

Article 66 of 2002 Town Warrant
Funding for Transportation Improvements

3/25/02

Arlington has made significant progress in 2001!

- Transportation Assessment Study Complete
 - With Funding provided by Town Meeting
- Mass Ave Corridor Options for East Arlington
 - DPW accomplished with funding from Chapter 90
- Community Safety established and staffed the Traffic Division
 - Acquired measurement equipment
- Transportation Advisory Committee Established by BOS and is operational

Resident's have expressed their concerns through:

- Public meetings and Letters
 - Three Public Meetings- Summarized in Assessment Study
- Vision 2020 Survey in January 2002
 - Responses from 1400 households tabulated so far
 - Top Very Important Issues
 - 64.9% - Pedestrian Safety
 - 57.0% - School Zone Safety
 - 53.7% - Congestion

Arlington's Major Transportation Issues

- Dangerous pedestrian safety in several areas
 - Average of over 20 collisions per year involving pedestrians
- Congestion on major roadways at commuter hours
 - Leads to cut-through of residential areas
 - Wasteful consumption of gasoline, increasing air pollution
 - Reduced access to merchants
 - Wasted time of Arlington residents

Design Goals

- Improve Safety everywhere
- Improve mobility (reduce congestion) on arterial streets
 - Including those like Rt 16 and Rt 2
 - (But we don't have direct authority here)
- Reduce speed and traffic volume in residential areas
 - By the use of traffic calming techniques

Initial plans for Article 66

- Hire professional engineers to:
 - Assist in selection of a lane configuration for Mass. Ave. in East Arlington: initiate design to improve pedestrian/traffic safety
 - Examine options for the Mass. Ave./Pleasant St./Mystic St. intersections to improve pedestrian and traffic safety, and to reduce congestion
 - Perform initial design and application of traffic calming techniques in a few neighborhoods
- We estimate that these items would require approximately \$250,000 in professional engineering design services
 - Excluding construction costs for implementation

Since Funds are Tight, An Alternate Plan

- Goal:
 - Leverage the significant time being invested by volunteers
 - Keep the costs low, but still make some progress towards goals
- 1. Authorize a co-op Traffic Engineering student
 - 6 months starting in summer, from Northeastern
 - Estimated cost for 6 months work = \$15,000
- 2. Explore sharing a professional Traffic Engineer with adjacent towns.
 - Take time to arrange: budget impact this year about \$15K

Alternate Plan (cont.)

- 3. Authorize specific small consulting assignments to address immediate and specific issues
 - BOS requests to TAC
 - Guidelines for Crosswalks
 - Traffic calming application
 - Estimate = \$20,000
- Total Cost of Alternate Plan = \$50,000
 - But it will not address the large issues indicated for the initial plan

Conclusion

- Transportation continues to be an issue
- Joint efforts of Town Departments, Board of Selectmen, and TAC has provided a start
- Demonstrated we can effectively use Town resources, professional engineers, and volunteers
- Major fixes are some time off because of complexity and cost
- But it is important to prepare for the time when funds will be available.