



A playground and grassy area at Crosby School

5 - Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest

5. Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest

Arlington's open space is a diverse combination of historical, natural and recreational areas. This section discusses the most significant privately and publicly owned open space parcels and provides a listing in table format of many other parcels.

A. Brief History of Arlington's Open Space

Arlington's open space is a precious and limited resource that has been difficult to acquire, develop and maintain. Much of the inventory that exists along the Mill Brook, for example, was reclaimed from abandoned millponds, dumping areas or fallow marshes. The Marquis / Minuteman Bikeway now rests on what was once a railroad corridor. This rail/trail conversion took almost 20 years to complete after its original conception in the early 1970s and was dedicated in 1992. Today, thousands of people use the bikeway, which connects many of the Town's open and historical spaces, for both recreation and commuting. In the Town's 2007 Vision 2020 survey, it was identified as one of the Town's favorite open space resources by a majority of respondents.

Charles Eliot's 1926 Town Plan provided a thoughtful blueprint for preserving

open space as a cohesive and important element of the Town's layout. Some of Eliot's ideas from 1926 have lived on in subsequent open space plans of 1973 and 1979, but many of his ideas have not been realized, and some of those opportunities are now lost. Included in his plans was a linear park along Mill Brook and a Town Center park. Eliot also suggested offering the public complete access to Town bodies of water. New initiatives in this 2007 Plan are addressing both the linear park and water body access issues.

More recent open space plans have identified a deficiency in the amount of open space land in Arlington. The 1972 Open Space Study by Dober and Associates identified a deficiency of 135 acres and suggested that the Town acquire and maintain a minimum of 65 acres. A 1979 study by Miriam DeLehrer identified a deficit of 250 acres by the regional standard set by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. (The reason for the open space deficit discrepancy between the 1973 and 1980 plans is that the 1973 plan included the water areas of Spy Pond and Mystic Lakes, which the 1980 report did not include because of their limited public access.)

Preservation of open space is extremely important to the residents of Arlington, the region, and the Commonwealth from several different perspectives. Clearly, one emphasis of this plan is to ensure that the Town's open space and recreation facilities will continue to be enhanced as described. As demonstrated throughout the plan, the Town of Arlington has embarked on a program of upgrading and maintaining its open spaces. Given the densely populated nature of Arlington, additional acquisitions are limited, but could provide local and regional residents with more open space opportunities, as well as connections with other existing open space resources in Arlington, Belmont, Lexington and Cambridge. Preservation, protection, and enhancement of existing resources is perhaps more important to the community as is the need to provide adequate funding to support these efforts.

Open space has been and will likely continue to be a concern for the Town of Arlington. The following statement from the Board of Selectmen (issued in 1972 and quoted by the Arlington Conservation Commission in an *Arlington Advocate* Letter to the Editor, 1987) succinctly demonstrates the need for Arlington to preserve and protect its existing open space:

"We have watched the inexorable and continuing encroachment on the few remaining natural areas, the persistent and unimaginative building on every last square inch of open space and the severe

stresses placed on our various community services whether we talk of schools, traffic patterns, recreational facilities, parking or library services as more and more people are crowded into these 5.5 densely packed square miles.”

Even though the population of the town has not continued to increase, the observations about encroachment on the few remaining natural areas and impacts continue to ring true in 2007.

Arlington has had no opportunity to avail itself of means designed for legal protections for forestry and agriculture and horticultural uses (Chapter 61, 61A, or 61B); there are no such properties in the Town. There is State-owned land managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (formerly Metropolitan District Commission/MDC) that is part of the Alewife Reservation, as well as scattered DCR parcels within the Town of Arlington including the Veterans’ Rink and land around the Medford Boat Club on the Mystic Lakes. The State Department of Public Works and Massachusetts Water Resources Authority also manage a number of parcels, and Mass Highway owns the footpath along the southern edge of Spy Pond.

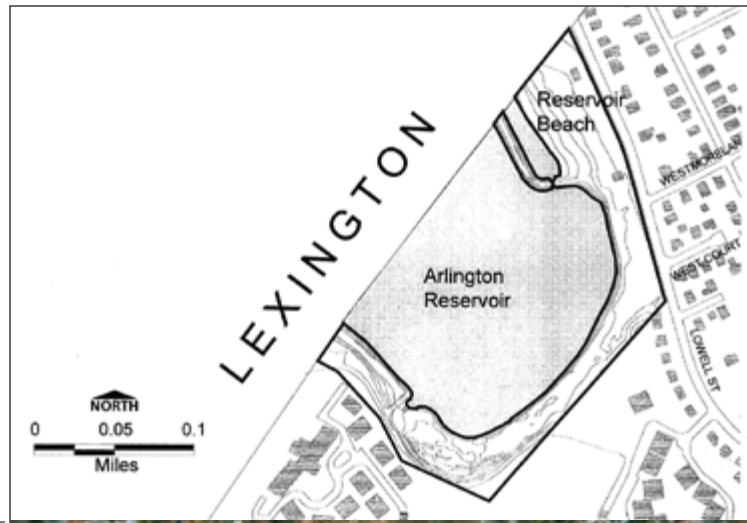
These state-managed parcels should receive protection as Article 97 lands. Article 97 protected lands are those purchased for the purpose of parkland and conservation of open space and are under the jurisdiction of the Park and Recreation Department or the Conservation Commission. The protection that is offered to Article 97 lands is that a two-thirds vote of the local governing body (i.e., Town Meeting) as well as a two-thirds vote of the State legislature is required to transfer them to another purpose. A number of municipal properties, as listed in the accompanying table, also receive this protection.

Local bylaws add a level of protection in our efforts to preserve our recreational and undeveloped areas. The Town Meeting 2001 created an Open Space Zoning District to further protect recreational and undeveloped public land. Arlington’s limited open spaces that are owned by the Town have been placed under the jurisdiction of a town department or commission most appropriate for the designated use of the land; they are the stewards of those lands under their jurisdiction. By so doing, disposition of these properties must be brought before Town Meeting for public hearing and approval. Similarly, a change in zoning designation would require Town Meeting approval. Additionally, all change of outdoor use or new development for outdoor use requires an Environmental Design Review by the Arlington Redevelopment Board (Zoning Bylaw, Article 11.06).



Buzzell Field undergoing renovations

Arlington Reservoir



Source: Google Earth



Size:	21.3 acres in Arlington (65 acres total in Arlington and Lexington)
Managing Agency/Owner:	Department of Public Works, Park and Recreation Commission/Town of Arlington
Current Use:	Passive and active recreation/flood control/conservation

B. Arlington's Open Space - Major Parcels

Currently Arlington has approximately 554.6 acres of publicly held open space, which includes land located in the Town of Lexington (Arlington's Great Meadows and some of the land surrounding the Arlington Reservoir). An additional 95.3 acres are privately owned, of which the Winchester Country Club, Belmont Country Club, Arlington Catholic Field, and Kelwyn Manor Playground are the only parcels used for recreation. Of those, only the Winchester Country Club is open to the public for a fee. Thus, the total is 649.9 acres.

