

**Master Plan Implementation Committee  
Mid-Year Update to Special Town Meeting  
December 5, 2018**

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The Arlington Master Plan, “Your Town Your Future,” was adopted by approximately 75% of Town Meeting members in 2015. The Town then appointed a Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) which meets quarterly to oversee and ensure plan implementation. MPIC reports are organized to follow the topic areas of the Master Plan: Land Use, Traffic and Circulation, Housing and Residential Development, Economic Development, Historic and Cultural Resource Areas, Natural Resources and Open Space, and Public Facilities and Services. The following mid-year update provides highlights of accomplishments since Annual Town Meeting and the ongoing and upcoming projects for the remainder of the year.

**Land Use**

- The recodified Zoning Bylaw passed by Special Town Meeting in February 2018 was approved by the Massachusetts Attorney General on June 12, 2018.
- In early September 2018, the new Zoning Bylaw Working Group was convened by the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) to review and propose amendments to the Zoning Bylaw as identified in the Master Plan and through the recodification process. The Zoning Bylaw Working Group expects to advance several zoning amendments to the 2019 Annual Town Meeting.

**Traffic and Circulation**

- A \$100,000 Barr Foundation grant funded a bus rapid transit pilot project conducted between October 9 and November 9, 2018. The pilot included a bus stop relocation with transit signal priority and queue jump at Lake Street, a dedicated bus lane between Varnum Street and Alewife Brook Parkway, and modifications to the lane assignments and signal changes at Alewife Brook Parkway. Preliminary pilot results indicated there was a travel time reduction for buses traveling on Massachusetts Avenue within the pilot corridor between Lake Street and Alewife Brook Parkway. Additional results and recommendations will be shared in 2019.
- In collaboration with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and 14 neighboring municipalities, a regional dockless bike share system was launched in June 2018, with 150 manual bikes from Lime, the bike share vendor, which was supplemented with approximately 40 Lime-E bicycles in September. The fleet will be reduced during the winter.
- The Parking Implementation and Governance Committee worked with DPCD to identify the first set of expenditures in the Parking Benefits District, which were approved by Special Town Meeting in February 2018 and are currently underway.

**Housing and Residential Development**

- A subcommittee of Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) members, Housing Plan Implementation Committee members, and staff from DPCD are working with MAPC on zoning amendments related to multifamily uses as recommended by the Housing Production Plan. These proposed amendments will be discussed at 2019 Annual Town Meeting.
- Out of a vote at the 2018 Annual Town Meeting, the Residential Study Group is considering two interrelated topics: the demolition of structures that may be affordable and the incompatible size and design of new structures in established neighborhoods. Through research conducted by the DPCD, the Residential Study Group will issue a report on these trends, the effectiveness of the existing regulatory and policy framework, best practices, and policy and process recommendations for presentation at the 2019 Annual Town Meeting.

**Economic Development**

- In September 2018, DPCD and the Zoning Bylaw Working Group utilized a Town Meeting appropriation to hire Lisa Wise Consulting to craft new sign regulations that are clear, well organized, responsive to current needs, straightforward to understand and administer, consistent with state and federal law, and representative of best practices in comparable communities. In December 2018, a Sign Bylaw Analysis and Recommendations Report will be released.

- DPCD and an Arlington Heights Working Group are working with MAPC to develop the Arlington Heights Action Plan. The forthcoming plan is focused on encouraging revitalization of the Heights business district. Two forums have shown support for mixed-use development, including increased housing, artisan spaces, retail, connectivity, and community spaces.

**Historic and Cultural Resource Areas**

- The Historic and Cultural Resources Working Group worked with DPCD and a consultant to add 135 properties to the *Inventory of Historically or Architecturally Significant Properties in the Town of Arlington*. On September 11, 2018, the Historical Commission voted to accept the new Inventory Forms. This project was funded by the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and the Massachusetts Historical Commission’s Survey and Planning Grant Program.
- In summer 2018, the Town hired Wendy Frontiero who is working with the Historic and Cultural Resources Working Group on a Community-Wide Historic Preservation Survey Master Plan. The plan will guide historic preservation efforts by identifying and prioritizing outstanding needs regarding the inventory and documentation of Arlington’s local historic resources. The final plan is anticipated in spring 2019.
- During the fall of 2018, the Arlington Center for the Arts (ACA) opened in its new location in the top two floors of the Central School at 20 Academy Street following a renovation supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council’s Cultural Facilities Fund, Town of Arlington, and many other donors. The ACA is a hub of arts and culture, serving as an anchor for the Arlington Cultural District.

**Natural Resources and Open Space**

- The Mill Brook Corridor Study Group is working to create opportunities for conserving and protecting the Mill Brook while leveraging recreational, economic development, and historic preservation opportunities. Currently, the Study Group is working with multiple Town departments to discuss next steps and actionable goals related to the corridor.
- Coming on the heels of the successful completion of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Plan, the Town was awarded an MVP Action Grant in the amount of \$399,260 to develop and implement ecologically sensitive flood management measures at Wellington Park in the Mill Brook Corridor. This project builds on a current initiative, undertaken by the Mystic River Watershed Association and funded by the Community Preservation Act, to improve public access and recreational opportunities at Wellington Park.

**Public Facilities and Services**

- Capital funds were used to hire an Owner’s Project Manager and designer for the Central School renovation to update the Senior Center. Design plans are now complete and exterior modifications are being reviewed by the Historic Districts Commission. Funding is in the Capital Plan for construction in FY2020.

Respectfully submitted by the Master Plan Implementation Committee:

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| Andrew Bunnell, ARB representative               | Charles Kalauskas (Co-Chair), Select Board appointee |
| Michael Byrne, Inspectional Services, ex officio | Ann LeRoy, Town Meeting Moderator appointee          |
| Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager, ex officio       | Wendy Richter, ARB appointee                         |
| Joe Barr (Co-Chair), ARB appointee               | Andrew West, ARB alternate                           |
| Peter Howard, Finance Committee appointee        | Ralph Willmer, Select Board appointee                |

with staff support from Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development and Erin Zwirko, Assistant Director of Planning and Community Development.

For more information on the MPIC, please visit: [www.arlingtonma.gov/planning](http://www.arlingtonma.gov/planning)