

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/ REDEVELOPMENT BOARD

Redevelopment Board

The Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) has three powers. It is the planning board under MGL Chapter 41 section 81A. It is the urban renewal authority for the Town under MGL Chapter 121, meaning it may, with Town Meeting approval, hold land or buildings to improve and rehabilitate them to meet community development goals. The ARB is also the Board of Survey, with authority to approve the design of ways (roads) 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.

The ARB met twenty-one times in 2012 and issued two significant Environmental Design Review (EDR) Special permits. An assisted living facility at the lower portion of the former Symmes Hospital site was reviewed and permitted. Also, Menotomy Grill, a restaurant for the long-vacant East Arlington video store at 25 Massachusetts Avenue was reviewed and permitted. In order to encourage re-tenanting of the vacant building, the Board had earlier lifted a restriction on the site that forbade restaurant use.

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. The Department works with the public and the private sector to ascertain and realize community goals for land use and physical development in housing, transportation, economic development, public services and facilities, historic, natural and cultural resources, open space and recreation.

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 four 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.

2012 Highlights & Initiatives

Comprehensive Long-Range Master Plan

The Redevelopment Board and the Planning Department began to engage the community in a long-range Master Plan to serve as the Town's primary policy statement on future physical development in Arlington. A Master Plan allows a community to guide desired change rather than react to ad hoc change. Communities with Master Plans have better bond ratings, get bonus points on grants, and send positive message to businesses considering Arlington. The Master Plan process involves public participation to set goals and communicate a long-term shared vision, followed by a review of current trends relative to land use, economic strength, housing, open space, recreation, natural, cultural and historic resources, transportation, population, demographics, public facilities, and includes steps to implement the plan. A lively interactive forum was held in October to begin the community goal-setting for the Master Plan. About 150 people participated. An eleven-member Master Plan Advisory Committee was selected to work with the public under the guidance of an experienced Master Plan consultant to develop the Master Plan. The ARB and the Department hosted a Master Plan table at Town Day, as well.

Symmes Urban Renewal

A decade after Town Meeting voted to purchase the former Symmes hospital site for redevelopment, the work on the residential component, called Arlington 360, finally began in earnest this year. The residential component will provide 176 units of housing, including 12 condominiums and 26 affordable units. Also the Redevelopment Board granted an Environmental Design Review Special Permit in April for the Assisted Living component on the lower portion of the Symmes site, now under construction by The Shelter Group. The Shelter Group will operate the facility as Bright View Senior Living.



Arlington 360 Urban Renewal Site (former site of Symmes Hospital)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Affordable Housing

Rent regulatory agreements were prepared for the expected 26 units of affordable housing at Symmes/Arlington 360. Marketing of 17 units of affordable housing at ALTA Brigham Square began in 2012. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held in 2012 for Capitol Square, the first of three buildings that will provide 32 units of affordable housing by the non-profit Housing Corporation of Arlington. Capitol Square was partly funded through the Community Development Block Grant program administered by the Department.



ALTA Brigham Square

Community Development Block Grant

Arlington received \$1.1 million dollars in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds that were allocated for public and community nonprofit services, public facility projects, and for housing and planning activities. Funding for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's CDBG program has been reduced in each of the last three years. This combined with stricter enforcement of eligibility guidelines has meant for increased stress on the budgets of the Departments and Arlington service agencies that rely on CDBG. The Department also completed the close-out of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grants in 2012.

Transportation

The Department hosted a public open house at the Hardy School on the 75% design plans for the Mass Avenue Corridor Project in April. Department staff and the DPW Director answered questions from residents and business owners as they showed plan details for landscaping, lighting, benches and other amenities.

Three design alternatives were presented for the Arlington Center Safe Travel project, funded by a Massachusetts Department of Transportation Clean Air Mobility Program (CLAMP) grant. The project seeks safer crossing of Massachusetts Avenue, Pleasant Street,

and Mystic Street for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

Town-owned Leased Properties

The Redevelopment Board (ARB) manages three buildings and the Planning Department is responsible for day-to-day management of these and three additional buildings owned and leased by the Town for the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen. The former Crosby School was sold in 2012 to longtime tenant Schools for Children through a disposition and procurement process. The remaining six buildings have over 142,844 gross square feet of space valued at \$20 million, housing twenty-two tenants paying over \$870,000 in rents. The six buildings consist of three former schools, one former library, and two historic houses.

The Department prepared 16 technical reports to the Zoning Board of Appeals on Special Permit and Zoning Variance requests in 2012. The Department assisted 50 businesses and commercial landowners.

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.

Activities

- Community Safety Building Phase 2 (envelope repair of Community Safety Building): Project currently under construction; completion spring 2013. Project budget \$2,240,000; project on budget.
- Central Fire Station Phase 1 (emergency envelope repairs): Project closed out.
- Central Fire Station Phase 2 (interior renovation): Study currently underway to determine impact of recent building code change which will require upgraded seismic resistance. Study cost \$20,000; completion expected February 2013.
- Highland Fire Station (envelope repair and interior renovation): Project closed out. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver Certification received.
- Stratton School Phase 1 (new roof, new transformer, electrical upgrades, and interior improvements) and Phase 2 (new windows, new boiler and interior improvements) completed at a total cost of \$2,455,395.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Reimbursement of \$718,115 from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Green School Repair Program and \$8,400 from utility company reduced the cost to the Town.

- Thompson School: 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. Funding approved by 2012 Town Meeting; total project budget \$20,598,956. Construction currently underway and project under budget. Completion expected August 2013.
- Robbins Library Roof Replacement (replacement of original slate roof and associated work): Design firm interviews conducted in December 2013; contract negotiation with preferred firm currently underway. Project completion expected summer 2013.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

In 2012 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 website and abutters to the property are notified by mail. To receive ZBA agendas by email, subscribe online at arlingtonma.gov/subscribe. 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-2012	
Petitions for Variance	8
Applications for Special Permits	10
Appeal of Decision of Inspector of Buildings	0
Amendments to SP/Variances	1
Comprehensive Permits	0
Total	
Total Petitions filed with Town Clerk	19
Total Hearings continued by the Board	1
Total Petitions withdrawn	2

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, 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 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 2012, the ACC convened twenty-nine (29) public meetings, and provided coordination, monitoring, permit review, and consultation on numerous residential and municipal developments around town. The board issued six (6) Permits/Orders of Conditions, three (3) Certificates of Compliance, three (3) Enforcements and five (5) Determinations of Applicability.

Conservation Activities

Hurd Field porous parking lot

Initiated by the Engineering Department and funded by the US EPA, this work was coordinated with ACC,

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

and completed in the fall. This project demonstrates a new approach to solving stormwater runoff problems in Town. The permeable pavement allows rainwater to infiltrate into the ground through the paved surface rather than running off into nearby Mill Brook. This recharges groundwater below the parking lot, reduces the amount of sediment and pollutants that enter the brook, and reduces potential flooding conditions downstream. A new raingarden will also be installed at this location.