The most significant change in open space acreage since the 2002 Plan is the sale of the Symmes property (Town-owned land purchased in 2001) to a private developer in 2007, with the retention of approximately 7.8 of those 18 acres as privately-owned conservation restricted land with public access when the development work is completed (anticipated by 2009-2010). A loss of private open space occurred when Knowles Farm (about 1.2 acres) was sold for housing development in 2005.

The narratives on the following pages briefly describe Arlington's largest and most noteworthy open spaces, including a brief history of the parcel and its conservation and/or recreational use. All public and private open space and recreation sites are listed in the inventory tables at the end of this section.

Arlington Reservoir

Created in the early 1870s to supply Arlington's municipal water system, the Arlington Reservoir has not been used for public drinking water since the Town joined the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) in 1899, yet the name "reservoir" remains in use. It is a 65-acre man-made recreational and flood-control pond on the Arlington/Lexington border in the northwestern section of Town.

Less than half of the open water is in Arlington, yet the Town owns and manages the entire perimeter. Its primary source is Munroe Brook whose watershed includes Reed's Brook and Arlington's Great Meadows (located in Lexington). The Reservoir has a mile-long wooded walking trail around its circumference that is open to the public. At different times throughout the year, the Reservoir is a recreational resource for walking, birding, jogging, and cross-country running. The Reservoir provides a diverse habitat for wildlife, and some 188 species of birds have been sighted there.

In 1935, the Arlington Board of Park Commissioners engaged the national Works Progress Administration (WPA) to develop a sandy beach on the Reservoir's eastern shore. The Town significantly improved this beach in the late 1970s, adding filters and an embankment to separate the swimming area from the rest of the Reservoir. A ramp now makes the Reservoir beach and swimming area accessible for people with disabilities. Arlington residents as well as residents from surrounding communities use the Reservoir for supervised swimming in the summer.

The earthen dam around the southern edge of the Reservoir is some 600 yards long and as high as 14 feet, although the water level is kept much lower except during the swimming season. The water discharges into Mill Brook through a sluice gate. In 1999, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management (DEM) expressed concern about dam safety and recommended that the Town cut down all the trees and shrubs along the dam structure. Working in collaboration, Town officials, engineers from Weston & Sampson and members of the Reservoir Committee of Vision 2020 Environment Task Group partnered to accomplish three goals: improve dam safety, enhance recreation, and preserve the natural landscape.

The work to improve the Reservoir Dam employed an innovative I-wall approach – reinforcing the dam with sheets of steel and creating a new 50-ft spillway. Before the project was put out to bid, a tree inventory was conducted so any significant tree removed could be replaced in near-by areas. Also, several very large trees, including two silver maples, were identified and protected during construction. Many tree limbs were pruned as part of the project, which will help to insure the health of the many trees that remain. Minimizing tree loss, while ensuring dam safety, was achieved. Construction was scheduled so as not to interfere with beach season, although there was some disruption to other recreational uses in the construction area. The project was viewed as a “win-win” by all involved.

It succeeded in balancing public health and safety with public interests and environmental issues and received two prestigious awards. For its success, the project was recognized as one the American Public Works Association's Public Works Projects of the Year for 2006 and received a 2006 Engineering Excellence Award from the American Consulting Engineers Council of Massachusetts (ACEC/MA).

Plans for planting trees have been completed and plans for additional ecological landscaping and habitat gardens are in process. Funding was committed as part



Photo Courtesy of Arlington Open Space Committee



During construction and after completion of Arlington Reservoir improvements

Cooke's Hollow



Size:	.75 acres
Managing Agency/Owner:	Conservation Commission/ Town of Arlington
Current Use:	Passive recreation

of the dam rehabilitation project for replanting over 100 trees. An anonymous donor has contributed toward the creation of a habitat garden of native plants, and volunteers from the Reservoir Committee plan to continue the work of planting and invasive control.

A serious water chestnut infestation was controlled by several years of manual and machine harvesting. The Conservation Commission and Reservoir Committee are actively monitoring the water quality for additional invasive waterweeds. The Reservoir Committee maintains a website with both historical and current information: www.arlington2020.org/reservoir/.

Cooke's Hollow

This parcel is a long, narrow, partially landscaped area on both sides of Mill Brook near Mystic Street. This small park provides scenic vistas and park benches. Arlington acquired Cooke's Hollow from several sources in 1969, and the Arlington Garden Club has been instrumental in developing gardens and public access at the site. In FY2008 CDBG funds will be available for landscape renovations and maintenance upgrades.

Elizabeth Island



Size:	2 acres
Managing Agency/Owner:	Private
Current Use:	Undeveloped/Private

Elizabeth Island

Elizabeth Island is a privately owned, undeveloped, heavily vegetated island in the middle of Spy Pond. Because it is not readily accessible, it provides a nesting habitat for various species of duck, Canada Goose, and Mute Swan. Several properly trained and licensed volunteers search for nests each spring and addle the goose eggs to keep the population under control. The island has frequently been the site of annual Town-sponsored fireworks displays on Town Day weekend each September. In 2006, the island's long-time owner announced that Elizabeth Island was being put up for sale. Various town and private entities are working to ensure the island will be permanently protected from development.

Great Meadows

This is the largest open space resource owned by the Town of Arlington, containing approximately 183 acres of land, but it is located entirely in Lexington. The largest part of the Great Meadows is a flat, marshy plain containing a series of hummocks. Surrounding the plain are wooded uplands criss-crossed by hiking trails. The Minuteman Bikeway forms the southern border and offers the most direct access to the trails. Other borders are mostly residential and there are only a few access points.

More than 50 percent of the site is certified vegetated wetland. The Lexington zoning bylaw protects the wetlands in Great Meadows by zoning them as Wetland Protection District (WPD). The Lexington Conservation Commission and various citizen groups have taken an active role in assuring that the Great Meadows remain in its natural state. A consultant was hired by the Arlington Conservation Commission in 1999 to prepare an inventory of the natural resources of this area, along with some management recommendations. The final report was published in 2001 and is available online at: http://www.foagm.org/AGM_Inventory/concomGM1001.htm.

Since publication of the report, a very active Friends of Great Meadows (FoAGM) organization of Arlington and Lexington residents has formed to serve as stewards of the property. The FoAGM have completed extensive surveying of plants and animals, organized annual bird watching and geology walks, and improved the visitor support facilities and better protected the environment in the Meadows by building a series of boardwalks. For information about this project and the other works of the Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows, visit their website at: www.foagm.org/.

