

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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 times in 2013, excluding Town Meeting. The Board granted an Environmental Design Review (EDR) Special Permit to allow a Summer Street two-family residential building to increase in size to create two attached condominiums. The Board's EDR authority rarely extends to two-family homes except for certain properties abutting the Minuteman bike path, as this Summer Street property does. The Board issued an EDR Special Permit for The Common Ground restaurant to occupy a vacant restaurant space in Broadway Plaza. This was possible when it was demonstrated that parking standards for additional parking demand could be met off-site at adjacent Town-owned parking lots, as is permitted by the Town's zoning by-law. The Board also amended Special Permits for the re-tenanting of commercial spaces in Arlington Heights.

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Department of Planning & Community Development analyzes and presents data and trends about Arlington's land use, transportation, economic development, housing, public and recreation facilities, open space, natural and historic resources, and cultural areas. The Department 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.

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 one support staff person. 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.

2013 Highlights & Initiatives

Comprehensive Long-Range Master Plan

The Department worked intensively with the eleven-member Master Plan Advisory Committee and liaisons from the Redevelopment Board and Board of Selectmen to engage the community in a Comprehensive Long Range Master Plan that will 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 individual public and private real estate and development changes as they arise. 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 resource areas, transportation, population, demographics, public facilities, and includes steps to implement the plan.



Master Plan Workshop June 1st at Arlington High School. Over 80 people attended in 90 degree temperatures on a Saturday.

Over sixty interviews were conducted with members of the community in 2013. In June, three workshops attended by 200 people were held to seek further input on Arlington's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to land, transportation, development, housing, and other master plan elements. An online survey was conducted with 950 respondents

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Master Plan Workshop June 4th at Cambridge Savings Bank

seeking further input on the goals and vision for the plan. Working groups of the Master Plan Advisory Committee met to draft goals for the plan in July. The Master Plan Advisory Committee, the Redevelopment Board and the Department hosted a Master Plan table at Town Day. A baseline report on existing conditions was presented by the Town's master plan consultant in November. An interactive forum followed at that November presentation.



Master Plan Workshop, June 5th at Hardy School

Symmes Conservation & Improvement Project

In 2001, the former Symmes Hospital indicated its intention to close the hospital and sell the site. The Board of Selectmen issued a policy statement and goal of acquiring the site to control development of the site to the benefit of the entire Town, rather than leaving development of the site strictly to market forces. Town Meeting voted that the Redevelopment Board use its urban renewal powers to redevelopment the site to advance a range of community objectives. Arlington 360, the residential component of the project neared comple-

tion this year. The project includes 176 units of housing, including 12 condominiums and 26 affordable units, and two public parks. Construction began this year on the Assisted Living component of the project, Bright View Senior Living.



Vista of Boston skyline from new Hattie Symmes Park at the former Symmes Hospital site.

Affordable Housing

Three important affordable housing projects came on line this year with a total of 75 affordable rental units. The year started with an affordable housing lottery for 17 units at ALTA Brigham Square. The affordable housing was the result of the Town's Affordable Housing zoning requirements. These units were occupied in the spring of 2013. Also in the spring, construction was completed at Capitol Square, a 32 unit, all affordable development at 252-260 Massachusetts Avenue. This project is owned and operated by the non-profit Housing Corporation of Arlington and was supported by the Community Development Block Grant program administered by this Department. The third project was the long awaited Arlington 360, at the site of the former Symmes Hospital. This project has 26 affordable units, also as a result of the Town's Affordable Housing zoning requirements. The Affordable Housing zoning requirements are part of a special permit granted by the Redevelopment Board, and administered by the Director of Housing who is within the Planning Department.



Capitol Square Apartments

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Community Development Block Grant

In FY2013 Arlington received \$1,020,887 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 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's CDBG program has been reduced each year. Nonetheless, 12 Public Service Agencies and 1 Public Service Staff Position received a total of 178,588 in CDBG funding and served 10,702 people. This includes individuals served via the 18 programs supported by Council on Aging volunteers.

Transportation

At the request of the Federal Highway Administration, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation held a second public hearing in 2013 to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed reconstruction of Massachusetts Avenue in East Arlington. The East Arlington Mass Avenue Rebuild Project received full state approval later in the year to proceed to construction.



Second MassDOT Mass Ave Public Hearing, February 26, 2013

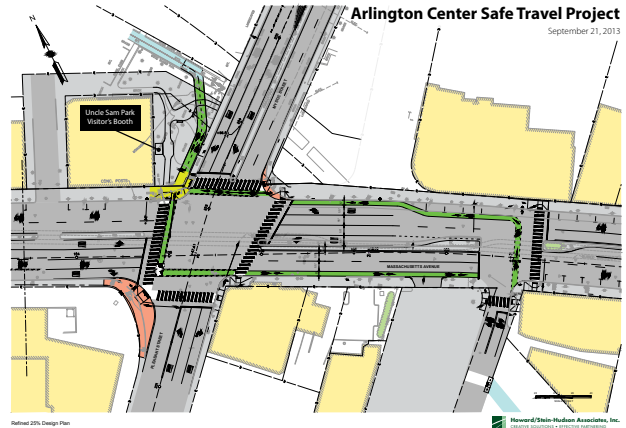
An additional public meeting was held on the Arlington Center Safe Travel project, funded by a Massachusetts Department of Transportation Clean Air Mobility Program (CLAMP) grant. The project seeks safer crossing of Massachusetts Avenue, Pleasant Street, and Mystic Streets for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

The #77 bus route received new upgrades thanks to the federal ARRA-funded "Key Bus Routes" program. Four bus shelters and 10 benches were installed at bus stops along the route. More shelters and benches will be installed when the East Arlington Mass. Ave. Rebuild occurs. New signs are also expected.

Additional transportation improvements happened as a result of the Alta Brigham Square residential development, and the Arlington 360 project. New sidewalks,

curbs, raised medians, and crosswalks were installed along Summer Street, while a flashing beacon was installed at the intersection of Mill Street and the Minute-man Bikeway to assist traffic at that busy intersection.

Pursuant to Town Meeting action, the Department hired a parking consultant to conduct a study of parking in Arlington Center and make recommendations to improve management of existing parking.