AFD demonstrate porous pavement at Hurd Field parking lot.

Arlington Reservoir

The native plant wildlife habitat garden, installed in 2011 by the Arlington Vision 2020 Reservoir Committee, continues to mature and thrive. The Conservation Commission provided some financial support for plantings with a grant from the Conservation Stewardship Fund managed by the Arlington Land Trust. In addition, over 250 tons of invasive water chestnuts were mechanically harvested in August 2012, supported by the Arlington Waterbodies Fund and with assistance from DPW. This work will need to continue but at reduced levels in future years.

Spy Pond phragmites control project

The ACC continues to coordinate with the Spy Pond Committee and the waterfront property owners to control “the Giant Reed” (phragmites) which was growing along many areas of shoreline around the pond. This approach has involved a multi-year program including controlled spraying by a licensed applicator, Aquatic Control Technology, Inc., and volunteer winter cutting events. The program is nearing completion and must continue to 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.

Meadowbrook Park and Mystic Valley Parkway

In spring and fall land stewards, ACC members, and others carried out a cleanup of this conservation area adjacent to Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. This park collects many items that wash down Mill Brook each year.

Symmes

Approximately half of the Symmes development will consist of two parks and woodland. When housing development and assisted-living facility are complete, the ACC and Arlington Land Trust will hold a Conservation Restriction on this area to protect it in perpetuity from further development. The ACC and Arlington Land Trust have been monitoring construction activities to minimize impacts on the land to be conserved.

Arlington’s Great Meadow

The Friends of Arlington’s Great Meadows (FO-AGM) continued to sponsor regular public nature events. Most of the activity this year was devoted to maintaining the upland meadow area and trails. We also produced a new color trail map that is posted on our kiosks and available at the website. Information about FO-AGM’s activities and their annual report is available at www.foagm.org.

Mt. Gilboa

A local arborist, Brian Murray, continued to help us manage this property in 2012, volunteering his professional services.

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. A Land Stewards group will be organized for Symmes Woods once construction is complete. 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 at the Conservation webpage.

Mystic Lakes-Mid-Lakes Dam Project

This project was completed and the herring were counted in the spring of 2012 where the Mystic River Watershed Association estimated that 199,000 fish migrated through the dam’s ladder.

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. This project was completed and a ribbon cutting ceremony held in October of 2012.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Walking Book

Now out of print, the ACC, through a working group, is revising this popular guidebook to open spaces and walking tours in Arlington.

Future Goals

The ACC hopes to have its Walking Book finished and available for purchase by the end of 2013.

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.

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.

Acknowledgments

The ACC sincerely thanks all individuals and organizations that contributed directly or indirectly to the activities of its forty-seventh (47th) 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.



Water chestnut removal at Arlington Reservoir

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

The Open Space Committee (OSC) was established by Town Meeting in 1996. Members are appointed by the Town Manager and 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, 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 late in 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 website at arlingtonma.gov/openspace.

Mill Brook Initiative

A subcommittee of OSC and other Town representatives began meeting in March 2009 to study the feasibility of developing a Mill Brook Linear Park. The brook travels nearly three miles through Arlington, parallel to both Massachusetts Avenue and the Minuteman Bikeway, and represents an important ecological and historical feature of the Town. Enhancement of and improved access to existing open spaces are key goals of the Open Space and Recreation Plan, and in 2009 proposed 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 sites that abut Mill Brook and offer convenient public entry points to access 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 outlines 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 more than 100 parcels of land along Mill Brook, totaling nearly 150 acres. The Town owns sixteen parcels, accounting for about thirty-five percent of the land abutting the brook. The other sixty-five per-

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

cent is in private ownership with a variety of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The Mill Brook group has 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. The report is available for review on the Town website at arlingtonma.gov/openspace.

The group is continuing to work closely with the Planning Department and Redevelopment Board in conjunction with their ongoing efforts to enhance economic development opportunities in Arlington, as well as with the recently established Master Plan process. The Town GIS Coordinator and Town Engineer have provided valuable technical assistance with mapping and other data collection related to the brook and the abutters, as well as mapping of storm drains and other drainage that affect water quality. In 2012 additional analysis of all abutting parcels looked at “co-occurring” characteristics that could help to prioritize which areas are most likely to benefit from new uses or redevelopment. For example, coordination with the developers of the former Brigham’s site resulted in landscape enhancements around the brook and adjacent parklands as part of that redevelopment process.

Other Activities

The Committee continues to monitor and contribute to a wide range of open space projects that affect the Town and its residents’ quality of life, including: the program for Off-Leash Dog Areas in Arlington Parks and a fenced dog park at Thorndike Field supported with private grant funding; the state Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Alewife Greenway Path recently completed as part of the larger Alewife Reservation Master Plan; and the continued maintenance of the Wildlife Habitat Garden at the Arlington Reservoir, as well as a 2013 calendar featuring photos of the Reservoir environs, prepared by the Vision 2020 Reservoir Committee.

Other timely issues addressed by the Committee during 2012 include participation in the Planning Department’s Town-wide Master Plan kick-off meeting in October, various water bodies and invasive plant projects – such as the management of phragmites in Spy Pond and harvesting of water chestnuts in the Reservoir, and meeting with teachers at the Covenant School who are interested in getting their students involved projects related to Mill Brook. New opportunities for enhancement of public open spaces include the Transportation Advisory Committee’s redesign of Downing Square in Arlington Heights, the creation of rain gardens at Spy Pond Park and Hurd Field, with plans for gardens in other Town properties, the reactivated initiatives of the Tree Committee, especially in light of serious tree losses due to recent storms, and the redevelopment of

the Symmes site, including additional open space and parklands that will be protected under a conservation restriction managed by the Arlington Land Trust and the Conservation Commission.

Ongoing open space concerns include the future land uses at Busa Farm on the Lexington border next to the Arlington Reservoir and beach, the status of the Mugar property in East Arlington due to potential flooding and traffic problems if the land were to be developed, and the loss of public access around the Arlington Catholic High School practice field following installation of expanded fencing around new artificial turf.

As part of its community education goals, OSC participated in Town Day in September, 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. Several members are also contributing to a revision of the 1994 book, *Walking the Open Spaces of Arlington*, which is being coordinated by the Conservation Commission for both print and web-based distribution.

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The goal of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) is to improve the quality of life in Arlington by improving safety, mobility, and access for people using all modes of transportation, and contribute to improving the environment and public health. In this effort, the TAC works closely with the Arlington Police Department’s Traffic Division, the Public Works Department, and the Planning Department.