Knowles Farm

This property was Arlington's last active family farm, until approximately

Knowles Farm

Source: Google Earth



Size: 1.2 acres
Managing Agency/Owner: Private
Current Use: Housing

1989. Prior to extensive residential development in the mid-twentieth century, the Town hosted more than 60 small and mid-sized truck farms serving the Greater Boston region. In 2005, the Knowles Farm open space was regrettably lost to a housing development.

Great Meadows



Source: Google Earth

Size: 183.2 acres (entirely in Lexington)
Managing Agency/Owner: Department of Public Works/Town of Arlington Board of Selectmen
Current Use: Conservation/Passive recreation

Donald R. Marquis/Minuteman Bikeway



Source: Google Earth

Size: 30.1 acres
Managing Agency/Owner: Towns of Arlington, Lexington, Bedford/MBTA
Current Use: Recreation/Transportation

Meadowbrook Park



Size:	17.3 acres
Managing Agency/Owner:	Conservation Commission/Town of Arlington
Current Use:	Conservation

Menotomy Rocks Park



Size:	35.1 acres
Managing Agency/Owner:	Park and Recreation Commission/Town of Arlington
Current Use:	Recreation/Conservation

Donald R. Marquis/Minuteman Bikeway

The Minuteman Bikeway, a converted Boston and Maine Railroad corridor, was completed in 1992 after more than 20 years of planning and construction. Nearly 11 miles long, it begins in Cambridge (at the Arlington border near the Alewife MBTA Station), passes through Arlington and Lexington, and ends outside of Bedford Center. In 2000 the approximately three-mile section that passes through the entire length of Arlington was renamed the Donald R. Marquis / Minuteman Bikeway in recognition of the former Town Manager who served Arlington for more than 34 years and was a strong supporter of the Bikeway. The bikeway travels through commercial, industrial and residential areas and open spaces. In addition to being a popular commuter bike route (with one endpoint near the Alewife MBTA Station in Cambridge), the bikeway is a linear park that connects significant historical sites and attractions as well as many conservation areas and park lands in Arlington, Lexington and Bedford. In 2001, eight educational signs were placed along the Arlington section of the Bikeway to inform users about the historical and cultural surroundings.

In 2000 Town Meeting voted to amend the zoning bylaw on transportation districts to ensure additional protection of the bikeway from encroachment by abutters. The Town also decided to lease a right-of-way parallel to the bikeway to Metromedia Fiber Networks for a conduit containing fiber optics cables. In March 2001, major flooding damaged about a mile stretch of the bikeway in Arlington Heights because of overflows from Mill Brook. Metromedia contributed funds to the Town for bikeway improvements. Current issues affecting the Bikeway include lighting, drainage, and surface maintenance. Plowing the path in winter remains a topic of debate.

Meadowbrook Park

This parcel, which is mostly wetlands, is located adjacent to Mt. Pleasant Cemetery at the delta of the Mill Brook where it opens to the Lower Mystic Lake. The Conservation Commission managed an environmentally sensitive landscaping project to create a better wildlife habitat and make the area more accessible for walking and bird watching. The banks were stabilized and a deep marsh was dug, while protecting the integrity of the wetland area. Invasive reeds were removed in the fall of 2000 and native wetland and aquatic plants were planted around the marshes during the spring of 2001. Land stewards continue to monitor this site, with occasional help from Boy Scouts on special projects, such as steps.

Menotomy Rocks Park

This Town park, established in 1896, is a blend of manmade areas (Hill's Pond, fields and playground) and natural features (wooded and rocky sections). After a major dredging project in 1993, the Friends of Menotomy Rocks Park (FoMRP) was formed to assist the Town with ongoing stewardship of the park. Working with the Town, the Friends group has rebuilt a playground in the woods, initiated a memorial bench program and monitored the pond water. The Friends have also helped secure funds to rebuild a crumbling pond wall originally built in the 1930s and to eradicate the invasive weeds that appeared unexpectedly after the dredging.

The park is used for walking, jogging, picnicking, ice skating, fishing, the annual "Spooky Walk" at Halloween, Earth Day activities and other education, sporting and cultural events. In 2007, Menotomy Rocks Park is undergoing an extensive renovation to its pathway system in an attempt to help control erosion and pond sedimentation. Included in the project are improved controlled access to the pond, pond aerators, improved drainage and a renovated rear field.

Mount Gilboa

Comprising 10 acres in northwest Arlington, Mount Gilboa is a tall, tree-covered hill with a single house on top. This house belongs to the Conservation Commission and is rented by the Town. Discussions about the future of the house, as a Town-owned asset, are underway. Trails through the surrounding woods are used for walking and bird watching. Coyotes have recently been sighted in the area.

Mugar Land

The 17-acre Mugar parcel in East Arlington is the last large privately owned but undeveloped tract of land in the Town. It is adjacent to residential neighborhoods and heavily used soccer fields at Thorndike Field and is bordered in part by Route 2. It is adjacent to the Alewife Reservation, a mixed conservation and developed area in parts of North Cambridge, Belmont and Arlington. The Mugar property has been extensively altered and filled, but still has significant wetlands and is highly susceptible to flooding. It has been the subject of repeated yet unsuccessful development proposals for more than 50 years. Serious limitations to its development include the lack of legal access from Route 2 and the history of flooding problems.

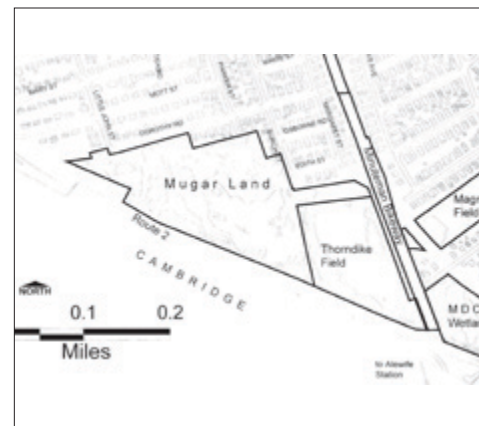
Mount Gilboa



Source: Google Earth

Size:	10 acres
Managing Agency/Owner:	Conservation Commission/Town of Arlington
Current Use:	Passive recreation/Conservation

Mugar Land



Source: Google Earth

Size:	16.8 acres
Managing Agency/Owner:	Private
Current Use:	Undeveloped

McClennen Park (formerly Reed's Brook)



Size:	20.3 acres
Managing Agency/Owner:	Arlington Redevelopment Board/Town of Arlington
Current Use:	Passive and active recreation

Robbins Farm Park



Size:	11.1 acres
Managing Agency/Owner:	Park and Recreation Commission/ Town of Arlington
Current Use:	Passive and active recreation

In early 2000, the Town learned that the Mugar family again was proposing to seek permits to build a commercial complex and extensive parking on the property. In response, concerned citizens from throughout the Town began exploring various ways to acquire the property in order to preserve it as undeveloped open space accessible to all Town residents. In 2000 Town Meeting voted to acquire the property as open space, and negotiations are continuing with the owners. At the same time, the Mugar family contracted with consultants to conduct hydrological and other studies in order to meet the requirements of a full Environmental Impact Review as ordered by the state Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

No significant progress has been made to either protect the land as public open space or to develop it. It remains undeveloped wetlands while the threat of imminent development has shifted to its Route 2 neighbor – the Belmont Uplands.