Economic Development

The Department presented a panel for commercial property owners to inform landlords and entrepreneurs about opportunities to lease shared workspaces and business incubators in under-utilized real estate in Arlington. Department staff worked with merchants and business owners in the business districts to present holiday shopping events to support the Arlington economy during the important holiday season. The Department also commissioned a study on the economic impact of theatres on Arlington's commercial districts, quantifying the benefit these uses have for other businesses in the districts.

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 six buildings consist of three former schools, one former library, and two historic houses.

The Department prepared 10 technical reports to the Zoning Board of Appeals on Special Permit and Zoning Variance requests in 2013.

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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 five 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 in 2013

Community Safety Building Phase 2 (envelope repair of Community Safety Building): Project nearing completion in December 2013. Latent conditions and construction quality control issues have delayed the project and caused cost overruns. Project budget \$2,240,000; final cost to be determined.

Central Fire Station Phase 2 (interior renovation): Final design started December 2013; construction phase funding will be sought at 2014 Special Town Meeting.

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. The new Thompson School opened in September 2013; punch list items being addressed fall 2013/winter 2014. Total project budget \$20,598,956; project under budget.

Robbins Library Roof Replacement (replacement of original slate roof and associated work): Project budget \$460,300; project completed on budget summer 2013.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

In 2013 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 Appeals has heard and rendered decisions on over 3300 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.

2013 Petitions Heard By ZBA

Petitions for Variance	3
Applications for Special Permits	3
Appeal of Decision of Inspector of Buildings	0
Amendments to SP/Variances	0
Comprehensive Permits	0
Total	
Total Petitions filed with Town Clerk	6
Total Hearing Continued by the board	1
Total Petitions withdrawn	1

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 onsite 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 2013, the ACC convened twenty-three (23) public meetings, and provided coordination, monitoring,

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permit review, and consultation on numerous residential and municipal developments around Town. The board issued four (4) Permits/Orders of Conditions, two (2) Certificates of Compliance, six (6) Enforcements and two (2) Determinations of Applicability.

Conservation Activities

Land Stewards – Our volunteer citizen organization, Arlington Land Stewards (ALS) has assisted in managing twenty-four (24) Town-owned conservation lands comprising approximately thirty (30) acres. Land stewards monitor, coordinate, and maintain (with permission from the ACC) conservation land of their choice, often in their immediate neighborhood or sometimes elsewhere in Town. Each land steward is provided with a stewardship handbook listing the location of conservation lands, conservation land regulations as well as problem/solution management information. The handbook is available online at arlingtonma.gov at the Conservation webpage. The group met in October 2013 and found a Land Steward Coordinator, Cheryl Miller.

Mt. Gilboa – A local arborist Brian Murray continued to help us manage this property until his untimely passing in May of 2013. The Commission remembers him for his efforts and expresses condolences to his family.

Hurd field porous parking lot - Initiated by the Engineering Department, this work was coordinated with ACC, and was completed in 2012. A new raingarden was installed in 2013 at this location and another at the Hardy School, with the help of the Mystic River Watershed Association.

Arlington Reservoir – A native plant wildlife habitat garden, that was installed in 2011 by the Arlington Vision 2020 Reservoir Committee continues to thrive. Other projects this year include the removal of Japanese Knotweed from the parking lot island and some new witch-hazels planted along the path next to the garden. The biggest event of the year was the spreading of woodchips along the perimeter path from Lowell Street to Rindge Park with the enthusiastic aid of the Arlington High School track and cross-country teams. In addition, 250 tons of invasive water chestnuts were mechanically harvested this summer supported by the Arlington Waterbodies Fund and with assistance from DPW. This work will need to continue but is expected to be at reduced levels in future years.

Mill Brook Linear Park – The Arlington Open Space Committee with involvement of the ACC and others continue to study the Mill Brook area with the goal of enhancing the public use and awareness of this natural

and historical resource. Efforts are underway with the Redevelopment Board to make this an important component of the new Arlington Master Plan.

Arlington's Great Meadows – In 2013 the Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows (FoAGM) continued their work here enhancing the natural habitat and improving the visitor experience. This group has now been active for over ten years and just released their first decade report that is available on their website: www.foagm.org.

Meadowbrook Park – In May 2013 stewards, ACC members, and others carried out a cleanup of the conservation area. This park collects many items that wash down Mill Brook each year.

Mystic Lakes-Mid-Lakes Fishway – Herring and eel were counted in the spring of 2013 where the Mystic River Watershed Association estimated that 190,000 fish migrated through the dam's ladder, similar to the count of the previous year.

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 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 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.

2014 Goals and Beyond

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

The ACC will work actively to support all efforts directed at preventing raw sewage from entering Alewife Brook. A big step in this direction was completed this year with the opening of the new stormwater wetland in the Alewife Reservation in Cambridge, adjacent to the new bikepath, the Mass Central Rail Trail, going to Belmont. The ACC would like to see the Alewife Brook restored to a healthy, fishable and swimmable waterway in the very near future. To do so, will be a significant challenge for the many parties involved in the better-

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ment of Alewife Brook. Yet the ACC believes this goal is attainable.

The ACC, in working with the Open Space Committee and the Arlington Land Trust, hopes to identify and, when available, acquire additional open space as protected “conservation land” to benefit residents of the Town.

Acknowledgments

The ACC sincerely thanks all individuals and organizations that contributed directly or indirectly to the activities of its forty-eighth (48th) year.

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

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Arlington’s 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) through 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 www.arlingtonma.gov/openspace.

Mill Brook Initiative

A subcommittee of OSC and other Town representatives began meeting in March 2009 to study the fea-

sibility of developing a Mill Brook Linear Park, an idea dating back many decades but not yet implemented. The brook travels nearly three miles through Arlington, parallel to both Massachusetts Avenue and the Minute-man 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, as well as important elements of the forthcoming Arlington Master Plan, and the Mill Brook corridor offers an exciting opportunity to draw attention to this resource.

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 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 percent 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 www.arlingtonma.gov/openspace.

The group is continuing to work 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 broader Master Plan process. 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 sources that affect water quality. Additional analysis of all abutting parcels has 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

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private grant funding; the state Department of Conservation and Recreation's Alewife Greenway Path as part of the larger Alewife Reservation Master Plan; and the continued maintenance of the Wildlife Habitat Garden at the Arlington Reservoir.