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. Resident and business members of the Committee at the end of 2012 were: Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Jean Clark, Paul Kent (representing the Chamber of Commerce), Jeff Maxtutis (Co-Chair), Howard Muise (Co-Chair), Scott Smith, Edward Starr (Vice Chair), and Richard Turcotte. Town staff members are Officer Corey Rateau (Police), Wayne Chouinard (Public Works), and Laura Wiener (Planning, Committee Secretary). John Lentz, is an Associate (non-voting) member.

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

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Major Activities

Arlington Schools

The TAC continues its multiyear plan to improve 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, reducing conflicts between students and autos during 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 and pick-up. The TAC is seeking funds for these items. Currently underway is an effort to improve the pedestrian environment and traffic flow around the Ottoson Middle School.

Crossing Flags Pilot Program

TAC initiated a pilot program to provide hand held flags at three locations near elementary schools, to provide more visibility for students crossing busy streets on the way to school. The program was expanded this past year, to a total of 7 locations around Town. The program was partially funded by the State of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security. Early indications are that the crossing flags are useful.

Arlington Center Safe Travel Project

Working with the Planning Department, DPW, TAC, and the Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC), the Town applied for funds from MassDOT under the Clean Air and Mobility Program (CLAMP) to improve safety and mobility for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians at the intersection of Route 60 and Mass Ave. Goals include providing a safe and visible bikeway connection through the intersection, reducing the crossing distance for pedestrians, and reducing congestion and wait time for vehicles.

Massachusetts Avenue Corridor

This project involves an upgrade of Massachusetts Avenue between the Cambridge city line and Pond Lane for safety and streetscape improvements. Design work is nearing completion, with construction anticipated to begin in 2013. The design will create a more organized roadway that balances the needs of pedestrians, motorists, bicyclists, and transit users. Members of the TAC served on the Review Committee for the project.

Ongoing Projects

- 30-50 Mill Street, aka Alta Brigham Square. TAC worked with the ARB on traffic mitigation implementation, particularly around the crossing of Mill Street by the Donald R. Mar-

- quis Minuteman Trail (Minuteman Bikeway).
- Massachusetts Avenue/Jason Street/Mill Street intersection. TAC continues to consider improvements to this intersection. Recommendations will be forthcoming in 2013.
- Lake Street Corridor. A TAC Working Group continues its work to develop alternatives for improving safety and mobility along Lake Street.
- Downing Square. Design and engineering of this complicated intersection is complete, and construction should begin in 2013.
- Jason Street cut-through traffic. At the request of the Board of Selectmen, based upon requests by Jason Street residents, a TAC Working Group is examining the traffic impact of motorists traveling between Route 2 and Massachusetts Avenue via Jason Street. A neighborhood meeting to identify issues was held in December.
- Arlington Center Parking. The 2012 Town Meeting requested that the Town study parking in Arlington Center. The Board of Selectmen requested that the TAC participate in this project. This work began this year.
- Bike Pavement Marking Policy. A Working Group made up of TAC and ABAC members is working with the Town Engineer and Department of Public Works to create a policy for accommodating bicycles when Town roads are repaved.

Reports

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

- MBTA Bus Route 77, Key Bus Routes Program. The MBTA is undertaking improvements to the top 15 bus routes, including Route 77 in Arlington and Cambridge. TAC worked with the MBTA to review proposed improvements, which will include moving and elongating some stops, and adding benches, shelters, and trash and recycling receptacles. The MBTA is expected to make planned improvements in 2013.
- Massachusetts Avenue at Water Street and Peg Spengler Way (Robbins Library). Recommendations for improving safety were approved by the Board of Selectmen.
- Old Mystic Street and Hutchinson Road. Recommendations for improving safety and visibility were approved by the Board of Selectmen.
- Crosswalk on Ridge Street at Crosby Street. Recommendations for improved pedestrian safety and driver visibility were approved by

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

TAC and will soon be reviewed by the Board of Selectmen.

- Wildwood Avenue/Lockeland Avenue, Field Road. Recommendations for improved pedestrian and vehicle safety were approved by TAC and will soon be reviewed by the Board of Selectmen.

Goals for 2013

The Committee will begin to update the 2007–2014 Open Space and Recreation Plan and continue its collaboration 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. Committee members will also work with the Master Plan Advisory Committee to ensure that open space and recreation resources are fully incorporated into all future Town planning.

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 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 running errands.

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 third Wednesday 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, contact the Department of Planning and Community Development at 781-316-3090, or e-mail tonkinc@comcast.net.

2012 Highlights

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

In early March, we held our annual winter social at the Arlington Center for the Arts About 50 people heard Dan Driscoll of the DCR give an illustrated talk on the DCR's trail system, how it was built up and the plans for the future. The talk was followed by a lively Q&A session.

Members have continued to be involved in the CLAMP (Clean Air and Mobility Program) proposal for the Arlington Center Safe Travel Project at the Mass Ave./Route 60/Bikeway intersection. We are hoping

that this will soon be progressing to the next stage.

Again one of the ABAC members organized a spring cleanup of the Bikeway. This was again successful although there were less people involved than last year there was less to pick up compared to previous years, possibly due to the mild winter. We will continue to make this an annual event.

In May, the weather was perfect for our annual BIKE-Arlington tour. Features of this slow paced ride included the Thompson School site and the new trails along Alewife Brook. Our police escort provided invaluable assistance to a cyclist, not part of the tour, who had just been injured by hitting one of the root heaves on the bikeway.

The Committee has helped the DPW pinpoint areas of the Bikeway that has issues with root heaves. Many of those issues have now been fixed, removing many serious hazards to cyclists and pedestrians. So a big thank you to the DPW.

Members of the Committee have worked with the Arlington Police Department on a revised handout that informs cyclists of their rights and responsibilities under the current law.

ABAC members participated in statewide bike and pedestrian counts at the Swan Place intersection of the bikeway, again demonstrating that the Trail is one of the busiest shared use paths in the Nation, with hundreds of bikes and pedestrians during a busy hour.

Members of the Committee have continued to be involved in the discussion around the rebuilding of Mass. Ave. in the East Arlington section of Town.

The Committee is still involved in the ongoing work to update the Minuteman Bikeway Map, replacing the current map that is now out of print and unavailable, and making the new map available to the public and online. The project is funded by a grant awarded to the three Bikeway communities; the program is entitled "Navigating the Minuteman Bikeway." This project is being coordinated with the towns of Bedford and Lexington, with Lexington taking the lead role. The Committee has been active in discussions with Lexington and Bedford in harmonizing signage along the whole length of the Bikeway, along with common policies that will give the whole trail a cohesive appearance. We are now looking at the maps and working on a consensus as what to show and what to leave out.

ABAC again had a booth at Town Day. The most asked question this year was "When is Hubway coming to Arlington?" There were also discussions about bike lanes, riding on the sidewalk, and cyclist visibility at night.

