



Vision 2020 Report to the 2012 Annual Town Meeting

May 9, 2012



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.

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% |

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 |

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 |

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 |

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 |

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 |