McClennen Park (formerly Reed's Brook)

Arlington reacquired this 20-acre site from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation in March 1995. Before 1959, Reed's Brook was agricultural land, and from 1959 to 1969 Arlington operated a landfill in this area. The Town closed the land pursuant to Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection policies and regulations while planning for its restoration and reuse. The Reed's Brook site is complicated by the fact that the brook runs through the site and eventually flows into the Arlington Reservoir and then to the Mill Brook. The brook was once enclosed in a culvert, but part of the culvert collapsed and has since been excavated to alleviate a flooding problem that affected the adjacent residential neighborhood.

As a result of many studies, the Arlington Redevelopment Board determined that the site was most valuable to the Town as open space and recommended to the 1997 Town Meeting that the land be developed for conservation and recreation use. Town Meeting appropriated \$5.8 million to address the flooding problems, properly close the landfill, and develop new open space uses. The plan proposed to completely replace the storm drain system, create a permanent retention pond and new wetland areas to serve as wildlife habitat, prevent exposure to landfill materials, construct two soccer fields and one baseball field, many trails, picnic areas, tot lots, and totally mitigate any existing environmental issues.

McClennen Park (Reed's Brook) was dedicated on June 3, 2006 in tribute to former Arlington Planning Director, Alan McClennen. The result is

a wonderful new open space for the Town, where there is something for everyone to enjoy, from the toddler playground to the sports playing fields and skateboarding area to the walking paths around the pond and wetlands. The State is currently reconstructing Summer Street, and when construction is finished a sidewalk and an on-street parking area will be added.

The plan for construction of an enclosed dog park must be mediated with the same Lexington appellants who originally opposed the development of the park. If successful, the State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will then issue the necessary permit to allow the creation of Arlington's first dog park. A community garden is the only element of the original plans that is not included, because it was determined that digging in the garden might penetrate the cap over the underlying trash dump.

Robbins Farm Park

From 1880 to 1941, at least three generations of the Robbins family farmed this land in Arlington Heights, and historical records cite a Robbins family farming the site during the Revolutionary War. In December 1941, Town Meeting voted to acquire the land by eminent domain, at a price of \$33,800. Robbins Farm and the renovated Skyline Park Playground (rededicated in September 2003) are used for active recreation all year round. The site includes a large playground with unique hillside slides and a picnic area, a basketball court, baseball and soccer fields, and steep hills favored for sledding. The spectacular view of the Boston skyline from many vantage points around the park draws thousands of people to view the Fourth of July fireworks in Boston. Red Sox games and movies have also been shown on large video screens set up in the park through the efforts of an active Friends group.

The Park and Recreation Commission, working with the Friends of Robbins Farm Park, had a master plan created for the site. Students from the Radcliffe Seminar program in landscape design prepared initial concept plans in 1999-2000. Using ideas from those students, a final master plan and cost estimates for the entire site were prepared and a landscape architecture firm was commissioned. The first phase of the project included renovation of the hillside slides, new paths and playground equipment, additional trees and the creation of a vista overlook area where the crumbling tennis courts stood. In future phases of the overall project, the basketball courts and fields will be renovated, including the addition of irrigation. A Robbins House Historic Interpretive area is also planned.

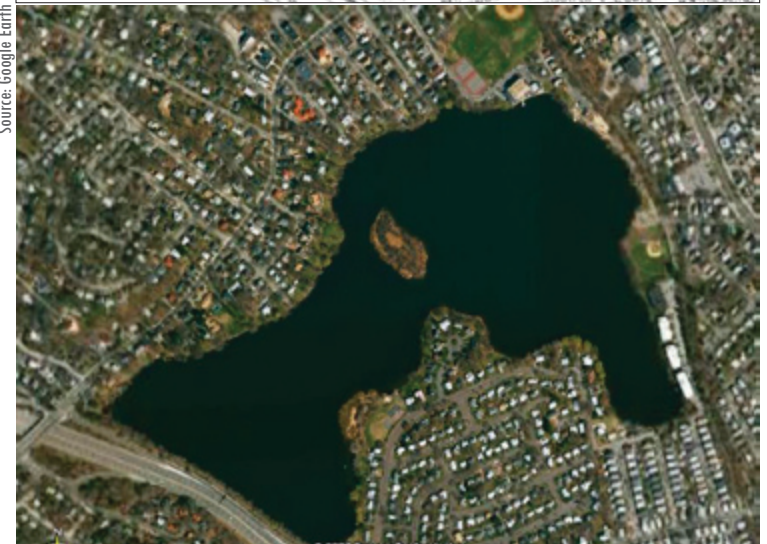
Spy Pond

At 100 acres, Spy Pond is the largest body of water located entirely within Arlington. Spy Pond is located near the Town Center, and is adjacent to Route 2 and close to the Alewife Reservation. Spy Pond is a "great pond," meaning it is a naturally occurring body of water 10 acres or greater in size. The pond was formed by a gigantic block of ice that broke away from the glacier leaving a "kettle hole" filled with glacial waters. Today, the source of the water in Spy Pond is runoff, primarily storm water drainage from the surrounding densely populated residential areas: no river or brook feeds it.

Spy Pond



Source: Google Earth



Size:	100 acres (pond) and 15 acres (park and fields)
Managing Agency/Owner:	Department of Public Works/Park and Recreation Commission/Town of Arlington
Current Use:	Recreation/Conservation

Symmes Property



Size: 7.8 acres of the total 18 acre site
Managing Agency/Owner: E.A. Fish Company and partners
Current Use: Vacant land to be developed for housing and mixed use; about 7.8 acres will be set aside for open space and passive recreation

Historic Spy Pond is a beautiful and precious community resource, although access is limited because much of the shoreline is private property. Walking, boating, bird watching, fishing and ice skating are popular pastimes, and many citizens, especially families with young children, enjoy Spy Pond Park and play area on Spy Pond's shore near the Boys and Girls Club. The playground was renovated several years ago, and in 1999 the Park and Recreation Commission engaged a landscape architect to prepare a feasibility study for renovations and improvements to the park and nearby shoreline.