ABAC members, with the assistance of the Town Planning and Community Development Department and community volunteers, worked hard to prepare and submit the application to the League of American Bicyclists national designation as a "Bicycle Friendly Com-

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

munity". Arlington has now joined Boston, Somerville, and Northampton in receiving this recognition, and is the first Town in Massachusetts to do so. We now have two signs placed at either end of Mass. Ave. proclaiming that we are a "Bicycle Friendly Community."

Doug Greenfield a member executive board has created a new website for ABAC and is keeping it updated.

We have regained control of the Minuteman Bikeway website and are working to get it updated.

We have now filled our last open position on the executive board and are delighted that Phil Goff has chosen to join us. His professional experience has already come to the fore in the work he has put in conjunction with TAC on how to restripe roads.

At the request of the Town Manager, we have started to work on a set of guidelines for bikeway usage, to be applied when special events such as races or charity walks are proposed. We are reviewing similar guidelines proposed in Lexington, so as to harmonize policies among the bikeway communities. We are also working on application forms for these events.

During Bike Week in May, there was a friendly statewide competition among both workplaces and communities to see who can pledge the most bicycle miles of commuting. In past years, Cambridge has generally won. This year, because the scoring was changed to account for Town/City population, Arlington came in 1st place.

ARLINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

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

The Arlington 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, one domestic violence unit, and 442 vouchers that help participants live in privately-owned dwellings throughout the community. The Arlington Housing Authority, in partnership with the Town of Arlington, added to its programs two units of housing for victims of domestic violence.

This year marks the Arlington Housing Authority's sixty-fourth 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 four locally elected board members and one Governor Appointee member of the Arlington Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners are: *Chairman* Richard B. Murray, *Vice-Chairman* Nicholas Mitropoulos, and *Members Daniel Brosnan, Bridgette James, and Governor Appointee, Gaar Talanian.* Teresa J. Walsh served until she moved out of Town in October. She was replaced by Bridgett James at a joint meeting between the Arlington Housing Authority and the Arlington Board of Selectmen in November.

The Executive Director, John J. Griffin, is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and manages the day-to-day operations of the Authority.

Year in Review

In 2011, the Arlington Housing Authority suffered a tragic loss of its Chairman, Brian R. Greeley. Brian



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

was an active chairman and a strong housing leader and advocate for the people of Arlington. Because of Brian's leadership, the AHA created and began a domestic violence program, which we expanded in 2012 by adding a second unit to the program. Brian was also instrumental in working with the Town with the renovation of the Plaza located at the Cusack Terrace building. The plaza was completely renovated and a new covered seating area added for the benefit of the residents of Cusack Terrace. On Saturday April, 14, 2012 the Arlington Housing Authority Board, with numerous State and Local Officials held a dedication ceremony and named the newly renovated plaza in his honor.

The AHA continues its efforts to modernize its properties and programs to better serve the needs of the community in the expansion of its tenant services support programs, and works on creative partnerships with many housing groups and service providers in the community.

Properties

The AHA continues to make energy efficiency a major priority at all of our buildings. By bringing gas to the 144 unit Hauser building and the 72 units at Drake Village it was able to remove 2,400 gallon electric hot water system and replace it with new energy efficient gas hot water system and convert nine buildings with new energy efficient gas boilers. The nine buildings were funded by the Town from the monies they received from ARRA funds from HUD. A new gas hot water system was also added to the 100 unit Chestnut Manor building and the Authority was awarded funds for a Cogen System at the 133 unit all electric Winslow Tower building.

We continue to take advantage of the NSTAR low income energy program by adding new efficient hallway lighting replacing the old fluorescent lighting fixtures in all of our elderly buildings.

The AHA was also installed 520 new low-flow toilets, 520 new programmable thermostats, and over 600 new refrigerators.

Safety and Security has been upgraded at all of our building by working the Arlington Fire Department all our senior building are now using the new wireless technology for our fire alarm systems. We also upgraded most of the building with new fire alarm systems. Message boards have been installed in all our properties so we can notify residents of issues or just to keep them up-to-date on programs and happenings in each of the buildings.

Lobby areas and hallways were updated, painted, and pictures added and new flat panel TV's were added in the community rooms. New lobby furniture was installed at Cusack Terrace.

Community Partnerships

2012 was a great year in expanding our partner-

ships 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 twelfth year in a row, inmates under the supervision of correctional personnel assisted the AHA maintenance staff in its spring and fall cleanup efforts as well as painting and floor waxing.

Minuteman Senior Services has been so successful at our Drake Village location by providing services to our seniors and a meals program. The AHA Board of Commissioners along with Minuteman worked with Tufts on a health care exercise and nutrition program at Drake Village study the effects of healthy eating and exercise. In partnership with Minuteman, we continued the emergency senior domestic violence program in a unit in one of our properties.

The Arlington Boys and Girls Club and Fidelity House continues their 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 and continues to provide needed help and assistance to our families at Menotomy Manor.

In partnership with the Saint Vincent DePaul Society we have added a clothing program at Menotomy Manor. This program offers clothing options for our families of low income.

Once again, Operation Success continues to be a major factor in improving grades by providing homework help and guidance for the residents of Menotomy Manor. In 2012 more families participated than ever before. Janet Maguire and Peggy Regan run this program with a large group of young volunteers. They have recently added to the program by offering counseling services and cultural experiences programs to middle and high school students that they would otherwise not be able to afford.

The new Domestic Violence Program/ Affordable Housing created by the Arlington Housing Authority, the Board of Health, and the Arlington Police Department began in 2011. The AHA was awarded funding through the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) for the purchases of a 2 bedroom unit for temporary housing for victims of domestic violence. Funding for a second unit was awarded to the AHA and we purchased a three bedroom unit 2012.

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.

Challenges Ahead

State Regulations and Mass Chapter 121B continue to be a major barrier to the housing authority in providing more affordable housing. Rents set at either

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

27% or 30% with many deductions; limit the increase of rents in all of our developments. This is well documented in numerous state housing studies since 2000.

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. On our current waitlist 86% of the applicants have incomes below \$10,000 and many of them receive only temporary assistance in the amount of \$3,000 per year. We greatly appreciate the efforts from the Town of Arlington in awarding us funds to continue to serve its neediest population.

The AHA will continue to seek funding from CDBG, and all other sources to make ends meet.

Of 180 households leased in our Menotomy Manor family units:

- 25 households have a total income of less than \$40,000
- 51 households have a total income of less than \$35,000
- 49 households have a total income of less than \$20,000
- 33 households have a total income of less than \$10,000

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 new website, arlingtonhousing.org, is now available and provides valuable information to those wishing to learn more about the AHA and its programs.

You may now also search for and become a fan of the Arlington Housing Authority on Facebook.