Other timely issues addressed by the committee during 2013 included the Planning Department's Town-wide Master Plan process; 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 the establishment of a new community farm at Busa Farm in Lexington, adjacent to the Arlington Reservoir and Town-owned open space. New opportunities for enhancement of public open spaces include the redesign of Downing Square in Arlington Heights; the creation of rain gardens at Spy Pond Park and Hurd Field, with plans for more gardens at other Town properties; the initiatives of the Tree Committee; 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 status of the Mugar property in East Arlington due to potential flooding and traffic problems if the land were to be developed; the loss of public access around the Arlington Catholic High School practice field following installation of expanded fencing around new artificial turf; and improving access to all Town open spaces in general, for all ages and abilities.

As part of its community education goals, OSC participated in Town Day in September 2013, 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 invasive plants and the Conservation Commission's Land Stewards Program, and a sign-up sheet for residents interested in getting more involved.

Goals for 2014

The committee will prepare an updated Open Space and Recreation Plan for 2015–2020, including a request for CDBG funding to prepare the final report that will be submitted to the state for approval in December 2014. The Vision 2020 annual survey distributed with the Census mailing in January 2014 featured questions about open space issues, and the results will be incorporated in the new report, along with input from other public outreach activities during the year. The committee will 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. In particular, OSC members will work with the Master Plan Advisory Committee and Planning Department to en-

sure that open space and recreation resources are fully incorporated into all future Town planning.

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

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.

Major Activities

Arlington Schools: Working with the Safe Routes to Schools program, 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. Also underway is an effort to improve the pedestrian environment and traffic flow around the Ottoson Middle School.

Crosswalk Flag Program: TAC initiated a program to provide hand held flags near elementary schools, to provide more visibility for students crossing busy streets on the way to school. The program has expanded to a total of 7 locations around Town. The program is now being funded by the Arlington Schools.

Arlington Center Safe Travel Project: Working with the Planning Department, DPW and the Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC), the Town will receive funds from MassDOT to improve connection of the bikeway through Arlington Center, as well as improving 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.

East Arlington Massachusetts Avenue Rebuild: This project involves an upgrade of Massachusetts Avenue between the Cambridge city line and Pond Lane for safety and streetscape improvements. Design work

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was completed and approved by the State and Federal government funders this year. Construction will begin in 2014. 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.

Alta Brigham Square. TAC worked with the ARB on implementing traffic impact mitigation, particularly around the crossing of Mill Street by the Minuteman Bikeway. A flashing beacon was installed this year to help with crossing conflicts.

Arlington 360 Summer Street Improvements. Re-development of the former Symmes Hospital is almost complete. TAC oversaw implementation of the traffic improvements that are part of the Special Permit for this site. Improvements include traffic signal retiming, installation of crosswalks and medians on Summer Street at Grove and Oak Hill Drive, and sidewalk installation on Summer Street.

Downing Square Improvements. Safety and mobility improvements were constructed this year at Downing Square including curb extensions, sidewalks, handicap ramps, visibility, flashing beacon, and parking improvements. Lighting, signage and pavement marking improvements will be completed in 2014.

Ongoing Projects

- Massachusetts Avenue/Jason Street/Mill Street intersection. TAC made recommendations for improvements to this intersection in 2013. Implementation will be forthcoming in 2014.
- Lake Street Corridor. A TAC Working Group continues its work to develop recommendations for improving safety and mobility along Lake Street.
- 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.
- Arlington Center Parking. In 2013 the Town hired a parking consultant to make recommendations regarding improvements to parking management in Arlington Center. A Parking Management Plan will follow in 2014.
- Bike Pavement Marking Policy. A Working Group made up of TAC and ABAC members worked with the Town Engineer and Department of Public Works to create a policy for accommodating bicycles when Town roads are repaved. Implementation of this policy began this year and is under evaluation.
- Master Plan Transportation Element. TAC is

participating in the master planning process by working on the Transportation Element, and will continue to make recommendations on transportation issues.

- Crosswalk at Mass Ave./Water St./Spengler Way. This intersection was studied and changes implemented in 2012. More changes are now being discussed that would add curb extensions to shorten crossing distances, increase visibility of pedestrians, and improve access for people with disabilities.
- Route 16/Mystic Valley Parkway rotary. Following a recent accident, TAC worked with Rep. Sean Garballey and the Town Manager to follow up on requested improvements to the intersection. The State Department of Conservation and Recreation subsequently installed crosswalks, sidewalks, and pavement markings.
- Alewife Rotary/Route 16 & Route 2. This MassDOT funded project will add a new lane at the intersection of Route 16 and Route 2 that will allow right turns without stopping, and to relieve congestion at this intersection. TAC reviewed and commented on the changes.
- Key Bus Routes Program, Route 77 improvements. TAC worked with the MBTA to recommend improvements to the Arlington portion of the #77 bus route along Mass. Ave. Improvements included adding shelters and benches, as well as relocating and extending certain stops. Funding came from the federal ARRA program.

Reports: TAC studied and made recommendations to the Board of Selectmen, Redevelopment Board, or School Committee on the following reports:

- Mass. Ave/Jason St./Mill St. report to Selectmen and Redevelopment Board on improving traffic flow,
- Broadway and Palmer Street safety
- Russell Place traffic calming
- Forest and Brand Streets crosswalk request
- Gray Street crosswalk recommendations
- Lewis/Franklin/Philips request for stop sign
- Thompson school access plan for cars and pedestrians
- Lowell St Crosswalks at Westmoreland
- Highland & High Haith crosswalk request

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BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ABAC)

ABAC has been busy over the past year working on a range of projects.

Working with the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and Town engineers, we developed a set of guidelines to be used when restriping major Town streets. These guidelines suggest to the DPW when to mark bike lanes or sharrows, and were used in the recent restriping of some of the western sections of Mass. Ave. Lessons learned from this project will be used to improve the guidelines going forward.

We held our annual Winter Social at the Arlington Center for the Arts. The well-attended program included a presentation by Hubway about their bike share program.

