

VISION 2020 FISCAL RESOURCES TASK GROUP
Meeting Minutes 1/15/15
Senior Center Ground Floor

ATTENDEES: Gordon Jamieson (Co-Chair), David Garbarino (Co-Chair), Brian Hasbrouck, Heather Remoff, Chris Loretta, Pete Howard (Secretary)

REVIEW OF DECEMBER MEETING: Gordon summarized the discussion & consensus. Refer to minutes.

ANNUAL REPORT: Gordon provided a copy (Ref 1) of the FRTG submission to the Vision 2020 annual report published by the Town.

ASSESSMENT DATA: Pete provided scatter plots (Ref 2) of the data file recently received from the Director of Assessments. The plots show \$/sqft ("land value" for the purpose of these minutes) vs parcel street number. There was a general discussion of the data. The numerous parcels that lack any land were not included. Most of these are condos. Attendees questioned whether this is a desirable way to handle condo land value. Attendees noted the apparent limit on the land value. They suggested possible reasons for the sizable variations. In general, it is the group's understanding that land values of adjacent parcels should be the same. They noted that commercial & residential parcels are often close together. The group has no explanation for the several parcels with street number zero. The group agreed that Pete should draft a letter to the BoA along lines suggested by Gordon for review in February.

FUTURE PROJECT: Gordon to again urge the BoS to relocate ARB articles in the order of the Warrant so they are not the first matters Town Meeting considers. He plans to meet first with the Town Manager. The group feels that these, often complicated articles, do not get fair consideration as the many new Town Meeting members learn how the meeting operates.

Note: Before the meeting started, Chris solicited signatures for 2 proposed warrant articles.

NEXT MEETING: Feb - Meetings held monthly - 3rd Thursdays 7:30 PM - Senior Ctr Ground Floor

Ref 1 FRTG Annual Report
Ref 2 Land Assessment Scatter Plots

Fiscal Resources: The Task Group researches topics and reports results and recommendations to the appropriate department or officials. In 2014 the following topics were addressed:

Financial Sustainability - The group is currently undertaking review of commercial land assessments to insure that commercial land values are both consistent and in line with residential land values in town. The review will continue during 2015 and will include analysis of using development to decrease Arlington's structural deficit.

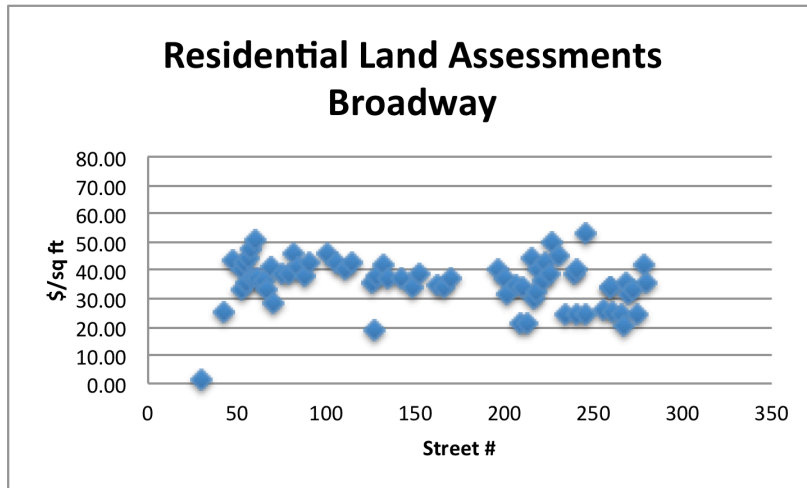
Financial Transparency - Reviewed the FY2014 Town's Financial Plan and provided written and verbal comments to the Manager's office. This process served to educate task group members on this and related financial documents. The plan is to review Town Financial Plans on a bi-annual basis to insure that this excellent document continues to improve.

Arlington Visual Budget - Reviewed the Arlington Visual Budget online tool and provided written and verbal comments relating to clarity and usefulness. The goal is to review and comment on these materials on a bi-annual basis.

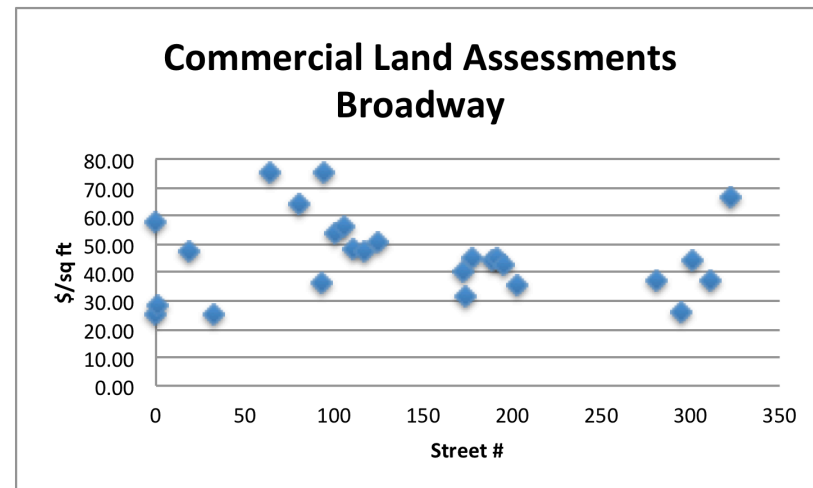
Financial Organization - Resumed our periodic review of the Town's Financial Organizational Structure, an issue that the group has raised many times. The recent upheaval in the Assessor office and Board of Assessors makes the review timely. It is expected that analysis of this complex topic will continue during 2015.

