

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

REDEVELOPMENT BOARD

The Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) is the Town's Planning Board, under G.L. c. 41, § 81. There are five members of the board: four are appointed by the Town Manager and the fifth is a gubernatorial designee appointed by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development.

The board serves as the Town's special permit granting authority for projects which require an Environmental Design Review per the Town's Zoning Bylaw; four applications were approved by the Board in 2019. Three of these reviews were for renovations of existing commercial spaces, including Food Link's new headquarters on Summer Street, the expansion of the Arlington Animal Clinic on Broadway, and a new restaurant in Arlington Heights. The ARB also reviewed new signage for one of the CVS locations in the community. The Board began reviewing a new mixed-use building containing a 50-room hotel and restaurant on Mass Ave; the project includes replacement of the former Town-owned Disabled American Veterans building. The Board also began reviewing a co-located medical and recreational marijuana dispensary on Mass Ave.

The ARB is also the Town's Urban Renewal Authority under G.L. c. 121; with Town Meeting approval, the Board may hold land or buildings to improve and rehabilitate them to meet community development goals. The ARB currently manages three properties: the Central School at 20 Academy Street, 23 Maple Street, and the Jefferson Cutter House at 611 Massachusetts Avenue, which includes Whittemore Park. Building tenants include the Senior Center, Mystic River Watershed Association, Arlington Chamber of Commerce, Arlington Center for the Arts, Dallin Museum, and Town departments.

Lastly, the ARB serves as the Board of Survey with authority to approve the design of roads for the purposes of ensuring that new building lots can meet zoning frontage and access requirements. There were no Board of Survey applications for consideration in 2019.

Progress continued on the final design of the new Senior Center. The Historic Districts Commission and state Architectural Access Board reviewed and approved exterior and accessibility improvements. The project went out to bid in fall 2019 and construction is expected to start in March 2020.

A revitalization plan for Whittemore Park continued. Supported by FY2018 CPA funds, the design includes improving ADA accessibility in the park, installing new seating and lighting, upgrading the landscape, and improving historical and cultural signage. Revitalization of the park will be completed in phases utilizing CPA, Community Development Block Grant, and Town capital funds.

The Board has a range of goals for the upcoming year, including:

- Making capital improvements to properties in the Arlington Redevelopment Board portfolio, including significant renovations to the Central School and Jefferson Cutter House and adjacent improvements to Whittemore Park;
- Developing Residential Design Guidelines and recommend options for Design Review process;
- Completing an Economic Analysis of Industrial Zones;
- Working with the Select Board on community outreach and dialogue on the need to address housing issues, including creating and preserving housing;
- Advancing Zoning Bylaw amendments to future Town Meeting to encourage development and redevelopment opportunities to generate a full range of housing options for all incomes and housing types, encouraging mixed-use development, and new commercial development;
- Reviewing progress on implementation of the Master Plan, including developing a process to amend Master Plan goals and objectives;
- Working with the Select Board, Conservation Commission, Historical Commission, Historic Districts Commission, Board of Health, Zoning Board of Appeals, Engineering, Inspectional Services, and Health and Human Services to ensure transparent, welcoming, and efficient permit review and delivery system.



Students from MIT's Department of Urban Studies and Planning facilitated a community meeting about the Broadway corridor.
Photo Jenny Raitt.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (DPCD)

The Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) oversees planning and community development activities within the town. The DPCD is committed to improving the quality of life for Arlington's residents by improving housing opportunities, transportation access, and economic development to enhance the vitality of our business districts and generate commercial tax revenue, providing opportunities for households with low- and moderate-incomes, and preserving and promoting the Town's natural, historic, and cultural resources.