We held our annual BIKE-Arlington tour in the spring along the Mystic Valley, starting and ending at the Medford Boat Club, touring through East Arlington and the Center. We crossed the Upper Mystic Dam and had some fine views of Arlington from the Medford side. We had a very helpful escort from the Winchester Police, who were helping out the otherwise-engaged Arlington Police Department. It was a fine day and at the dam we were able to see the running of the alewives and one of the portages of the Herring Run Race.

With help from Chad Gibson of East Arlington Livable Streets Coalition we held a "Safety Stop" on the Bikeway. We talked with Bikeway users and provided them safety tips and safety checks of bikes and helmets. We also handed out the pamphlet we had assisted the Police Department develop that explains bicyclists' rights and responsibilities when using the road.

We again staffed a booth at Town Day and talked to many fellow citizens about bicycling matters in town. Among the issues we discussed were bike lanes, cycling on sidewalks, nighttime visibility, and traffic enforcement issues.

ABAC attended the CLAMP meetings involving the Bikeway crossing in Arlington Center and contributed our suggestions.

The committee has been in touch with TAC regarding a letter received from a concerned citizen about issues involving the Bikeway/Lake Street crossing.

ABAC members and associates assisted with bike counts on the Bikeway in the Center at what is now the Kickstand Café. The number of bike users we've counted at that location has about doubled in the past two years.

At the request of the Town Manager we have developed user guidelines and an application form for special events to be held on the Bikeway.

Members worked on the Toole report, "Navigating the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway", which has recommendations for unifying the look and treatment of the

Bikeway in the three involved communities. This project was undertaken jointly by the three Bikeway towns (Arlington, Lexington and Bedford), with support from a DCR Recreational Trails Program grant. This 2011 grant also led to the new Minuteman Commuter Bikeway Map, to which ABAC contributed suggestions.

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, and 422 vouchers that help participants live in privately-owned dwellings throughout the community.

The Authority is a quasi-governmental agency that administers these programs sponsored by the state or federal government. Properties owned by the Authority are exempt from local property taxes, yet the Authority annually pays the maximum "in lieu of" taxes as allowed by state statute.

Board of Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners of the Authority is the policy making body of the agency. The five members of the Arlington Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners are: *Chairman*, Daniel Brosnan, *Vice-Chairman*, Nicholas Mitropoulos and *Members* Bridgett Garbally James, Richard B. Murray and Gaar Talanian

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



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Year in Review

In 2013 the AHA completed substantial modernization work to all of its buildings, as well as the continued expansion of its tenant services support programs, and worked on creative partnerships with many housing groups and service providers in the community.

Properties

At Menotomy Manor, a large scale siding project was completed on the duplex apartments. This project updated the appearance of the units as well as included an update to the landscaping. The total project cost approximately \$800,000. Sidewalk and driveway paving was also completed to ensure the sustainability of the properties. Funding was provided through DHCD in our formula funding for 2013.



The site of the Authority's 144 unit, seven story Hauser Building at Drake Village also updated its sidewalks and driveways with new paving. At the Drake Village cottages, new energy efficient furnaces were installed, replacing the old oil burners. The eight furnaces that were installed allowed the Authority to increase its energy saving and cost-saving measures. New energy efficient lighting was completed in all our building and we are looking forward to the saving ahead.

The Authority added to its low-income housing portfolio by purchasing a three bedroom home. It was updated with energy efficient appliances, lead paint removal, as well as other home improvements. This home is being rented to a family from our community.

Other modernization projects completed by the Authority in 2013 include paving projects at Chestnut Manor and Cusack Terrace. Both resulted in the addition of over seven parking spaces each. The condominium units that house a number of elderly and disabled tenants went through an entire energy conversion system bringing their heat from oil to electric. This has resulted in a great cost-saving for the Authority as well as adding to the Authority's goal of increasing energy efficient measures. These projects were funded through the Authority's formula funding from the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Community Partnerships

2013 was a great year in expanding our partnerships with a number of community service program providers. The Authority continued to take advantage of the Community Work Program (CWP) sponsored by the Middlesex Sheriff's Office. Under the supervision of correctional personnel, inmates assisted the AHA maintenance staff in its spring and fall cleanup efforts.

Minuteman Senior Services has been very successful at our Drake Village location by providing services to our seniors and a meals program. The expansion of the program to our other facilities has proven quite beneficial. The quality of life for our residents has improved with the helpful resources that Minuteman Senior Services provides.

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

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

The partnership between the AHA and the Arlington Police Department has had a positive effect on the residents and neighbors of Menotomy Manor. The AHA continues to see a large decrease in crime and expanded services to the area. The AHA and police held their annual National Night Out Cookout during the summer.

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

The Authority has been successful in maintaining our buildings and operation and looks forward to the coming years in expanding our programs and modernizing our buildings. In 2013 the federal sequestration on the federal budget affected funding for the Authority's federal Housing Choice Voucher Program. With deep cuts to administrative fees and housing assistance payments, the Authority was responsible for ensuring that families did not lose their homes. The AHA was successful in 2013 and did not have to terminate any housing vouchers. It also has developed multiple cost saving measures to ensure that families will continue to have stable housing.

State Regulations and Mass Chapter 121B continue to be a barrier to the housing authority in providing more affordable housing. Rents set at either 27% or 30% with many deductions; limit the increase of rents

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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, over 80% of the applicants have income below \$10,000 and many 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.

Administrative Services

The Authority continues to be a member of the MassNAHRO Centralized Section 8 Wait List program. The list is now open to all daily. Arlington residents are given a preference.

The AHA's website, www.arlingtonhousing.org provides valuable information to those wishing to learn more about the AHA and its programs.

You may also become a fan of the Arlington Housing Authority on Facebook and Twitter.

Wait Lists

Stated-Aided Elderly/Handicap One Bedroom Units

Arlington Applicants:	10
Non-Arlington Applicants:	<u>263</u>
Total	273

State-Aided Family 2-Bedroom Units

Arlington Applicants:	17
Non-Arlington Applicants:	<u>255</u>
Total	272

State-Aided Family 3-Bedroom Units

Arlington Applicants:	4
Non-Arlington Applicants:	<u>133</u>
Total	137

Section 8 Wait List

Arlington Applicants:	*570
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**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: (includes heat and lights)	\$386/month
Average Family Monthly Rent: (tenant pays utilities)	\$560/month

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

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 Governance. Task group information can be found at <http://www.arlingtonma.gov/vision2020>.