Arlington's Master Plan - Reviewed and provided written comments with a focus on smart growth promoting zoning and developmental aspects on the initial and revised drafts of the master plan document.

Warrant Article Presentation Order - With an eye to improving the functioning of town meeting, the group proposed revision of the order in which warrant articles are taken up during town meeting. The concept was to have perfunctory and citizen sponsored articles be among the first ones taken up by the body thereby permitting the meeting to get its processes fully 'established' before moving onto more substantive matters. The plan is to revisit the issue in 2015.



AVG= 35.69 \$ / sq ft
 STD= 8.58 \$ / sq ft

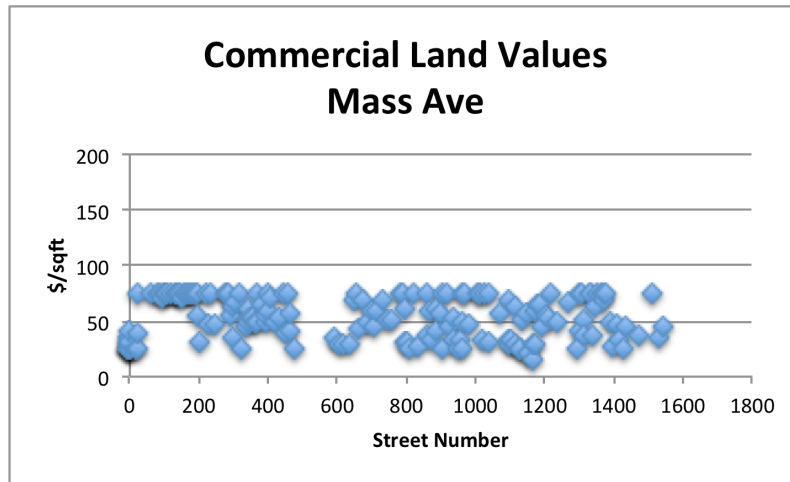


AVG= 45.62 \$ / sq ft
 STD= 14.16 \$ / sq ft

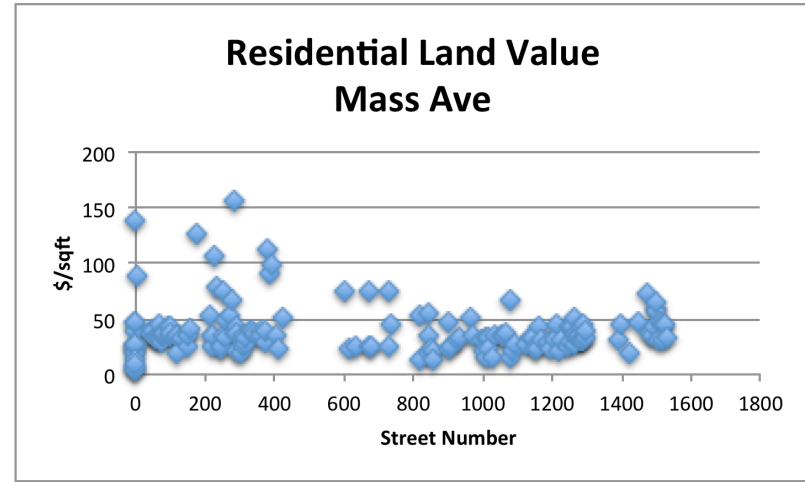
The average commercial land assessment is 28% greater than the average residential land assessment.
 The standard deviation (a common measure of dispersion) of commercial land assessment is 65% greater.

There are 15 residential parcels and 4 commercial with \$0 land assessment. These are not included in the results above.
 There is a very large residential \$/sq ft at street #0 which belongs to the BoS. This has also not been included.

Also significant the commercial parcels are scattered between residential parcels.



N= 174
 AVG= 37 \$ / SQ FT
 STD= 19 \$ / SQ FT



N= 167
 AVG= 39 \$ / SQ FT
 STD= 22 \$ / SQ FT

The average commercial land assessment is 5% less than the average residential land assessment.
 The standard deviation (a common measure of dispersion) of residential land assessment is 16% greater.

There are many residential and commercial parcels with \$0 land. Many are clearly condos. These are not included in the results above.

Also significant the commercial parcels are scattered between residential parcels.