The renovation to Spy Pond Park completed in 2005 included the following: reconstruction and stabilization of the pond edge with a mix of new native plantings to control erosion and deter geese; improved pond access points lined with boulders to prevent erosion; installation of a stepped stoned embankment at the Linwood Circle pond edge replacing the broken retaining wall; regrading and improved drainage; installation of a new pervious stabilized aggregate path with cobblestone edging from Pond Lane to Linwood Street; some removal of invasive plant species and pruning of existing trees and shrubs; construction of a boat ramp, intended mainly for emergency vehicle access but also making it possible to launch private boats without eroding the shore; installation of new trees, benches, picnic tables, trash receptacles, interpretive signs and ground cover; and restoration of the existing lawn area at Pond Lane.

The Town's Vision 2020 Spy Pond Task Group and the Friends of Spy Pond Park are actively involved in stewardship and planning for pond and park improvements, including weed control treatments.

Turkey Hill Reservation



Size: 11.9 acres
Managing Agency/Owner: Park and Recreation Commission/MWRA
Current Use: Recreation/Conservation

Symmes Property

On March 31, 2001, by a margin of 64 to 36 percent, Arlington voters approved a debt exclusion to allow the Town to acquire the entire 18-acre Symmes property from owners, Lahey Clinic and HealthSouth, in order to be able to control development of the site. The property includes several former hospital buildings, a vacant former nurses residence, several acres of parking lots, and about nine acres of undeveloped land, mostly steep wooded slopes. The purchase and sale was completed in April 2002, and the property was put under the Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB)'s jurisdiction.

A Symmes Advisory Committee (SAC) created by Town Meeting held numerous meetings to help evaluate the project and the various private development options for it. The SAC submitted its final report to the ARB and Town Meeting in April 2003, and the ARB and private development entity Symmes Redevelopment Associates (SRA) finalized a Land Disposition Agreement in June 2007. Town Meeting also approved zoning changes necessary for that development. After all approvals have been obtained, the site will be developed for housing, medical office use, and other possible uses according to a formal permitting process, and approximately 7.8 acres will be protected

as open space under a conservation restriction to be co-held by the nonprofit Arlington Land Trust and the Town of Arlington's Conservation Commission. A vista park at the top of the hill and much of the wooded area will be accessible to the public.

Turkey Hill Reservation

Turkey Hill Reservation contains the Turkey Hill water tower and land immediately surrounding it, which are owned by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA). The Park and Recreation Commission has jurisdiction over the land below the water tower. This area is heavily wooded, with trails running throughout. Many foot paths lead to the property, and one main access road is at Dodge Street. Recent security concerns of the MWRA resulted in an attempt to limit access to the area, but discussions held with neighborhood residents, the MWRA and State and Town officials resulted in an acceptable policy for continued public access during daylight hours. A stewardship group organized through the Conservation Commission Land Stewards Program is actively caring for the site.

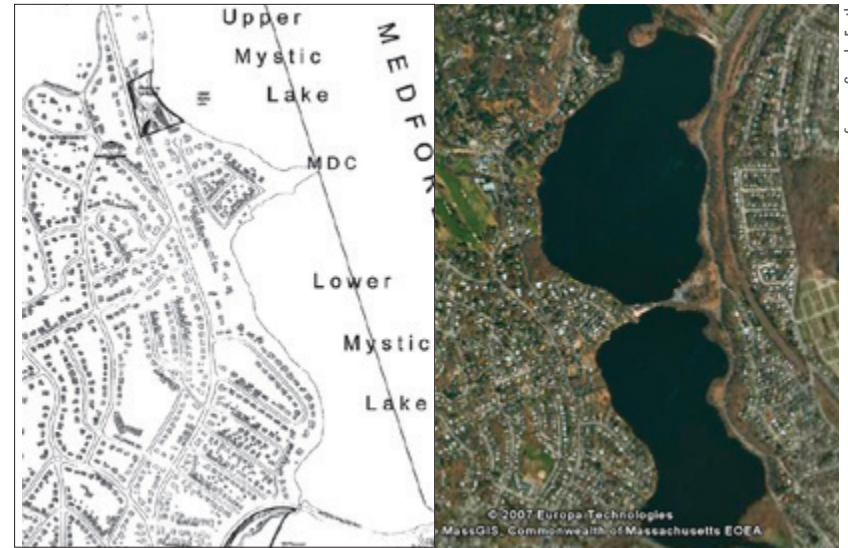
Upper and Lower Mystic Lakes

The Upper Mystic and the Lower Mystic Lakes are glacial lakes that straddle the boundaries of Arlington, Winchester and Medford. While there is ample access along the northern shore in Medford and Winchester from Mystic Valley Parkway, most of the shoreline in Arlington abuts roadways or privately held land with developed house lots. An exception is a three-acre wooded, waterfront conservation land on Upper Mystic Lake on Mystic Street (Route 3A) near the Winchester town line, known as Window-On-The-Mystic.

Window-On-The-Mystic

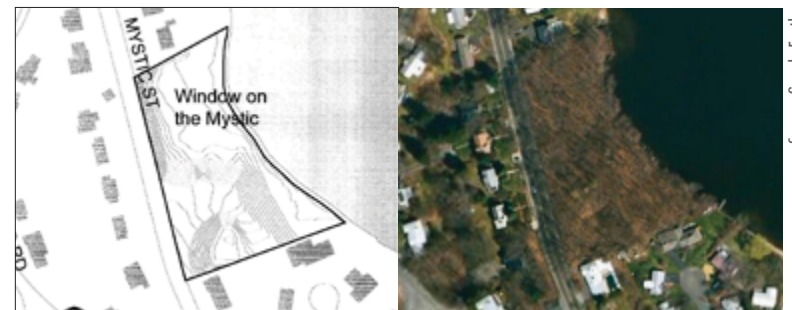
Window-On-The-Mystic is a three-acre waterfront parcel on the Upper Mystic Lake; it offers views of the Mystic Lakes and is also the primary public access point for the Upper Mystic Lake. Arlington purchased this parcel in 1975 from private owners. Federal Community Development Block Grant Funds and the Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources provided partial funding for this purchase. The land is under the jurisdiction of the Arlington Conservation Commission. A recent Eagle Scout project made some improvements to the site.