Notable Activities

In 2013 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 4,458 resident responses to the 2013 Vision 2020 Annual Survey, an insert to the Town's Annual Census mailing.

Twenty-four percent of Arlington households responded to the survey, "Collaborative Arlington: Exchanging Information, Working Together." This is the second year that almost a quarter of Town households have responded, an excellent return rate.

The survey looked at residents' participation in Town government and other Town events, communication sources residents use to learn about Town events and issues, volunteer activity, and awareness of and support for the nine Town goals. Questions focused on attendance of Town and Town government-related events, interaction with one's Town Meeting Member, participation as a volunteer – including what motivates or deters volunteering, awareness of Town goals and support for them. Some communication-related questions were specific to the Arlington Public Schools (APS).

Household responses received by March 17, 2013, were summarized and reported to Town Meeting, Town officials, departments, and the Board of Selectmen. Survey data and recommendations support Town officials and departments in planning and evaluation

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tasks. A review of responses to the APS questions was provided to the Superintendent of Schools. The detailed full report, including data tables, was posted to the Vision 2020 page on the town website (and appears at the end of this report). An article on the survey appeared in the Arlington Advocate. Additionally, a presentation of initial data on resident participation in Town government-related events was made to the April Precincts 12 and 14 meeting; a presentation on the volunteerism data was made to the Robbins Library Plugged-In group attending the Library's Volunteer Fair; a report on Town participation data and recommendations was presented at a Board of Selectmen meeting.

Additional Activities of the Standing Committee and Task Groups:

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

Sponsored a Warrant Article for the 2013 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 Article. The Fund paid for this year's treatments of Spy Pond, the removal of water chestnuts from the Arlington Reservoir, and the ongoing management of Arlington's water bodies.

Using a new collaboration-intensive process, worked with Robbins Library, Open Space Committee, and Department of Public Works to develop the 2014 Annual Town Survey, "Help Shape the Future: Arlington's Library, Open Spaces, and Household Waste Program," an insert to the Census mailing.

At Town Day, 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.

Began a number of organization improvement activities including development of procedures and guidelines for Vision 2020's major activities/events, development and initial approval of Vision 2020's first budget, discussions about the need to update Vision 2020 operations to create a more nimble, modern, and humanly sustainable organization, particularly important given decreased volunteer availability.

Diversity: Continued to provide leadership to the Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Committee, advocating for recruiting, employing and retaining staff of diverse backgrounds in the Arlington Public Schools. Initiated a series of Conversations to learn how welcome residents feel in Arlington; collaborated with the Arlington Senior Center and Arlington's True Story Theater

(TST) improv troupe. To deepen the Conversations, TST presented "Stories of Welcome," supported by an Arlington Cultural Council grant. Diversity then focused on Conversations such as "We are many nationalities," "What is a family?" Collaborated with Robbins Library on events related to the Conversations. The series will continue in 2014. Helped select *The Book Thief*, by Markus Zusak, for the 2014 Community Book Read.

Fiscal Resources: After more than a year of discussion, composed and presented a letter to the Board of Selectmen (BoS) urging a variety of actions to prepare for the expected water and sewer rate increases. Learned that a consultant to the DPW had recommended many of the same actions. The Town Manager recommended and BoS approved quarterly billing, one of the Task Group's recommendations.

Based on an ongoing study to better understand property assessment in Arlington, composed a letter to the Board of Assessors (BoA) which reviewed the Task Group findings and posed several questions. The BoA Chair attended the group's June meeting and participated in a full and frank discussion.

The Fiscal Resources Chair discussed the task group's spreadsheet, My Tax Dollars, with the Town Manager's office and requested that he again make it available to the public on the Town website. The spreadsheet calculates the actual cost of each Town service to a property owner based on the assessed value of the property. Subsequently, the Town posted a greatly enhanced version of this tool called the Arlington Visual Budget (AVB).

The Task Group has begun a new study to review the Town's Financial Plan with the intent of offering suggestions for improvement of this already excellent document.

Governance: Presented an Orientation for New Town Meeting Members, led by Town Moderator John Leone. Forty people attended the session.

Public Art Committee: Received a \$1,000 grant from the Arlington Cultural Council to help fund the second annual Chairful Where You Sit exhibit of temporary art on the bikepath and in Whittemore Park. Raised over \$7,000 in contributions through Chairful sales; received unsolicited donations of about \$1,300. Created a calendar featuring Chairful 2013 chairs; sales exceeded production costs. Established the Fund for Public Art. Received approval for the Transformer Box Mural Project which launches in 2014. Signed a contract for the Spy Pond Mural to continue hanging for another year.

Collaborated with Arlington Recreation to get approval for the first ever Art Rocks Menotomy, a temporary public art exhibition at Menotomy Rocks Park, scheduled for May 2014.

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Reservoir Committee: With help from many volunteers, conducted several gardening sessions at the Wildlife Habitat Garden, now in its third growing season; increased the signage to identify the plants and animals in the garden. The Committee welcomes schools, recreational groups, and others to participate in its growth and hopes to involve the Arlington High School Community Service Program, the boy and girl scouts, and schools. See photos and learn more at: <http://www.arlington2020.org/reservoir/>

With the help of the Arlington High School cross country and track teams, spread woodchips on the trail from the beach gate, along the Busa Farm border, and around the Res to Rindge Park, improving the trail for walkers and runners. Thanks to the DPW for delivering two huge piles of wood chips. Refurbished the parking lot kiosk, removed invasive plants, and planted many Narcissus bulbs that should make it more colorful in the Spring. Added three witch hazel trees along the path leading from the garden to the island.

With monies from the Water Bodies Fund, continued water chestnut harvesting last summer under the management of DPW. The volume should be less in the future because the harvesting removes the seeds that produce new plants.

