues.

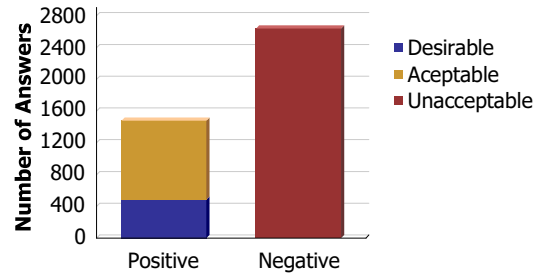
#### Discontinue bike path plowing (Save \$3,600)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
1328	1420	<b>2748</b>	<b>1664</b>
30.1%	32.2%	<b>62.3%</b>	<b>37.7%</b>



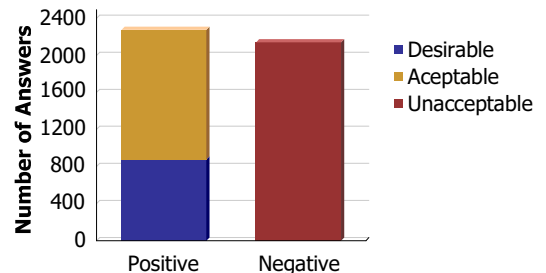
#### Discontinue sidewalk/corner plowing (Save \$27,000)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
484	997	<b>1716</b>	<b>2639</b>
11.1%	22.9%	<b>39.4%</b>	<b>60.6%</b>



#### Eliminate the pre-treatment of side streets (Save \$500,000)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
876	1399	<b>2275</b>	<b>2141</b>
19.8%	31.7%	<b>51.5%</b>	<b>48.5%</b>

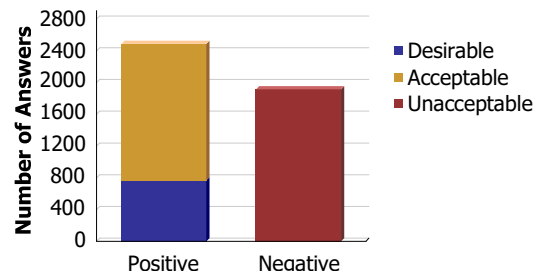


### 7. Town Fields

Elimination of lawn irrigation, some field enhancements, and pre-game prep of sports fields could save \$173,000 annually. However, this would speed deterioration of our fields, and varsity field sports would have to fund labor for raking the fields and line painting. The youth sports groups now contribute \$40,000 to the upkeep of the fields and this would not be affected.

#### Eliminate these sports field and park services (Save \$173,000)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
770	1718	<b>2488</b>	<b>1916</b>
17.5%	39.0%	<b>56.5%</b>	<b>43.5%</b>



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

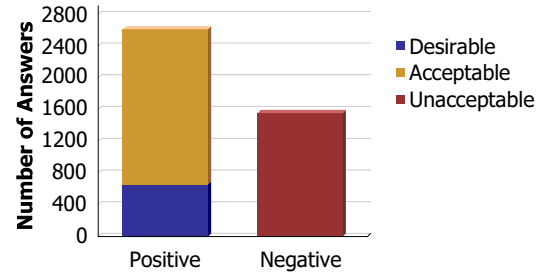
## Social Services

### 8. The Arlington Youth Consultation Center (AYCC)

AYCC provides help for troubled youths and their families, in and out of the school environment. Clients are charged for this service on a sliding scale dependent on their income, and the center also receives some insurance reimbursement. The Town's FY09 contribution to this service was \$293,000, 78% of AYCC's operating expenditures.

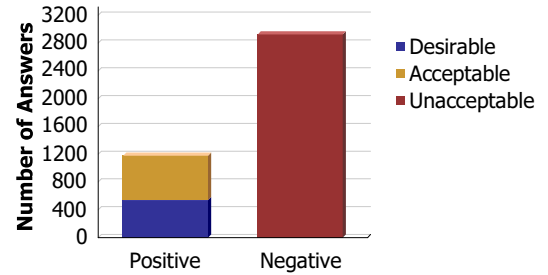
#### Reduce Town support by 50% (Save \$147,000)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
659	1955	<b>2614</b>	<b>1556</b>
<i>% Desirable</i>	<i>% Acceptable</i>	<i>% Positive</i>	<i>% Negative</i>
15.8%	46.9%	<b>62.7%</b>	<b>37.3%</b>