Upper and Lower Mystic Lakes



Size:	99 acres
Managing Agency/Owner:	DCR/Commonwealth of MA
Current Use:	Recreation/Conservation

Window-On-The-Mystic



Size:	3 acres
Managing Agency/Owner:	Conservation Commission/Town of Arlington
Current Use:	Conservation/Passive recreation

C. Open Space Inventory Tables

The following tables detail Arlington's publicly and privately owned open space and recreation parcels over 10,000 square feet or otherwise of significant value. These tables were prepared by the Department of Planning and Community Development and have been updated for this 2007 report. Open Space Inventory table column headings are described briefly:

- ☞ Property: Names the open space site.
- ☞ Now Zoned: Indicates how the site is currently zoned by the Town.
- ☞ Sq. Ft./Acres: Details the site's square footage and acreage.
- ☞ Location: Names the major street(s) nearest the parcel.
- ☞ Manager/Owner: Names the agency (or agencies) charged with managing the property and the owner of the property.
- ☞ Current Use/Recreation Potential: Lists the most common or major uses of the site; most public spaces are currently used for recreation. Those noted as conservation have little recreation potential. Private open spaces listed as recreation are the only ones accessible for such use.
- ☞ Condition: A general description of the maintenance/usability of the site
- ☞ ADA Self-Evaluation: Conservation Commission and Park and Recreation Commission review of properties within their jurisdictions, for accessibility and services for disabled; reports are on record with the organization having management jurisdiction; noted in the table is the year of the evaluation.
- ☞ Reasonable Accommodation: Based on the ADA Self-Evaluation, notes in what manner the site is accessible for the disabled.
- ☞ Protection: The type, if any, of grants received for purchase or improvement of site, as well as Art. 97 protection.
- ☞ Structures: Identifies buildings and other structures on the site.
- ☞ Comments/Proposed Renovations: Includes additional information about the site, such as any changes in status currently underway and proposed capital improvements, the names of active volunteer citizens groups, and further clarifying descriptions.

Table 5.1 lists those zoning districts in which inventoried open spaces are located. It is not an inclusive list of all zoning districts in Arlington. Table 5.2 is an inventory of all public and private open spaces in the Town.

Table 5.1 - Zoning

Full Name	Class	Code	Description
Residence 0	Residential	R0	Large lot, single-family residential
Residence 1	Residential	R1	Single-family residential
Residence 2	Residential	R2	Two-family residential
Business 3	Business	B3	Major business district
Business 5	Business	B5	Central business district
Multi Use	Multi Use	MU	Mixed use district
Planned Unit Development	Planned Unit Development	PUD	Large scale, multi-use development district
Industrial	Industrial	I	Industry, manufacturing, assembly, etc
Open Space	Open Space	OS	Undeveloped and recreation land

Table 5.2 - Inventory of Open Space in Arlington

Public Space

Compiled Fall 2000; Updated Spring 2002; Updated Spring 2007

	Property (Public)	New Zoned	Sq. ft./ Acres	Location	Manager/Owner	Current Use/ Recreation Potential	Condition	ADA Self-Eval.	Reasonable Accomodation	Protection (Grant, Art. 97, restriction, easement)	Structures	Comments/Proposed Renovations
1	Great Meadows	RM, RO, WPD	7,971,480/ 183.3 A in Lexington	Mass. Ave. and Maple St. in Lexington	Dept. Public Works/ Town of Arlington	Conservation	Good - undeveloped, natural open space			Urban Self-Help; Art. 97		Protected wetlands (WPD= wetland protection district, RS - one-family residential per Town of Lexington Zoning By-laws); Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows
2	Mt. Pleasant Cemetery	R1	1,568,160/ 36.1 A	Medford St.	Cemetery Comm./ Town of Arlington	Cemetery	Good				Maintenance, Chapel	Limited burial space availability
3	Menotomy Rocks Park	OS	1,525,634/ 35.1 A	Jason St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Conservation	Good	Fall, 2002		Land and Water; Hill's Pond; Clean Lakes and Ponds; CDBG; Art. 97		Renovation spring/summer 2007
4	Alewife Brook and Mystic Lakes Reservation	OS	1,393,920/ 32.1 A	Alewife Brook and Mystic Valley Parkways	Dept. of Conservation and Conservation (DCR) / Mass.	Passive Recreation/ Conservation	Fair			Art. 97		Forms eastern border of town; DCR proposed Alewife Reservation Master Plan-2003
5	Minuteman Bikeway	OS	1,306,800/ 30.1 A		Towns of Arlington, Lexington, Bedford/ MBTA	Recreation/ Transportation	Good			Self-Help; Urban Self-Help; Land and Water		Former Bedford Branch RR; runs full length of the town from Cambridge to Lexington; Arlington section resurfaced 2002; Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee
6	Arlington Reservoir	OS	925,214/ 21.3 A in Arlington 43.7 acres in Lexington	Lowell St.	Park and Rec. Comm., Dept. Public Works/ Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Conservation (year-round use of trail; seasonal use of swimming area)	Good - sanded beach, parking area, walking trail	Fall, 2002	accessible tot lot; learn to swim programs; parking; site access; path of travel; entrance, stairs, doors, restrooms	Land and Water	Maintenance bldg, Snack bar, Restrooms	Vision 2020 Reservoir Committee; Aquatic weed harvesting completed in 2003; reservoir dam repair completed in 2006; landscaping / tree planting begins 2007
7	Arlington High School	R1	906,077/ 20.8 A	Mass. Ave.	School Dept.	Education/ Recreation	Good	Fall, 2002	parking, site access		School buildings, service shed, bleachers, press box, concession stand, scoreboard	Playing fields (1 field turf), bleachers; environmental remediation completed 2006
8	McClennen Park / Reed's Brook	OS	881,384/ 20.3 A	Summer St.	Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) / Town of Arlington	Flood Control/ Conservation/ Recreation	Good	To follow - on completion	planned	Art. 97	Skateboard Park	Developed for recreation and conservation; expected completion 2008 (drainage work)
9	Spy Pond Park and Fields	OS	654,322/ 15.0 A	Pond Lane, Wellington St., Linwood St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Park - excellent; Playing fields - good; Playground - good	Fall, 2002	parking, site access, slopes, paths	CDBG; Land and Water; DCR Lakes and Ponds Restoration; Art. 97	Tennis Courts; seat walls; playground equipment; bleachers at Hornblower Field and Scannell/ Santini Field	Friends of Spy Pond Park; Vision 2020 Spy Pond Committee; Shore repair / renovations in park completed 2006
10	Crusher Lot and Otoson Middle School	R1/OS	260,250/ 6.0 A	Gray St.	Park and Rec. Comm., School Dept. / Town of Arlington	Education/ Conservation	Fair	Fall, 2002	parking, site access, paths of travel	Crusher Lot-Art. 97	School	