Spy Pond Committee: Working closely with the DPW, led the effort to treat Eurasian water milfoil with Sonar. Without treatment, the weeds would have interfered with the Arlington-Belmont rowing program, boating, sailing, and enjoyment of the pond. Cleaned the Route 2 path, removing invasives and poison ivy and trimming bushes. Led the follow-up treatment of Phragmites, an invasive reed that had overrun the marshes on Spy Pond. In 2013 the marshes started their recovery with native wetland plants. Encouraged the idea that Spy Pond is what goes into its watershed; distributed flyers to all households in the Spy Pond watershed, and ran the Spy Pond quiz at Ecofest and Town Day. Joined the Reservoir Committee in requesting the Water Bodies Fund which paid for this year's treatments of Spy Pond. Helped keep the goose population to a manageable size. Participated in Town Day, Ecofest with a secchi disk model; visited committee counterparts in Wayland to learn of their experiences with pulling milfoil.

Sustainable Arlington Committee: Collaborated with other local groups to educate the public and support recycling, reuse, and repurposing programs, encourage continued increases in energy efficiency and the adoption of renewable energy, and opportunities to address climate disruption.

Two Sustainable Arlington members continued as appointees to the Town's Energy Working Group which helped guide improvements to energy efficiency at the

High School and the Robbins Library with funding from a \$250,000 Green Communities Grant which Sustainable Arlington helped secure. In 2013 the Town hired its first Energy Manager implementing a recommendation made in the Arlington Sustainability Action Plan, written by Sustainable Arlington and Tufts University students, and adopted by the Town in 2006.

With the Minuteman Parents Association and Massachusetts Climate Action Network, co-sponsored the Food Recovery Project which received the MassRecycle 2013 Institution ReUse Award. This annual award is presented for outstanding achievements by individuals, public servants, municipalities, businesses and organizations in promoting recycling and waste reduction in Massachusetts. The Food Recovery Project collects good nutritious food that would otherwise be thrown away from grocers and bakeries in and near Arlington and redistributes it to organizations serving those in need. In the past year over 9,500 boxes of food, with an estimated value over \$550,000, were redistributed. The Project was featured in a public performance by Arlington's True Story Theater with support from an Arlington Cultural Council grant to the theater group.

Worked at the May and November Community Collection Days, collecting clothing, household goods, books and toys for reuse, repurposing and recycling as well as talking to the public and encouraging ongoing participation in this Town program. With the Town of Arlington and the Arlington Garden Club, managed and co-sponsored EcoFest 2013, "EcoFootprints: Arlington People, Places, Spaces."

Special Recognition and Leadership Changes

Vision 2020 thanks all the volunteers who help support and achieve the Town Goals. The Standing Committee is especially grateful to Josh Lobel and Joey Glushko for their significant and outstanding contributions of time and talents to the production and analysis of the Town Census Insert Survey over many years. Their many hours of work have been vital to the survey effort.

The Standing Committee voted unanimously to reactivate the Education Task Group with Michael Stern as its Chair.

David Garbarino joined Gordon Jamieson as Co-Chair of Fiscal Resources Task Group. Adria Arch became Co-Chair of the Public Art Committee. Task Group Co-Chairs who stepped down this year were Tarajee Pass, Diversity, and David Haas, Sustainable Arlington.

Vision 2020 Co-Chairs Brucie Moulton and Mary Harrison announced they will step down as chairs on July 31, 2014. During the first months of 2014 they will engage the Standing Committee in revising Vision 2020 and planning for succession.

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To: Town Meeting Members and Town Officials

From: Vision 2020 Standing Committee and Task Group Chairs

Co-Chairs: Mary Harrison and Bruce Moulton

Standing Committee: Adria Arch, Brad Barber, Kathleen Bodie, John Budzyna, Claire Carswell, Adam Chapdelaine, Joe Connelly, Daniel Dunn, Andrew Fischer, Bruce Fitzsimmons, Joey Glushko, Leba Heigham, Jane Howard, Gordon Jamieson, Elizabeth Karpati, John Leone, Josh Lobel, Gail McCormick, Charlotte Milan, Cheryl Miller, Angela Olszewski, Stephen Ricci, Tarajee Pass, David White

Date: May 6, 2013

Subject: Vision 2020 Report to the Annual Town Meeting

The Vision 2020 Standing Committee and its Task Groups are pleased to present the following report on their projects and activities for calendar year 2012, along with Warrants 23 and 40 and the 2013 Annual Survey, "Collaborative Arlington: Exchanging Information, Working Together." The attached survey overview of basic findings will be rounded out and discussed in the final report later this summer. For further detail on the work Vision 2020 has performed on behalf of the Town of Arlington, please see:

- The Town's 2013 Annual Report, pages 92 – 101, briefly reviews Vision 2020's history, describes specific Standing Committee and Task Group accomplishments in 2012, and ends with the results of the 2012 survey, "Mastering Our Future: Help Arlington Prepare for its Upcoming Master Planning Process."
- The Selectman's recommended vote in their Report to the 2013 Annual Town Meeting for Warrant Article 23 (Public Art Fund) was affirmed by Town Meeting on April 29, 2013; the Finance Committee's recommended vote on Article 40 (Waterbodies Fund) comes before you on May 6.

This year's survey netted responses from 4,458 households by the March 15 cut-off date, making 2013 the fourth consecutive year with more than 4,000 survey returns. The 4,458 surveys received represents a 24% response rate. The bulk – 4,026 – were on paper, while 432 were completed on-line. Town Meeting Members may be interested in the precinct and Town government-related data.

The Vision 2013 Survey, "Collaborative Arlington: Exchanging Information, Working Together," looked at several ways that residents might participate in and learn about neighborhood and town-wide events. We asked how many knew at least one of their Town Meeting Members and how many had talked with a Town Meeting Member about a Town issue or concern. We listed ten different Town-government events and asked respondents to indicate which events they had attended or viewed on ACMi Cable TV. Given the rapidly changing ways of communicating information, we asked about the communications channels (9 print, 16 electronic, and 3 word of mouth) used by residents to stay informed about Arlington events and issues. Volunteering is another way to participate in the life of a community. We measured volunteer activity of all household members by age, hours per month, and whether residents volunteer in Arlington or elsewhere. Given the numerous Town and other committees in Arlington that rely on volunteers, we asked about motivations for volunteering as well as conditions that make it difficult. Finally, since familiarity with and support for Town of Arlington Goals is another aspect of community participation, we looked at awareness of and support for the nine goals enacted as Town Bylaw in 1993. The goals identify valued features of life in Arlington and point to a need for collaboration between residents and Town government to ensure a vital and resilient community.