#### Eliminate the AYCC program (Save \$293,000)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
539	639	<b>1178</b>	<b>2925</b>
13.1%	15.6%	<b>28.7%</b>	<b>71.3%</b>



## Increases in Revenue

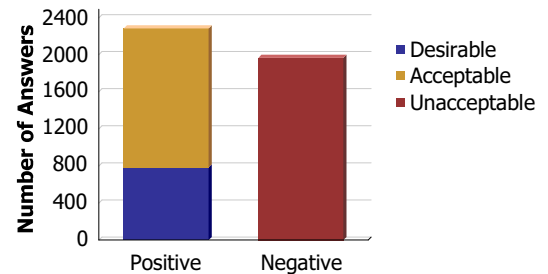
### Override Proposition 2 1/2

#### 9. Override Proposition 2 1/2

A Proposition 2 1/2 Override of 11.5% in 2010 would fund the Town budget for 5 years given the limits on spending increases in place for the last 5 years. A 9% Override would provide funding for a period of 3 years. In FY2009, the average single-family home had an assessed value of \$465,952 and a tax of \$5,554. The increase in property taxes on an average single-family home would be \$514 (3 year plan) and \$668 (5 year plan).

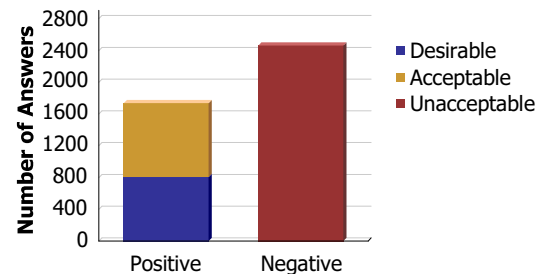
#### Pass a 9% override (3 year plan)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
784	1501	<b>2285</b>	<b>1966</b>
18.4%	35.3%	<b>53.8%</b>	<b>46.2%</b>



#### Pass a 11.5% override (5 year plan)

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
808	929	<b>1737</b>	<b>2464</b>
19.2%	22.1%	<b>41.3%</b>	<b>58.7%</b>



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## Implement Pay As You Throw (PAYT)

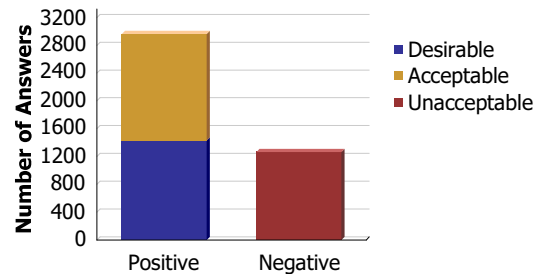
### 9. PAYT

The Town's solid waste program (trash collection and disposal, together with recycle & yard waste collection) costs over \$3.2 million annually and helps the environment. Recycling paper and containers avoids the cost of the final step in the disposal process (incineration). To further reduce these disposal costs, a PAYT program based on trash bag sales could be instituted. The price of the bags could be set to pay for part or all of the solid waste program.

#### PAYT - Some Free Bags - Revenue Neutral for Avg Household

**Institute a PAYT program with enough free bags -- thus no additional expense to an average household with efficient recycling practices (Positive environmental impact)**

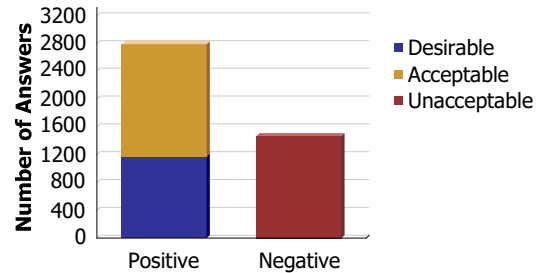
Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
1431	1535	<b>2966</b>	<b>1265</b>
33.8%	36.3%	<b>70.1%</b>	<b>29.9%</b>



#### PAYT - No Free Bags - \$40 Bag Cost/Year

**Institute a PAYT program with bag prices set to pay the trash disposal cost. The annual expense to an average household with efficient recycling practices would be \$40. (Save \$1,000,000)**

