



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476
Phone: 781-316-3000

webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us

02/26/2014 Minutes

Arlington Master Plan Advisory Committee

Central School, Main Room - 7:00PM

Minutes: February 26, 2014

Approved: (as amended) March 6, 2014; vote: 5 approved, 2 abstain

Members present: Ann LeRoyer, Charles Kalauskas, Harris Band, Carol Svenson, Pam Heidell, Greg Bowe

Members absent: Monica Tibbits-Nutt, Eric Bourassa, Sheri Baron, Bob Radochia, Joe Barr

Also present: Consultant Judi Barrett of RKG; Joe Curro (BoS); Carol Kowalski, Laura Wiener, Ted Fields, and Joey Glushko of the Planning Dept. Sign-in sheets and a count indicated that 14 residents were in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm. At onset, there was not a quorum of the committee; late arrivals created a quorum and the minutes of February 6, 2014 were approved, as presented, at the end of the meeting.

Charlie Kalauskas opened the meeting, acknowledging those present who were on various town boards and committees and were Town Meeting members. Carol Kowalski introduced the presentation topic – Public Service and Facilities - and presenter Judi Barrett of RKG. After a brief presentation, the “Discussion and Questions” (hand-out) were handled individually with participation from the audience.

The questions are listed below, with some of the public comments from the meeting:

- What non-land use options should Arlington consider in order to reduce (or at least contain) the structural deficit? In other words, setting aside any land use policy changes, what else could the Town do? What should be the Town’s “structural deficit” policy?
 - Selectman Joe Curro spoke briefly to the policy topic
 - Can/should volunteers do more? – using their “expertise?”
 - Consider adoption of CPA; should town sell some of its buildings/properties; should those who lease space do so at costs closer to market rate(s)?
- 2) By any measure, Arlington is a full-service community – that is, a community that provides a comprehensive package of programs and services for residents. Should the Town reduce some services to control costs? If so, which ones?
 - a. combine some services
 - b. reduce roadway services to private ways, or charge for these services
 - c. aim to improve efficiencies
 - d. consider regionalization of some services; regional efficiencies
- 3) Arlington owns quite a bit of real estate. There may be good reasons for the Town to keep and manage so many buildings, but should there be a policy to guide the identification and disposition of “surplus” property? Do you think the Town has properties now that it could sell without sacrificing something very important to the community?
 - a. what criteria to determine when a property is “surplus”?
 - b. what profitable “opportunities” are there association with a property?

- c. what about the loss of services from existing tenants?
 - d. should town administration be in the real estate business?"
 - e. we are a land poor community; do we need to hold on to properties because we will need the land at a later time?
- 4) According to the DPW, Arlington is rapidly running out of cemetery space. What options should the Town consider?
Town is not required to provide cemetery space; this item is not seen as a high priority by audience.
- 5) Despite the number of Town-owned buildings, Arlington seems to have a shortage of public land to meet a variety of needs. Examples: inadequate space for cemeteries and snow storage, the skating rink has reached capacity, and playing fields are overused. How should the Town address the shortage of land for public facilities and services?
Consider regional approaches to services.
- 6) There seems to be some concern in Arlington about the desirability of installing and maintaining brick sidewalks. Two issues have been identified: access constraints for people with disabilities, and cost. However, those who support brick sidewalks make a strong case for aesthetics. How should the Town address these opposing views?
- a. high priority to be considered a "walkable community"
 - b. there are alternative options to brick sidewalks which do need to be explored
- One of the draft goals for the master plan calls on the Town to "build, operate, and maintain public facilities that are attractive and help to minimize environmental impact and that connect Arlington as a community." How can public facilities be better used to connect the community? Are there areas of town that are underserved by existing public facilities?
 - community center(s) services to neighborhoods
 - use schools as localized community spaces
 - redesign roadways to accommodate "green spaces"
 - programs in churches or other publicly used spaces; difficulties of access and hours of use; program accommodations for general public
 - planning developments which have "community space" as part of the development

The public component of this meeting ended about 9:00PM; the committee members gathered for additional discussion and actions – approval of minutes, since the next working paper topic has been split into two topic sessions (Housing and Economic Development) changes in the meeting schedule are needed, topic working groups will review submitted comments and select and consolidate these comments for submission to Judi Barrett.

Action: On March 6, the Advisory Committee will convene at 630 PM, location TBA, to discuss the working paper and the submitted comments on the Public Facilities and Services topic. This meeting is prior to the regular scheduled meeting,

The meeting adjourned at 915PM
Minutes submitted by Joey Glushko