The staff is involved in many key Town initiatives including Master Plan implementation, the development of a Sustainable Transportation Plan, "net zero" planning initiatives, and a range of efforts in our business districts. The Department administers the Town's federal Community Development Block Grant Program and has done so since the program's inception in 1974. The Menotomy Weatherization Program is part of the Department and serves eligible homeowners and renters in Arlington, Belmont, Cambridge, Lexington, Somerville, Waltham, and Watertown to make their homes more energy efficient. The Department provides staff support to many Town boards, commissions, and committees, including the Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB), the Town's Planning Board and redevelopment authority. The ARB manages three town buildings: Jefferson Cutter House with Whittemore Park, Central School, and 23 Maple Street.

Department staff also represents the Town on a number of regional bodies: the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); the North Suburban HOME Consortium; the Somerville-Arlington Continuum of Care; the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (Council, Executive Committee, and MetroCommon 2050 External Advisory Committee); Metropolitan Mayors Coalition's Climate Preparedness Taskforce and Regional Housing Partnership; Mystic River Watershed Association Resilient Mystic Collaborative; and the Charles River Watershed Association Climate Compact.

The Department administers the Town's participation in the Commonwealth's Green Communities Act Program, which includes grants for energy efficiency totaling more than \$1.6 million since 2010.

DPCD has 12 full-time and two per-diem staff. Staff support and participate in a range of Town committees, commissions and boards, and work with other departments in support of Town initiatives. The groups and projects with DPCD involvement include: Arlington Redevelopment Board; Conservation Commission, Master Plan Implementation Committee and five sub-groups (Zoning Recodification Working Group, Residential



DPCD Staff at Wellington Park renovation site. L>R: Ali Carter, Economic Development Coordinator; Emily Sullivan, Environmental Planner/Conservation Agent; Daniel Amstutz, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner; Ken Pruitt, Energy zProject Manager; Kelly Lynema, Senior Planner; Erin Zwirko, AICP, LEED AP, Assistant Director. Photo Jenny Raitt.

Study Group, Mill Brook Study Group, Historic and Cultural Resources Working Group, Zoning Bylaw Working Group); Envision Arlington and its Task Groups; Open Space Committee; Bicycle Advisory Committee; Transportation Advisory Committee; Housing Plan Implementation Committee; Arlington Tourism and Economic Development; Parking Advisory Committee; Clean Energy Future Committee; Energy Working Group; Arlington Center Merchants Association; Arlington Heights Merchants Association; Heights Neighborhood Action Plan Committee; Arlington Commission on Arts and Culture; Arlington Cultural District; the Arlington Chamber of Commerce; and the Complete Count Working Group.

The Department also represents the Town locally serving on the boards of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce and the Arlington Preservation Fund and regionally serving on the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Metropolitan Area Planning Council Executive Committee, Inner Core Committee, and MetroCommon External Advisory Committee, the Battle Road Scenic Byway Committee, the North Suburban HOME Consortium, and the Somerville/ Arlington Continuum of Care.

The Department reviewed and approved 20 sign permits; reviewed and provided memos to the Zoning Board of Appeals on 25 dockets; and reviewed and provided comments to the Select Board on 21 license applications. The Economic Development Coordinator assisted 108 businesses through office visits, site visits, merchants' meetings, and the Chamber of Commerce.

The Department would like to thank Jack Jones, Weatherization and ADA Coordinator, for his 44 years of service to the Town, as well as Mike DiNicola, Technical Resource Administrator, and Doreen Piacitelli, Principal Clerk, for their service to the Department and Town and congratulate them on their retirements. We also thank Julie Wayman, CDBG Administrator, for her work in the Department.

We welcomed Carl Forgo, Energy Efficiency Inspector, to DPCD this fall.

During 2019, DPCD staff worked with students at Boston University (BU), Northeastern University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Through BU's MetroBridge Program, we worked with undergraduate students in the Urban Politics and Policy and Urban Public Policy Lab to prioritize interventions for transportation safety based on data-driven analysis. Staff served as local experts for graduate students in Northeastern's Big Data for Cities course. And finally, graduate students in the MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning's Community Growth and Land Use Planning course to study the Broadway corridor and produce recommendations for improving mobility, housing and neighborhood character along the corridor.