Wait Lists

Stated-Aided Elderly/Handicap One Bedroom Units

Arlington Applicants:	74
Non-Arlington Applicants:	290
Total	364

State-Aided Family 2-Bedroom Units

Arlington Applicants:	21
Non-Arlington Applicants:	170
Total	191

State-Aided Family 3-Bedroom Units

Arlington Applicants:	5
Non-Arlington Applicants:	117
Total	122

Section 8 Wait List

Arlington Applicants: *438

** 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: \$378/month (includes heat and lights)

Average Family Monthly Rent: \$486/month (tenant pays utilities)

Tenant Services

Mary Maher and Nancy Flynn-Barvick, Housing Coordinators, continued their active participation in monthly meetings with the presidents of the tenant associations. The tenant presidents and our staff, meet regularly to insure communication between our agency and the residents.

For the third year in a row, the AHA participated in National Night Out at Menotomy Manor. National Night Out is the celebration between the AHA, The Arlington Police department and the community. It is a going-away celebration of crime and drugs in our community. The Arlington Housing Authority would like to thank the Chief of Police Fred Ryan, and Officer James Smith, the entire Police Department, and Fire Chief, Robert Jefferson and his crew for their efforts and work with the Arlington Housing Authority.

Personnel

The Arlington Housing Authority would like to thank all its employees for their dedication throughout the year. We further would like recognize the service of the Jerry Keefe and George "Salty" Mead. Both retired this past year and both were dedicated hard working employees. We wish them well in their well deserved retirement. They will be missed by all.

VISION 2020

About Vision 2020

Vision 2020, established by Town Meeting in June 1992, is a committee of the Town of Arlington that partners residents, Town employees, and Town leaders in a joint planning process. This process focuses on accomplishing the Town Goals enacted by Town Meeting in 1993. The Standing Committee oversees projects of volunteer task groups that work in support of the goals and develops and reports the results of an annual Town-wide survey. It also reports to Town Meeting on the results of Vision 2020 collaborative activities.

Vision 2020's task groups support goals related to: Business, Communication, Community and Citizen Service, Culture and Recreation, Diversity, Education, Environment, Fiscal Resources, and Gover-

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

nance. Task group information can be found online at arlingtonma.gov/vision2020.

Notable Activities

In 2012 Vision 2020 volunteers worked on a wide range of new and ongoing projects to benefit the Town and its residents. These efforts brought together Town departments, local groups and organizations, and volunteers.

Annual Vision 2020 Survey

Employing the concept that while you are being counted, your opinions count too, the Vision 2020 Standing Committee, its Task Groups, and Town Departments created, tallied, and analyzed 4,400 resident responses to the 2012 Vision 2020 Annual Survey, an insert to the Town's Annual Census mailing.

In just six weeks, 24% of Arlington households responded to the survey, Mastering Our Future: Help Arlington Prepare for the Upcoming Master Planning Process. Response rates were remarkably even across all precincts.

Residents weighed in on various aspects of living in Arlington now and in the future. Questions covered Town character, land use, transportation systems, parking, housing options, economic development, and financial sustainability. Residents were invited to share their visions for Arlington's future, 10 to 20 years out, and to indicate how they might want to engage in the master planning process.

Household responses received by March 15, were summarized and reported to Town Meeting, Town officials, and departments. A one-page analysis was made available to residents on Town Day, and a more detailed discussion (included at this end of this report) was published in The Arlington Advocate in October. Survey data support Town officials and departments in planning and evaluation tasks.

Additional Activities

Sponsored a Warrant Article for the 2012 Annual Town Meeting to appropriate \$50,000 to the Town's Water Body Fund for the maintenance, treatment, and oversight of the Town's water bodies. The Spy Pond and Reservoir Committees worked with the DPW and Conservation Commission to draft this successful Warrant Article. Important work completed as a result included a major harvest and removal of invasive water chestnuts from the Reservoir for a second consecutive year as well as monitoring and treatment of Hill's Pond and Spy Pond for invasive and nuisance aquatic plants.

Prepared the 2013 Annual Town Survey, "Collaborative Arlington: Exchanging Information, Working Together," as an insert to the Census mailing.

With the Arlington League of Women Voters, co-sponsored the annual Candidates' Night program.

Helped select titles for the 2012 Community Book Read. The title chosen was *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green.

At Town Day, Vision 2020 used demonstrations, calendar sales, and engaging activities to inform and educate the public about Arlington matters, and to attract new Task Group members. Diversity, Fiscal Resources, Governance, Public Art, and all Environmental Task Groups were represented.

Diversity: Continued to provide leadership to the Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Committee, advocating for recruiting, employing, and retaining staff with diverse backgrounds in the Arlington Public Schools.

Public Art Committee: Completed the Spy Pond Mural project, with an installation at the Boys and Girls Club incorporating art by four high school students. The Committee raised funds once signage by-law changes allowed display of the mural. Most funding came from two campaigns, both artistic expressions in their own right. Chairful Where You Sit, a pop-up art installation on the Minuteman Bike Path featuring over thirty re-imagined chairs by local artists and community members, raised about \$3,000. Artbeat, an East Arlington business, sponsored the very successful Art Gecko fundraiser.

Fiscal Resources: Analyzed the assessment of properties on Massachusetts Avenue in East Arlington for the years 2003 to 2010, and compared them to assessments in North Cambridge during the same period. Discovered that the assessment history in the two regions was more similar than expected. Discussed results with Town Manager.

Prepared five articles for The Arlington Advocate called Ideas for Growth in Arlington which pointed out the importance of accurate assessment of land in commercial areas.

Studied the water and sewer metering and billing process. Quantified the financial benefits of moving from semi-annual to quarterly billing cycle. Discussed results with Town Manager.

Reservoir Committee: Continued work on the new Wildlife Habitat Garden which it designed and installed with help from DPW in 2011. New plantings were added and substantial maintenance was done over a number of group work sessions, as well as by volunteers on their own time, and a local Girl Scout troop's work project. Better signage was installed, identifying the garden as a Vision 2020 initiative. Native plants were also labeled, as part of ongoing public education.

The Wildlife Habitat Garden is a special community resource. The Committee welcomes schools, recreational groups and others to participate in its future development and maintenance. Information is available

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

at www.arlington2020.org/reservoir/.

Continued to provide maintenance and trash pick-up for the landscaped island at the east end of the Reservoir parking lot.

Created the Arlington Reservoir Calendar for 2013, with photos from around the Reservoir throughout the seasons, for outreach and education as well as fundraising. Solicited photos from members of the Reservoir Committee and the Menotomy Bird Club and received over 200 submissions. The calendar was printed in time for sales at Town Day (over 40 sold) and, with support from a number of local businesses, was a sell-out during the holidays. The Committee expects to net about \$500 to support future projects.