Table 5.2 cont'd

Public Space

Property (Public)	Now Zoned	Sq. ft./ Acres	Location	Manager/Owner	Current Use/ Recreation Potential	Condition	ADA Self-Eval.	Reasonable Accomodation	Protection (Grant, Art. 97, restriction, easement)	Structures	Comments/Proposed Renovations	
11	Summer St. Recreation Area, Hill's Hill	OS	551,479/ 12.7 A	Summer St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Conservation	Good - fields Poor - rink	Hill's Hill, Buck Field - Fall, 2002	parking, slopes, ramps, site access	Land and Water; Art. 97	Indoor skating rink (owned by state)	Area Surrounding Veterans Memorial Skating Rink; Buck Field lighting installed 2006; Summer St. Playground renovation & parking expansion proposed for 2009
12	Turkey Hill	OS	515,825/ 11.9 A	Brand St.	Park and Rec. and Conserv. Comm./ MWRA	Recreation/ Conservation	Fair	Fall, 2002	semi-primitive trails; site access	Art. 97	Water Tower- MWRA	Turkey Hill Land Stewards
13	Robbins Farm Park and Skyline Playground	OS	481,077/ 11.1 A	Eastern Ave.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Good-Excellent	Fall, 2002	parking, site access	Land and Water; Art. 97		Friends of Robbins Farm Park; Master Plan created; phase 1 construction completed 2004
14	Mt. Gilboa	OS	457,129/ 10.5 A	Crescent Hill Ave.	Conservation Comm./ Town of Arlington	Conservation/ Passive Recreation	Good			Land and Water; Art. 97; Historic District	single family house	House is rented by the Town
15	Thorndike Field	OS	433,153/ 10.0 A	Thorndike St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Good	Fall, 2002	parking, slopes, ramps, site access	Art. 97		Parking expansion / reconfiguration planned for 2008
16	Meadowbrook Park	OS	750,786/ 17.3 A	Mystic St.	Conservation Comm./ Town of Arlington	Conservation	Fair-Good natural open space	Evaluated 1995	no accessibility	CDBG; Art. 97		Adjacent to Mt. Pleasant Cemetery
17	Thompson School / North Union Playground; Lussiano Park	R1/OS	216,000/ 5.0 A	North Union St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Education / Recreation	Good	Fall, 2002	drop-off, site access, paths of travel	CDBG; Land and Water; Art. 97 - North Union Playground	School	Playground renovations completed 2007; Friends of North Union Playground
18	Hurd / Reservoir Field	OS	267,372/ 6.1 A	Lowell St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Fair	Fall, 2002	parking, site access, paths of travel	Art. 97		
19	Bishop School Playground / Field	R1 / OS	248,000/ 5.7 A	Stowcroft Rd.	Park and Rec. Comm. / Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Education	Good	Fall, 2002	parking, site access, paths of travel	Land and Water	School	Bishop Field renovations underway in 2007-2008
20	Dallin School Playground / Florence Field	R1/OS	231,128/ 5.3 A	Florence Ave.	Park and Rec. Comm., School Dept., Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Education	Good	Fall, 2002	parking, site access, paths of travel	CDBG for Tot Lot; Land and Water	School	Tot lot renovations completed with school rebuild
21	Stratton School / Greeley Playground and Pheasant Ave. Field	R1/OS	176,620/ 4.1 A	Pheasant Ave.	Park and Rec. Comm., School Dept./ Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Education	Fair	Fall, 2002	parking, site access, path of travel	Land and Water; Greeley Field-Art. 97	School	Renovations proposed for 2008; Friends of Greeley Park at Stratton
22	Crosby School and Playground	R1	164,450/ 3.8 A	Oxford St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ ARB/ Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Education	Good	Fall, 2002	parking, site access, path	Land and Water	School (leased); Tennis Courts	Renovations completed in 2005
23	Poets Corner	OS	163,420/ 3.8 A	Wollaston Ave.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Fair	Fall, 2002	parking, site access, paths of travel	CDBG; Land and Water; Art. 97	Tennis Courts	
24	Buzzell Field	OS	155,145/ 3.6 A	Summer St.	Park and Rec. Comm. / Conservation Comm. / Town of Arlington	Recreation	Poor	Fall, 2002	drop-off, site access	CDBG; Land and Water; Art. 97		Buzzell Field renovations underway in 2007-2008
25	Magnolia St. Playground and Field	OS	141,851/ 3.3 A	Magnolia St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Good	Fall, 2002	parking and ramps	CDBG; Land and Water; Art. 97		Community gardens
26	Brackett School	R1	135,297/ 3.1 A	Eastern Ave.	School Dept./Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Education	Good				School	

Table 5.2 cont'd

Public Space

Property (Public)	Now Zoned	Sq. ft./ Acres	Location	Manager/Owner	Current Use/ Recreation Potential	Condition	ADA Self-Eval.	Reasonable Accomodation	Protection (Grant, Art. 97, restriction, easement)	Structures	Comments/Proposed Renovations
27	Window on the Mystic	OS	129,919/ 3.0 A	Mystic St.	Conservation Comm./ Town of Arlington	Conservation	Good - natural open space	Evaluated 1995	very limited access	CDBG; Self-Help; Art. 97	
28	Wellington Park / Playground	OS	129,098/ 3.0 A	Grove St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Fair	Fall, 2002	site access, path of travel	Land and Water Conservation Fund; CDBG; Carol White PEP grant; Art. 97	Tennis Courts Renovations proposed for 2010; Project Adventure challenge course planned for fall 2007
29	Town Hall Civic Block	R1	118,395/ 2.7 A	Mass. Ave./ Academy St.	Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Cultural	Good			Mass. Preservation Projects Fund	Town Hall, Central School (Senior Center), Whittemore- Robbins House, Memorial Gardens, Library, Cemetery Restoration work in gardens in progress; Friends of Town Hall Gardens
30	Gibbs Jr. High School	R1	115,621/ 2.7 A	Foster and Tufts Sts.	ARB / Park and Rec./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Good	Fall, 2002	tot lots, parking, site access, path of travel; entrances, stairs, doors, restroom, floors, fountains, switches		School (leased); Arlington Center for the Arts, Kelliher Center, Lesley-Ellis School Arts, education, and recreational uses
31	Hardy School	R1	110,666/ 2.5 A	Lake St.	School Dept./ Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Education	Good			CDBG	School School and playground renovations completed in 2001
32	Peirce School	R1	98,010/ 2.3 A	Park Ave. Ext.	School Dept. / Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Education	Good				School New school and playground completed 2004; Summer St. reconstruction impacting park thru 2007
33	Veterans Memorial Skating Rink	R1	104,544/ 2.4 A	Summer St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ DCR	Recreation/ Parking	Poor	Fall, 2002	parking, ramps, site access, path of travel, stairs	Art. 97	Indoor skating rink (owned by state) Adjoins Summer St. Recreation Complex (see map site 11); capital improvements proposed 2007-2010
34	Park Circle Water Tower	R1	80,425/ 1.8 A	Park Circle	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Good	Fall, 2002	site access and path of travel		Water Tower Currently being used as staging area for firestation rebuild
35	MWRA Pump Station	I	179,144/ 4.1 A	Brattle St.	MWRA/ Comm. of Mass.	Infrastructure	Good				Station
36	Thorndike St. Wetlands	OS	74,923/ 1.7 A	Thorndike St.	DCR/ Comm. of Mass.	Conservation-natural open space	Fair			Art. 97	
37	Parallel Park	OS	53,731/ 1.2 A	Medford St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Good	Fall, 2002	drop-off and site access	CDBG; Land and Water; Art. 97	
38	Parmenter School	R1	52,781/ 1.2 A	Irving St.	Park and Rec./ ARB/ Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Education	Good	Fall, 2002	parking, site access, path of travel		School (leased)
39	Mass. DPW site (Route 2)	R1	45,816/ 1.1 A	Sylvia St.	DPW/ Comm. of Mass.	Infrastructure	Good				Maintenance Bldg.