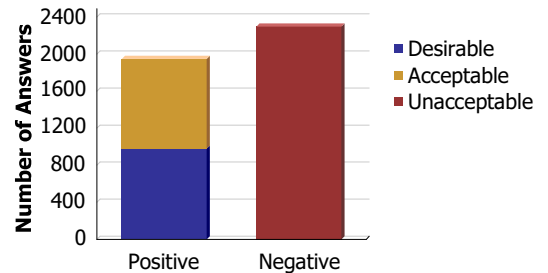
Positive		Positive	Unacceptable
Desirable	Acceptable		UnAcceptable
1176	1618	<b>2794</b>	<b>1469</b>
27.6%	38.0%	<b>65.5%</b>	<b>34.5%</b>



#### PAYT - No Free Bags - \$130 Bag Cost/Year

**Institute a PAYT program with bag prices set to pay the entire cost of the solid waste program. The annual expense to an average household with efficient recycling practices would be \$130. (Save \$3,200,000)**

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
979	968	<b>1947</b>	<b>2297</b>
23.1%	22.8%	<b>45.9%</b>	<b>54.1%</b>





# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

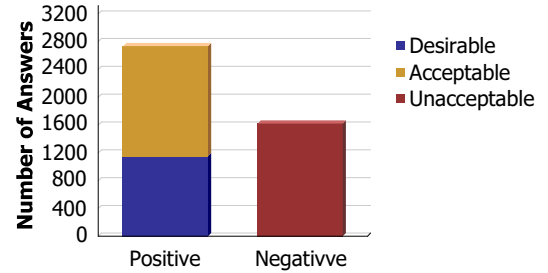
## Advanced Life Support (ALS)

### 13. Add Advanced Life Support (ALS) Facility within Fire Department

The Town runs a Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance service which transports patients to the nearest hospital in an emergency. Currently Advanced Life Support (ALS) is provided through a private contractor at no cost to the Town. Instead, the Town could run an in-house Advanced Life Support (ALS) service using Fire Department Paramedics. This in-house ALS service could potentially bring in an additional \$300,000 in revenue annually. The program would require an investment of \$1million over the first three years. Break even would be realized in year 5, and in year 6 a net gain of \$300,000 annually would be the ongoing estimated revenue.

#### Develop an in-house ALS ambulance service

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
1154	1585	<b>2739</b>	<b>1623</b>
36.3%	36.3%	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>37.2%</b>



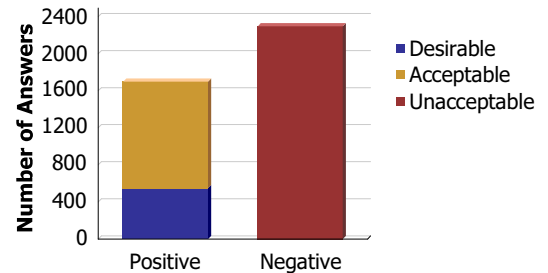
## LED Street Lights

### 14. Replace Street Lights with LED Lamps

The current budget for street lights (electricity) is about \$205,000. If the existing street light bulbs were replaced with high efficiency light emitting diodes (LED's), a savings of \$110,000 per year is possible. Yet, LED street light technology is still new and there would be substantial "set up" costs, estimated at \$2.2 million. So savings would be delayed for some time.

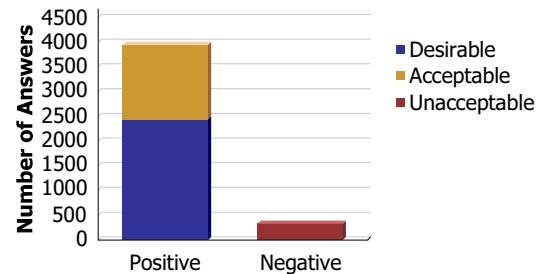
#### Replace street lights with LED technology

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
547	1152	<b>1699</b>	<b>2296</b>
47.5%	28.8%	<b>42.5%</b>	<b>57.5%</b>



#### Wait until the technology is more affordable

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
2444	1503	<b>3947</b>	<b>327</b>
57.2%	35.2%	<b>92.3%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

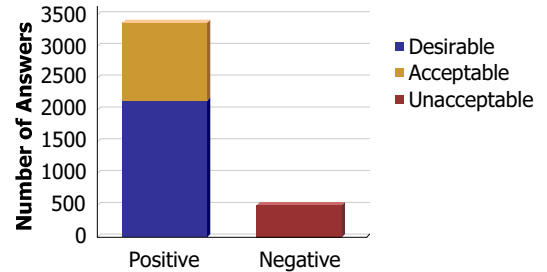
## Install Solar Photovoltaic Systems

### 15. Solar Electricity

Electricity for municipal and school buildings costs more than \$1,000,000 per year. Installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems on Town buildings would reduce the amount of electricity purchased. These systems can be owned and financed by third parties who would then sell the solar electricity to the Town at a price that is less than the current price paid for electricity from the grid, thereby reducing the overall cost of electricity. Installation of PV also provides a hedge against rising electricity prices and reduces the environmental impact of Town energy use.