Spy Pond Committee: Helped to monitor water quality and control excessive vegetation on Spy Pond. Met with the Planning Department, DPW, Board of Health, and Aquatic Control Technology (ACT) regarding Arlington's water bodies. Met with the Board of Health about blue green (microcystis) algae, an increasing health threat in the Pond. Trained several Committee members to take Secchi Disk readings to monitor Pond clarity and demonstrated the method at Town Day. ACT performed further Secchi Disk training with the Boys and Girls Club and initiated a survey.

Wrote a public education flyer about the problems and costs of weed growth at Spy Pond (or any water body) when high-phosphorus fertilizers end up in storm water runoff. High school students distributed the flyer to the 3,000 Arlington households in the 748-acre Spy Pond Watershed.

Planned and managed the ninth annual Spy Pond Trails Day at which local volunteers and the Boston area Appalachian Mountain Club pruned trees and removed invasives and trash along the trail at the Route 2 end of the Pond. In a separate project with the Arlington Land Trust and Kelwyn Manor Association, planted wetland plants and seed mix in the marshes surrounding Kelwyn Manor Park and Elizabeth Island.

Met with MassHighway and the Town Engineer to review the Spy Pond path along Route 2 and the sand bar that is growing at that end of the Pond.

Sustainable Arlington: Worked with the Town EcoFest committee to create and manage the fourth annual EcoFest at Town Hall, "Locavoracious ... About Food!" with local food producers, including community and home gardeners, home food waste composting, and presentations on environmental impacts of food production, consumption and disposal. Engaged local groups and organizations including Old Schwamb Mill, the Arlington Center for the Arts, the Friends of Spy Pond Park and the Garden Club.

Participated in the food-waste composting pilot at Brackett Elementary School.

Worked with Town staff to submit a proposal for the second year of the state's *Solarize Mass* program. Arlington was one of 17 communities selected. The program combined community-led marketing and outreach with a tiered pricing structure as an incentive to install PV systems up to 15kW on homes or businesses. Sustainable Arlington worked with the Town to select the PV installer (Solarflair Energy) and then led the marketing and outreach campaign. 157 contracts were signed, totaling 718 kW of capacity, more than any other community. As of late 2012, approximately 15 PV systems had already been installed.

Two members of Sustainable Arlington continued to serve on the Town's Energy Working Group (EWG), which works to reduce the Town's energy use and costs. In 2012, in addition to ongoing projects, the EWG pursued three new directions.

It submitted a proposal to the first ever round of competitive grants under the state's Green Communities Program. Arlington was one of 19 communities awarded a grant, receiving \$250,000 for two projects to increase building energy efficiency: HVAC upgrades at the high school and installation of variable frequency drives on electric motors in six other buildings.

EWG work with the Thompson School Rebuilding Committee and the project's architect led to that building being made "solar ready" (the EWG intends to pursue a rooftop PV system for the new school).

The EWG was able to have \$200,000 in supplemental local aid from the state designated by Town Meeting for use in implementing energy efficiency projects.

Leadership Changes

The Vision 2020 Standing Committee's long-time co-chairs Jane Howard and Jo Martha Glushko stepped down after serving more than 20 and nine years, respectively. They continue on, however, as Town Meeting and Planning Department representatives to the Standing Committee. New co-chairs are Brucie Moulton, from the Environment Task Group Sustainable Arlington committee, and Mary Harrison, from the Diversity Task Group.

Task Group and Committee leadership changes during 2012:

- Claire Carswell and Tarajee Pass became Diversity Task Group co-chairs when Miriam Stein stepped down;
- David White is the new Chair of the Reservoir Committee;
- Brad Barber replaced Jacob Friis as Chair of the Spy Pond Committee;
- Dave Haas took over as co-chair of Sustainable Arlington replacing Charlotte Milan.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



To: Town Meeting Members and Town Officials

From: Vision 2020 Standing Committee and Task Group Chairs
Co-Chairs: Jo-Martha Glushko and Jane Howard
Paul Bayer, Kathleen Bodie, John Budzyna, Adam Chapdelaine, Joe Connelly, Dan Dunn, Andrew Fischer, Bruce Fitzsimmons, Jacob Friis, Mary Harrison, William Hayner, Gordon Jamieson, Elizabeth Karpati, John Leone, Josh Lobel, Gail McCormick, Charlotte Milan, Cheryl Miller, Sally Moulton, Angela Olszewski, Stephen Ricci, Miriam Stein, Brian Sullivan and David White

Date: May 9, 2012

Subject: Vision 2020 Report to the 2012 Annual Town Meeting

The Vision 2020 Standing Committee and its Task Groups are pleased to present the following report covering Vision 2020 projects and activities for Calendar Year 2011 as well as Warrant Article 51 and its 2012 Annual Survey. The report can be found in three areas:

- The Town's 2011 Annual Report, in the Community Development section on pages 103-117, presents a short history of Vision 2020's 22-year existence and specific accomplishments for the year 2011. The results of the 2011 Vision 2020 Annual Survey - Truth and Consequences: You Can Influence the Difficult Decisions - are included on these pages.
- The second is by reference to the Finance Committee's recommended vote in their 2012 Report to the 2012 Annual Town Meeting for Warrant Article # 51 -Appropriation/Arlington's Water Bodies Fund. It received your unanimous approval on May 2, 2012.
- The third, a summary of the almost 4,400 Arlington household responses received by March 15, 2012 to the 2012 Vision 2020 Annual Survey - Mastering Our Future: Help Arlington Prepare for its Upcoming Master Planning Process - can be found in this booklet. Twenty-four percent (24%) of Arlington's households responded to this survey in just six weeks; 3,698 completed paper forms, and 693 responded to an online version of the survey. This is the third year in a row with more than 4,000 households responding. The demographics page shows that respondents are distributed across town.

Focused on preparing residents for the Town's anticipated master planning process, the survey introduced residents to some Arlington trends seen since 1990 and asked residents to weigh in on some elements/aspects of living in Arlington currently and in the future. These responses will contribute to the Town's development of a Master Plan that is designed to have value for years to come. Residents were queried on such elements as town character, land use, transportation systems, parking, housing options, facilities, infrastructure, economic development and financial sustainability.

Residents were also encouraged to share their visions for Arlington's future, 10-20 years down the road, and comment on ways they might want to be involved in the master planning process. A summary of these comments and vision statements has been collected and will follow this report.