Basic data from the 2013 survey are attached here. Complete results and analysis will be posted on the Town website this summer and reported in the Town's 2013 Annual Report.

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Vision 2020 Annual Survey Results for 2013

Demographics

Total Responses: 4,458
Paper or Survey Monkey

	Count	%
Paper	4,026	90%
Online	432	10%

Precinct

	#	%
Pct 1	143	3.2%
Pct 2	199	4.5%
Pct 3	254	5.7%
Pct 4	237	5.3%
Pct 5	210	4.7%
Pct 6	213	4.8%
Pct 7	203	4.6%
Pct 8	251	5.6%
Pct 9	204	4.6%
Pct 10	255	5.7%
Pct 11	196	4.4%
Pct 12	243	5.5%
Pct 13	159	3.6%
Pct 14	202	4.5%
Pct 15	189	4.2%
Pct 16	200	4.5%
Pct 17	178	4.0%
Pct 18	178	4.0%
Pct 19	195	4.4%
Pct 20	197	4.4%
Pct 21	205	4.6%
(blank)	147	3.3%

Household includes children < 18

	#	% <18
Under 18 yrs	1,341	30%
(blank)	3,117	70%

Household includes 18-29 year olds

	#	%
18-29 years	700	16%
(blank)	3,758	84%

Household includes 30-54 year olds

	#	%
30-54 years	2,569	58%
(blank)	1,889	42%

Household includes 55-64 year olds

	#	%
55-64 years	1,005	23%
(blank)	3,453	77%

Household includes 65-74 year olds

	#	%
65-74 years	629	14%
(blank)	3,829	86%

Household includes 75+ year olds

	#	%
Over 74 yrs	584	13%
(blank)	3,874	87%

Years in Arlington

	#	%
Less than 5 years	1,233	28%
5-15 years	1,351	30%
16-25 years	681	15%
26-40 years	493	11%
More than 40 years	644	14%
(blank)	56	1%

Housing Type

	#	%
Single Family	2,297	52%
Condo	711	16%
2-4 units	1,060	24%
5 or more units	326	7%
(blank)	64	1%

Own/Rent

	#	%
Own	3,179	71%
Rent	1,214	27%
(blank)	65	1%

Does household have Internet Access

	#	%
Yes	4,086	92%
No	286	6%
(blank)	86	2%

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Vision 2020 Annual Survey Results for 2013

Participation

Your household is part of the Town of Arlington as a whole and also part of a particular neighborhood. We would like to learn how and why Arlington residents engage with their community.

Does your household participate in activities in your neighborhood?

	#	%
Yes	2,136	61%
No	1,218	35%
Total Yes Plus No	3,354	96%
Unaware of neighborhood activities	1,298	37%

Does your household attend Town-wide events (such as Town Day, Feast of the East, Eco-Fest, Patriots' Day events, school performances, sports)?

	#	%
Yes	3,146	71%
No	1,263	29%
Total	4,409	100%

Do you know one or more of your Town Meeting Members?

	#	%
Yes	1,466	33%
No	2,945	67%
Total	4,411	100%

Have you talked with a Town Meeting Member about a town issue or concern?

	#	%
Yes	930	21%
No	3,470	79%
Total	4,400	100%

Do you know Town Meeting Rep, by Precinct

	#		%	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Pct 1	35	108	24%	76%
Pct 2	56	140	29%	71%
Pct 3	62	189	25%	75%
Pct 4	59	175	25%	75%
Pct 5	52	158	25%	75%
Pct 6	49	162	23%	77%
Pct 7	51	150	25%	75%
Pct 8	122	129	49%	51%
Pct 9	57	145	28%	72%
Pct 10	109	144	43%	57%
Pct 11	74	121	38%	62%
Pct 12	117	125	48%	52%
Pct 13	64	94	41%	59%
Pct 14	57	142	29%	71%
Pct 15	81	108	43%	57%
Pct 16	81	118	41%	59%
Pct 17	48	130	27%	73%
Pct 18	58	117	33%	67%
Pct 19	71	123	37%	63%
Pct 20	54	140	28%	72%
Pct 21	71	133	35%	65%
(blank)	38	94	29%	71%

Have you discussed issues with a Town Meeting Rep, by Precinct

	#		%	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Pct 1	24	119	17%	83%
Pct 2	26	170	13%	87%
Pct 3	42	208	17%	83%
Pct 4	46	185	20%	80%
Pct 5	36	174	17%	83%
Pct 6	41	171	19%	81%
Pct 7	38	163	19%	81%
Pct 8	83	166	33%	67%
Pct 9	38	164	19%	81%
Pct 10	69	184	27%	73%
Pct 11	41	154	21%	79%
Pct 12	67	176	28%	72%
Pct 13	35	123	22%	78%
Pct 14	41	159	20%	80%
Pct 15	53	135	28%	72%
Pct 16	52	144	27%	73%
Pct 17	32	146	18%	82%
Pct 18	33	143	19%	81%
Pct 19	45	148	23%	77%
Pct 20	32	160	17%	83%
Pct 21	34	169	17%	83%
(blank)	22	109	17%	83%



Vision 2020 Annual Survey Results for 2013

Events and Issues

Attended or Viewed Events

Has your household attended any of the following Town government-related events or viewed them on Arlington's ACMi Cable TV or ACMi online?

% indicates Percentage of Total Survey Respondents - 4458

	Count	% Attended	Count	% Viewed
Ann./Special Town Meeting	463	10%	606	14%
Board of Selectmen Mtg.	356	8%	684	15%
Candidates' Night	293	7%	389	9%
Public Forum	410	9%	249	6%
Finance Comm. Mtg.	95	2%	244	5%
Public Hearing	416	9%	280	6%
School Comm. Mtg.	381	9%	551	12%
State of the Town Address	108	2%	227	5%
Town Board or Commission Mtg.	251	6%	250	6%
Precinct Mtg.	120	3%	138	3%

Communication Matters

Communication is vital to residents' engagement with their community and civic participation. The Town wants to know the most effective ways to get timely information to residents about Town events, issues, and procedures.