#### Develop a solar photovoltaic program

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
2148	1226	<b>3374</b>	<b>505</b>
55.4%	31.6%	<b>87.0%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>



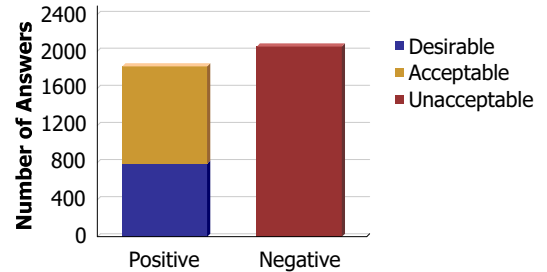
## Increase State Income Tax

### 16. Income Tax

State Aid to Arlington has decreased 20% in just the past year alone, and from 18% of total Town revenues in FY04 to 14% (FY10). State Aid is dependent upon State revenues which are heavily dependent upon the state income tax. The state income tax rate is set by the legislature. An increase in the state income tax to 6% could yield \$720,000 for Arlington if it were distributed to towns/cities using current local aid funding formulas.

#### Urge our legislators to increase the state income tax rate to reduce the pressure on the real estate tax

Positive		Positive	Negative
Desirable	Acceptable		Unacceptable
790	1050	<b>1840</b>	<b>2053</b>
20.3%	27.0%	<b>47.3%</b>	<b>52.7%</b>



# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

---

## Summary of 4657 Survey Responses to the Questions on Parking In Arlington Center

Do you have difficulty parking in Arlington Center?

Yes: 1983 (46%) No: 2290 (54%)

How would you describe the difficulty?

- No parking near destination 1589
- There is a parking fee 565
- Russell Common parking not  
near my destination 611
- Parking regulations are confusing 868

Do parking problems deter you from shopping in Arlington Center?

Yes: 1874 (45%) No: 2250 (55%)

How many blocks from your destination would you park?

1 block: 668 2 blocks: 1531 3 blocks: 1004 4 blocks: 867

Would parking meters on Massachusetts Ave., Medford St. and Broadway Plaza discourage

you from shopping in Arlington Center?

Yes: 1874 (45%) No: 2250 (55%)

What is the highest parking meter fee you find acceptable?

• \$.25/hr: 1650 • \$.50/hr: 1552 • \$1.00/hr: 752

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## Vision 2020 - 2010 Survey Results

Total Surveys Collected: 4,657

### Demographics

#### Precinct

0	324	6.96%
1	137	2.94%
2	262	5.63%
3	201	4.32%
4	205	4.40%
5	183	3.93%
6	206	4.42%
7	194	4.17%
8	251	5.39%
9	216	4.64%
10	256	5.50%
11	204	4.38%
12	280	6.01%
13	187	4.02%
14	198	4.25%
15	212	4.55%
16	232	4.98%
17	145	3.11%
18	182	3.91%
19	205	4.40%
20	168	3.61%
21	209	4.49%

#### Own/Rent

Own	3493	77.64%
Rent	1006	22.36%

#### Housing Type

Single Family	2110	50.88%
Condo	666	16.06%
2-4 Units	1096	26.43%
>>4 Units	275	6.63%

#### Number of Years in Arlington

<< 5 Year	1018	23.86%
5-15 Year	1303	30.54%
>> 15 Yea	1946	45.61%

#### Number of Adults 18-64

none	567	13.61%
one	940	22.56%
two	2231	53.54%
three	307	7.37%
four	117	2.81%
five	5	0.12%

#### Number of Adults 65+

none	2504	66.56%
one	725	19.27%
two	516	13.72%
three	14	0.37%
four	2	0.05%
five	1	0.03%

#### Number of Children

none	2104	56.21%
one	639	17.07%
two	719	19.21%
three	218	5.82%
four	61	1.63%
five	2	0.05%

#### Internet Access

Home	3982	60.22%
Work	1943	29.39%
Library	306	4.63%
None	381	5.76%