Table 5.2 cont'd

Public Space

Property (Public)	Now Zoned	Sq. ft./ Acres	Location	Manager/Owner	Current Use/ Recreation Potential	Condition	ADA Self-Eval.	Reasonable Accomodation	Protection (Grant, Art. 97, restriction, easement)	Structures	Comments/Proposed Renovations
40	Waldo Park / Playground	OS	44,468/ 1.0 A	Teel St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Excellent	Fall, 2002	drop-off and site access	CDBG; Land and Water; Art. 97	Renovations completed in 2006; Friends of Waldo Park
41	Forest St. Conservation	OS	42,612/ 1.0 A	Forest St.	Conservation Comm./ Town of Arlington	Conservation	Good - undeveloped open space	Evaluated 1995	very limited access	Art. 97	
42	Medford Boat Club	R0	41,800/ 1.0 A	Robinhood Rd.	DCR / Medford Boat Club/ Comm of Mass.	Recreation	Good			Art. 97	Boathouse
43	Cooke's Hollow	OS	32,605/ 0.7A	Mystic St.	Conservation Comm./ Town of Arlington	Passive Recreation	Fair-small natural open area, steep slopes	Evaluated 1995	limited access	Art. 97	Bank stabilization project planned for 2008
44	Ridge St. Conservation	OS	27,563/ 0.6 A	Ridge St.	Conservation Comm./ Town of Arlington	Conservation	Good - undeveloped open space	Evaluated 1995	very limited access	Art. 97	
45	Woodside Lane Conservation	OS	25,305/ 0.6 A	Woodside Lane	Conservation Comm./ Town of Arlington	Conservation	Good - undeveloped wooded open space	Evaluated 1995	very limited access	Art. 97	
46	Hibbert St. Playground	OS	23,803/ 0.5 A	Hibbert St.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Fair	Fall, 2002	parking, site access, path of travel	Land and Water Conservation Fund; Art. 97; CDBG	
47	U-Shaped Parcel	OS	23,602/ 0.5 A	Brattle St.	Conservation Comm./ Town of Arlington	Conservation	Good - undeveloped open space	Evaluated 1995	very limited access	Art. 97	
48	Cutter School / Reinhart Playground	OS	20,000/ 0.5 A	School and Robbins Sts.	Park and Rec. Comm./ Town of Arlington	Recreation	Good	Fall, 2002	tot lot; parking, site access, path of travel	Art. 97	Adjoining condos
49	Monument Park	R1	19,502/ 0.4 A	Mass. Ave./ Broadway	Town of Arlington	Historic	Good				Monument Adjoining Central Fire Station
50	Jefferson Cutter House and Whittemore Park	B3	13,300/ 0.3 A	Whittemore Park, Mass. Ave.	ARB/Town of Arlington	Recreation/ Cultural/ Historic	Excellent			CDBG; Art. 97	Jefferson Cutter House (historic protection) Dallin Museum; Chamber of Commerce office
51	Uncle Sam Park & Monument	B5	10,664/ 0.2 A	Mass. Ave./ Mystic St.	Board of Selectmen/ Town of Arlington	Historic	Good				Monument
52	Locke School Playground	OS	10,473/ 0.2 A	Davis Rd.	Park and Rec. / Town of Arlington	Recreation	Excellent	Fall, 2002	parking, site access	CDBG	Adjoining condominiums; playground renovations completed 2006

Table 5.2 cont'd

Private Space

Property (Private)		Now Zoned	Sq. ft./ Acreage	Location	Manager/ Owner	Current Use	Condition	ADA Self Eval.	Reasonable Accomodation	Structures	Comments
53	Winchester Country Club	R0	981,980/ 22.6 A	Mystic St.	Winchester Country Club	Recreation	N/A			Clubhouse, Maintenance	
54	Mugar Land	PUD	731,905/ 16.8 A	Concord Turnpike (Route 2)	B. Brown, et al	Private-Undeveloped	N/A				No project in process
55	St. Paul's Cemetery	R1	649,891/ 14.9 A	Broadway, Mystic Valley Parkway	Roman Catholic Church - Archdiocese of Boston	Cemetery	N/A			Chapel, Maintenance	
56	Belmont Country Club	R1	487,523/ 11.2 A	Kent Lane	Belmont Country Club, Inc.	Recreation	N/A				
57	Poets Corner	R1	282,255/ 6.5 A	Wollaston Ave. and Kipling Road	Roman Catholic Church - Archdiocese of Boston	Parking/ Wetland area	N/A				
58	Orient St. to Summer St.	R2	180,002/ 4.1 A	Orient Ave.	Werner Carlson, Jr., et al	Private	N/A				
59	Gas Co. open land	R1	100,188/ 2.3 A	Washington St.	Tenneco, Inc	Private	N/A				
60	Arlington Catholic Field	R1	98,450/ 2.3 A	Summer St.	Roman Catholic Church - Archdiocese of Boston	Recreation	N/A				
61	Elizabeth Island	R1	87,120/ 2.0 A	Spy Pond	E. Sacco	Undeveloped	N/A				Owner exploring sale of island
62	Armenian Cultural Institute	RO	82,615/ 1.9 A	Mystic St.	Armenian Cultural Institute	Private/ Cultural	N/A			Meeting Center	
63	Kelwyn Manor Park	R1	77,567/ 1.8 A	Spy Pond Pkwy.	Kelwyn Manor Association	Recreation	N/A			Playground	
64	Jason Russell House	R2	26,330/ 0.6 A	Mass. Ave./ Jason St.	Arlington Historical Society	Historical	N/A			House and Museum	Located in Jason-Gray Historic District
65	Private Land	R2	12,503/ 0.3 A	Smith/ Hibbert St.	J. Santosuosso, et al	Undeveloped	N/A				
66	Prince Hall Cemetery	R1	9,491 / 0.2 A	Gardner St.	Masonic Grand Lodge, Corp.	Cemetery/ Historic	N/A				
67	Symmes Hospital Site	MU	Approx. 18A (7.8 acres designated for open space accessible to the public under conservation restriction)	Hospital Rd.	E.A. Fish Company and partners	Mixed Use/ Open Space / Residential	N/A		Inaccessible while under development	Various former hospital buildings to be demolished and new housing and offices to be built	Town sold property to developer in June 2007 for housing and mixed-use development; 7.8 acres to be open space w/conservation restriction

Map 10 - Open Space Inventory



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