The 2012 survey results, further analysis and resident contributions will be available on the Town website.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Demographics

Total Responses: 4,391
Paper or Survey Monkey

	#	%
Online	693	16%
Paper	3,698	84%

Precinct

	#	%
Pct 1	143	3%
Pct 2	169	4%
Pct 3	187	4%
Pct 4	212	5%
Pct 5	180	4%
Pct 6	199	5%
Pct 7	209	5%
Pct 8	215	5%
Pct 9	206	5%
Pct 10	224	5%
Pct 11	184	4%
Pct 12	215	5%
Pct 13	169	4%
Pct 14	211	5%
Pct 15	193	4%
Pct 16	201	5%
Pct 17	162	4%
Pct 18	175	4%
Pct 19	175	4%
Pct 20	176	4%
Pct 21	189	4%
(Blank)	397	9%

Household includes 18-64 year olds

	#	%
Yes	3,357	76%
No	726	17%
(Blank)	308	7%

Household includes 65+ year olds

	#	%
Yes	1,338	30%
No	2,782	63%
(Blank)	271	6%

School Age Children in Arl Schools

	#	%
Yes	630	14%
No	3,551	81%
(Blank)	210	5%

School Age Children Not in Arl Schools

	#	%
Yes	93	2%
No	3,308	75%
(Blank)	990	23%

Years in Arlington

	#	%
<<5 yrs	1,008	23%
5-15 yrs	1,196	27%
>>15 yrs	1,942	44%
(Blank)	245	6%

Housing Type

	#	%
Single Family	2,286	52%
Condo	539	12%
2-4 Units	898	20%
5 or more units	318	7%
(Blank)	350	8%

Own/Rent

	#	%
Own	3,142	72%
Rent	1,062	24%
(Blank)	187	4%

Own/Rent Commercial Space in Arlington

	#	%
Yes	621	14%
No	2,907	66%
(Blank)	863	20%

Employed in Arlington

	#	%
Yes	293	7%
No	3,082	70%
(Blank)	1,016	23%

Under 18 Employed in Arlington

	#	%
Yes	202	5%
No	3,949	90%
(Blank)	240	5%

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1: Town Character

Listed below are some characteristics that may or may not be important to you about Arlington as a place to live. Indicate how important each one is to you. Fill in one bubble per item only.

	% Important	% Unimportant	Important	Unimportant	(Blank)	Total Valid Responses
Safe Neighborhoods	98.9%	1.1%	4,207	48	136	4,255
Geographic Location	95.0%	5.0%	4,010	209	172	4,219
Parks/Open Space	91.9%	8.1%	3,866	340	185	4,206
Access to Public Transportation	91.1%	8.9%	3,859	376	156	4,235
Stability of Real Estate Values	86.4%	13.6%	3,629	570	192	4,199
Biking/Walking Areas	86.0%	14.0%	3,614	589	188	4,203
Quality of Public Education	83.2%	16.8%	3,493	706	192	4,199
Town Gvmt Services	78.3%	21.7%	3,253	902	236	4,155
Civic Involvement/Sense of Community	76.1%	23.9%	3,153	989	249	4,142
Variety of Restaurants	74.3%	25.7%	3,116	1,079	196	4,195
Distinct Commercial Centers	66.8%	33.2%	2,749	1,364	278	4,113
Water Bodies Throughout Town	66.2%	33.8%	2,742	1,401	248	4,143
Cultural Activities/Historic Resources	65.6%	34.4%	2,726	1,430	235	4,156
Youth Activities	63.8%	36.2%	2,649	1,506	236	4,155
Senior Services/Activities	53.6%	46.4%	2,253	1,947	191	4,200

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2: Land Use: Purpose and Location

Land use choices can affect the Town’s character and economic viability. Though Arlington is perceived as densely developed, opportunities may arise for future projects.

A) Do you support or oppose policies that encourage the following uses for new building and redevelopment in Arlington?

	% Strong Support	% Some Support	% Some Opposition	% Strong Opposition	Strong Support	Some Support	Some Opposition	Strong Opposition	(Blank)	Total Valid Responses
Museums / Galleries / Theaters / Libraries	51.1%	40.4%	6.1%	2.4%	2,094	1,653	248	99	297	4,094
Commercial/Small Business	43.7%	48.5%	5.6%	2.1%	1,775	1,972	229	86	329	4,062
Health Wellness	41.6%	50.7%	6.1%	1.6%	1,691	2,060	249	67	324	4,067
Restaurants	40.5%	46.5%	9.7%	3.3%	1,651	1,893	395	136	316	4,075
Recreation / Sports Facilities	40.3%	46.2%	10.1%	3.4%	1,639	1,880	412	137	323	4,068
Retail	36.1%	51.6%	9.1%	3.1%	1,465	2,094	371	127	334	4,057
Info Tech	35.9%	46.3%	13.1%	4.7%	1,445	1,862	527	189	368	4,023
Engineering/Arch/Design	33.0%	51.0%	11.8%	4.2%	1,333	2,057	478	169	354	4,037
Mixed Use retail, office, residential	29.7%	52.3%	13.2%	4.7%	1,196	2,105	531	191	368	4,023
Biotech	28.5%	39.4%	21.6%	10.5%	1,154	1,592	873	426	346	4,045
Residential	28.1%	45.8%	17.4%	8.7%	1,139	1,854	706	353	339	4,052
Prof Services	22.7%	62.4%	11.7%	3.3%	914	2,510	469	131	367	4,024
Hotels, Inns, B&B's	20.6%	48.2%	21.6%	9.6%	836	1,957	875	388	335	4,056
Light Industry	19.1%	41.7%	27.7%	11.5%	770	1,680	1,116	465	360	4,031
Personal Services	17.9%	50.9%	24.0%	7.3%	723	2,061	972	294	341	4,050
No More Development	12.3%	27.0%	34.7%	26.0%	471	1,029	1,325	993	573	3,818

2: Land Use: Potential Development Locations

B) Do you support or oppose policies that encourage new building and redevelopment in the following areas, where possible?

	% Strong Support	% Some Support	% Some Opposition	% Strong Opposition	Strong Support	Some Support	Some Opposition	Strong Opposition	(Blank)	Total Valid Responses
Along Route 2	35.2%	42.5%	12.3%	9.9%	1,419	1,714	496	400	362	4,029
Broadway	25.9%	48.8%	16.5%	8.7%	1,033	1,945	657	348	408	3,983
Mass. Ave.	25.9%	42.8%	18.8%	12.5%	1,048	1,732	761	508	342	4,049
Throughout Town	22.7%	52.0%	16.3%	8.9%	902	2,065	649	355	420	3,971
Dudley Street	22.3%	50.6%	18.1%	9.0%	848	1,928	689	344	582	3,809
Summer Street	19.0%	47.8%	21.1%	12.2%	744	1,877	827	477	466	3,925

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

3: Living in Arlington

As you think about living in Arlington, how do you experience the following?