What communication sources does your household currently use to learn about Arlington Events (such as Town Day or Feast of the East) and Issues affecting the Town (such as schools, recycling, and financial matters)?

Print Sources - What print sources has your household used within the last year to learn about Town/School events and issues?

% indicates Percentage of Total Survey Respondents - 4458

	# Events	% Events	# Issues	% Issues
Arlington Advocate	2,204	49%	2,053	46%
Arlington Shopper	1,666	37%	643	14%
Boston Globe	1,509	34%	1,662	37%
Faith community newsletter	269	6%	196	4%
Neighborhood/ comm. newsletter	510	11%	406	9%
Flyers on bulletin boards	1,082	24%	410	9%
School messages sent home	852	19%	620	14%
Town Warrant mailings	1,026	23%	1,576	35%
Other printed materials	560	13%	520	12%



Vision 2020 Annual Survey Results for 2013

Events and Issues

Electronic/Online Sources: What sources has your household used within the last year to learn about Town/School events and issues?

% indicates Percentage of Total Survey Respondents - 4458

	# Events	% Events	# Issues	% Issues
Arlingtonma.gov	2,242	50%	2,144	48%
Town of Arlington Alerts	1,647	37%	1,706	38%
Town of Arlington Notices	1,439	32%	1,329	30%
Arlington Public Schools website	943	21%	684	15%
Arlington Public Schools - email lists	862	19%	701	16%
Arlington Parents' listserv	577	13%	531	12%
ACMi Cable TV	462	10%	437	10%
ACMi Cable online	106	2%	111	2%
E-mails from groups	948	21%	799	18%
Arlington Patch	1,001	22%	975	22%
Your Arlington	291	7%	349	8%
The Arlington List	754	17%	781	18%
Arlington Advocate	1,337	30%	1,239	28%
Boston.com	1,137	26%	1,073	24%
Facebook/Twitter	459	10%	353	8%
Community org. websites	528	12%	386	9%

C. Spoken (Word of Mouth) Communication: In what ways has your household talked with others within the last year to learn about Town/School events and issues?

% indicates Percentage of Total Survey Respondents - 4458

	#	% Events	#	% Issues
Neighborhood/Town conversations	2,382	53%	2,409	54%
Committee/Group conversations	613	14%	688	15%
At a social gathering	1,797	40%	1,739	39%

Even if you regularly use all three of the following types of communication to obtain Town information, which one source do you use most frequently?

	#	%
Electronic/Online	2,316	52%
Print source	1,099	25%
Word of mouth	665	15%
(blank)	378	8%

Vision 2020 Annual Survey Results for 2013

Volunteering

Arlington is rich in volunteers who serve the Town, nonprofit organizations, various causes, and other interests. The following questions relate to volunteer work done for the Town or State; schools; faith organizations; professional, trade or other work-related groups; sports; and special interest groups.

Do adults in your household serve as volunteers?

	#	% Adults
Yes	1,922	46%
No	2,220	54%
Total	4,142	100%

Do children in your household serve as volunteers?

	#	% Children
Yes	385	20%
No	1,510	80%
Total	1,895	100%

Do any members of your household volunteer in Arlington?

	#	% In Arlington
Yes	1,421	35%
No	2,669	65%
Total	4,090	100%

Do any members of your household volunteer outside Arlington?

	#	% Outside
Yes	1,768	44%
No	2,273	56%
Total	4,041	100%

Listed are some reasons people volunteer. For each reason indicate whether it is important to your household.

% indicates Percentage of Total Survey Respondents - 4458

	#	% Important
Group/Team effort	2,216	50%
Commitment to a cause	2,866	64%
Feel useful	2,225	50%
Give back to community	2,810	63%
Opportunity to learn	2,132	48%
Meet new people	1,997	45%
Network	925	21%
Use skills/knowledge	2,263	51%

Do any of the following keep anyone in your household from volunteering?

% indicates Percentage of Total Survey Respondents - 4458

	#	% Important
Care for family member	757	17%
Need transportation	246	6%
Language barrier	58	1%
Nothing to offer	206	5%
Meeting place not accessible	143	3%
Did not feel welcomed	154	3%
Too busy/no time	2,264	51%

If you were to consider volunteering, which of the following meeting times work best for you?

% indicates Percentage of Total Survey Respondents - 4458

	#	% Volunteer Time
Weekday day-time	621	14%
Weekday evening	1,091	24%
Weekend	1,283	29%

If you were to consider volunteering, which time commitment works best for you?

	#	% Volunteer Time
One day	1,098	25%
Few days or weeks	842	19%
Weeks to months	440	10%
Long-term	401	9%

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Vision 2020 Annual Survey Results for 2013

Town Goals

Arlington adopted nine Town Goals in the 1990's. We would like to know how residents currently view these goals.

Are you aware of these goals?

	Count	% Goals
Yes - aware	822	28%
No - not aware	2,072	72%
Total	2,894	100%

Vision 2020 Goals Support

	Strongly Support	Support	Do Not Support	(blank)
Community and Citizen Service – supporting community vitality, people helping people	1,764	1,193	51	1,450
% Community	40%	27%	1%	33%
Diversity – extending a warm welcome and respect to all	1,869	1,074	81	1,434
% Diversity	42%	24%	2%	32%
Education – educating youth and supporting life-long learning	2,363	641	40	1,414
Education	53%	14%	1%	32%
The Environment - protecting and enhancing Arlington's natural resources and sustainability	2,208	785	53	1,412
% Environment	50%	18%	1%	32%
Culture and Recreation (Public Art) – offering opportunities to meet, play, and grow in Arlington	1,666	1,244	93	1,455
% Culture and Recreation	37%	28%	2%	33%
Communication – supporting open public dialogue and accountability	1,571	1,360	63	1,464
% Communication	35%	31%	1%	33%
Fiscal Resources – achieving sound fiscal planning through an open process	1,843	1,113	42	1,460
% Fiscal Resources	41%	25%	1%	33%
Governance – promoting effective, efficient services and exchange of ideas	1,655	1,295	52	1,456
% Governance	37%	29%	1%	33%
Business – supporting business diversity and attractive commercial centers	1,734	1,229	62	1,433
% Business	39%	28%	1%	32%