	% Often an Issue	% Sometimes an Issue	% Not an Issue	Often an Issue	Sometimes an Issue	Not an Issue	(Blank)	Total Valid Responses
Traffic on Mass. Ave.	36.0%	47.3%	16.8%	1,530	2,012	713	136	4,255
Housing Affordability	29.2%	37.6%	33.1%	1,222	1,573	1,385	211	4,180
Overnight Parking	23.8%	29.2%	46.9%	1,010	1,240	1,990	151	4,240
Traffic in My Neighborhood	23.4%	37.6%	39.0%	985	1,586	1,645	175	4,216
Traffic on Other Main Roads	23.1%	51.6%	25.3%	966	2,160	1,060	205	4,186
Daytime Parking	17.5%	36.1%	46.4%	741	1,527	1,967	156	4,235
Employment Opportunities in Arlington	16.9%	25.4%	57.7%	686	1,034	2,349	322	4,069
Maintenance of Town Properties (buildings, roads, water bodies, fields)	16.5%	44.5%	39.0%	687	1,854	1,624	226	4,165
Snow Clearing	15.0%	42.3%	42.7%	631	1,783	1,798	179	4,212
Amount of Open Space	13.4%	33.5%	53.1%	557	1,391	2,207	236	4,155
Public Transportation	12.9%	33.0%	54.1%	541	1,386	2,267	197	4,194
Mix of Stores/Services	9.2%	36.5%	54.2%	386	1,528	2,267	210	4,181
Handicap Accessibility	6.6%	20.6%	72.8%	271	851	3,001	268	4,123
Historic Preservation	5.5%	23.1%	71.5%	224	947	2,934	286	4,105

4: Housing Options

Arlington offers a diverse mix of housing types in a variety of sizes such as single-family and multi-family homes, condos and apartments. As we look to the future, should the following housing options be encouraged?

	% Yes	% No	Yes	No	(Blank)	Total Valid Responses
Senior Housing Options	81.2%	18.8%	3,344	774	273	4,118
Housing for First Time Buyers	78.4%	21.6%	3,195	882	314	4,077
Accessory Apartment	74.8%	25.2%	3,018	1,016	357	4,034
Housing in Mixed-Use Building	68.2%	31.8%	2,789	1,301	301	4,090
Special Needs Housing	65.7%	34.3%	2,645	1,381	365	4,026
Co-housing	60.2%	39.8%	2,411	1,593	387	4,004
Single Room Occupancy	45.2%	54.8%	1,833	2,221	337	4,054
High-rise Residential	22.4%	77.6%	926	3,207	258	4,133

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

5: Transportation

A) Transportation Options - Think about the transportation systems serving Arlington. Do you support or oppose the implementation of each of the following options?

	% Support	% Neutral	% Opposed	Support	Neutral	Oppose	(Blank)	Total Valid Responses
Additional / Improved Sidewalks	69.2%	25.6%	5.2%	2,940	1,087	219	145	4,246
Red Line Extension from Alewife	64.5%	20.1%	15.5%	2,731	850	655	155	4,236
Green Line Ext to Route 16	63.2%	25.8%	11.0%	2,668	1,091	465	167	4,224
Car/Bike Sharing Rentals	58.7%	33.2%	8.1%	2,473	1,396	342	180	4,211
Town Shuttle / Circulating Bus	58.5%	31.1%	10.4%	2,480	1,317	441	153	4,238
Carpool Networking	57.8%	39.1%	3.1%	2,435	1,649	131	176	4,215
Shuttle / Bus to Adjacent Town Centers	57.7%	32.5%	9.8%	2,444	1,374	416	157	4,234
Additional Bus Shelters	52.1%	39.6%	8.3%	2,190	1,665	348	188	4,203
Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	49.6%	42.1%	8.3%	2,092	1,778	349	172	4,219
Additional Bike Lanes/Routes	46.5%	24.4%	29.1%	1,971	1,035	1,232	153	4,238

B) Parking Options - Does Arlington need more parking options?

	% Yes	% No	Yes	No	(Blank)	Total Valid Responses
Need More Parking	58.8%	41.2%	1,967	1,381	1043	3,348

Would you support or oppose each of the following options?

	% Support	% Neutral	% Opposed	Support	Neutral	Oppose	(Blank)	Total Valid Responses
Shared Parking / Use of Business Lots	63.9%	32.2%	3.9%	2,565	1,293	155	378	4,013
Park and Ride Area	58.6%	32.6%	8.8%	2,360	1,313	355	363	4,028
Daytime Parking on Residential Streets	57.8%	28.0%	14.2%	2,332	1,128	572	359	4,032
Designated Commuter Parking	52.7%	35.9%	11.4%	2,118	1,445	457	371	4,020
Overnight Parking Residential on Residential Streets	40.8%	23.1%	36.1%	1,661	942	1,468	320	4,071
Parking Structure / Garage	30.3%	33.5%	36.2%	1,218	1,344	1,452	377	4,014
Metered Parking on Mass Ave	28.5%	23.5%	48.0%	1,156	952	1,942	341	4,050

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

6: Involvement in the Master Planning Process

Keeping people involved is vital to the success of the master plan and its implementation. How would you like to participate in the master planning process?

	% Yes	% No	Yes	No	(Blank)	Total Valid Responses
Respond to Online Community Surveys	80.1%	19.9%	2,971	737	666	3,708
Submit Ideas via a Website	72.8%	27.2%	2,666	995	718	3,661
Email	70.6%	29.4%	2,582	1,074	725	3,656
Neighborhood Gatherings	53.3%	46.7%	1,960	1,716	715	3,676
Submit ideas through a Town Meeting Member	52.3%	47.7%	1,879	1,713	799	3,592
Attend Public Meetings	47.6%	52.4%	1,747	1,921	723	3,668
Through Local Media (newspapers)	45.2%	54.8%	1,620	1,966	794	3,586
Participate in Small Group Discussions	33.5%	66.5%	1,208	2,398	785	3,606

7: Financial Sustainability

To meet Arlington's goal of achieving financial sustainability, we must operate without a structural deficit (expenses rise at a rate greater than revenues). Below are some ways to address this challenge. Indicate your support of or opposition to the following.

	% Favor	% Opposed	Favor	Oppose	(Blank)	Total Valid Responses
Increased State Aid	90.7%	9.3%	2,628	271	463	2,899
CPA - Community Preservation Act (matching state funds)	87.6%	12.4%	1,910	271	569	2,181
Commercial Development	83.2%	16.8%	2,300	463	441	2,763
Revised Business / Commercial Tax Structure	82.9%	17.1%	1,621	335	521	1,956
More Regionalization of Services	75.7%	24.3%	1,423	458	561	1,881
Residential Development	65.1%	34.9%	1,516	814	457	2,330
Debt Exclusions to Finance Specific Building Projects	51.0%	49.0%	905	869	603	1,774
Pay As You Throw for Trash Removal (PAYT)	39.3%	60.7%	1,284	1,981	368	3,265
Periodic Property Tax Overrides (Prop 2.5)	38.6%	61.4%	1,024	1,626	456	2,650
Reduced Services	11.7%	88.3%	340	2,562	467	2,902