2019 Highlights

Economic Development

DPCD worked with more than 100 individual entrepreneurs and merchant groups in the neighborhood business districts to address the issue of business district improvements. Top economic development priorities for the town are supporting and retaining existing and attracting new businesses, and planning initiatives that stimulate Arlington's local economy. Work continued to engage with property owners and potential developers to encourage mixed-use, residential, and commercial development along major corridors and in support of business districts.

Key achievements included kicking off Phase I of the Whittemore Park Revitalization Project, commencing implementation of the Arlington Heights Neighborhood Action Plan by convening an Implementation Committee, organizing a second season of pop-up beer garden hosted by Aeronaut Brewing Company in Whittemore Park, and coordinating two pop-up markets at Uncle Sam Plaza during the summer in collaboration with Boston Women's Market.

DPCD also secured a District Local Technical Assistance Grant from MAPC to assess the data collection strategies for the town's arts and culture sector. The Department updated the Economic Development page on the Town's website to include market data tailored to Arlington businesses via Local Intel and updated Arlington Business Guide. In collaborating with the Battle Road Scenic Byway committee, DPCD staff was key in the creation and management of a website for the Battle Road Scenic Byway, www.battleroadbyway.com.



Transportation Initiatives

DPCD worked on several key transportation initiatives in 2019, including helping implement a permanent bus lane on Mass Ave as a follow up to the bus rapid transit (BRT) pilot, continuing to oversee the dockless bike share program, developing a bicycle parking guide, and laying the groundwork for the development of a Sustainable Transportation Plan for the Town. DPCD has been involved in major transportation projects for Arlington, including a state-funded Safe Routes to School project for the Stratton Elementary area, the Arlington Center Sidewalk Project, and the Lake Street/Minuteman Bikeway signal project. DPCD also works closely with the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC), Parking Advisory Committee (PAC), and the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).



An MBTA bus uses the new Mass Ave priority bus lane between Lafayette Street and Boulevard Road. Photo credit: MBTA

Permanent Bus Lane on Mass Ave

Arlington was one of four municipalities in Greater Boston to receive \$100,000 in grant funding from the Barr Foundation to pilot elements of BRT along local bus transit routes. The pilot goals were to reduce travel time and increase reliability for MBTA buses, as well as improve traffic flow in the corridor. Working in cooperation with the City of Cambridge, the MBTA, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and other partners, bus priority features were installed along Mass Ave from Lake Street to Alewife Brook Parkway.

Data and rider experience surveys showed the fall 2018 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) pilot was a major success, improving travel times by 6-10 minutes and increasing reliability considerably. Considering this in-

formation, in February 2019 the Select Board approved the installation of a permanent bus lane on Mass Ave in East Arlington. Over the summer, DPCD worked with the Town Manager's Office, the Department of Public Works, the Arlington Police Department, and the MBTA to design the bus lane with pavement markings and signage. With funding assistance from the MBTA, the bus lane was installed in the fall and became operational on October 21. The bus lane operates in the parking lane on the eastbound section of Mass Ave between Varnum Street and Alewife Brook Parkway and serves MBTA routes #77, #79, and #350. It operates Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., and is designated by red lane pavement markings and new signage. The other elements of the fall 2018 BRT pilot that have remained in place to speed bus riders through this corridor include: relocation of the Mass Ave at Lake Street bus stop to the far side of the intersection; transit signal priority and a queue jump at the same intersection; and traffic signal and lane changes at the intersection of Mass Ave and Alewife Brook Parkway.

Town staff are monitoring the Mass Ave bus lane to ensure compliance with the new morning parking restrictions, efficient traffic operations, and the safety of all users. The Town continues to learn how to manage, operate, and maintain the many elements of the dedicated lane, which will be instructive for future bus priority improvements around the town. This is expected to be reviewed as part of the Sustainable Transportation Plan development in 2020.

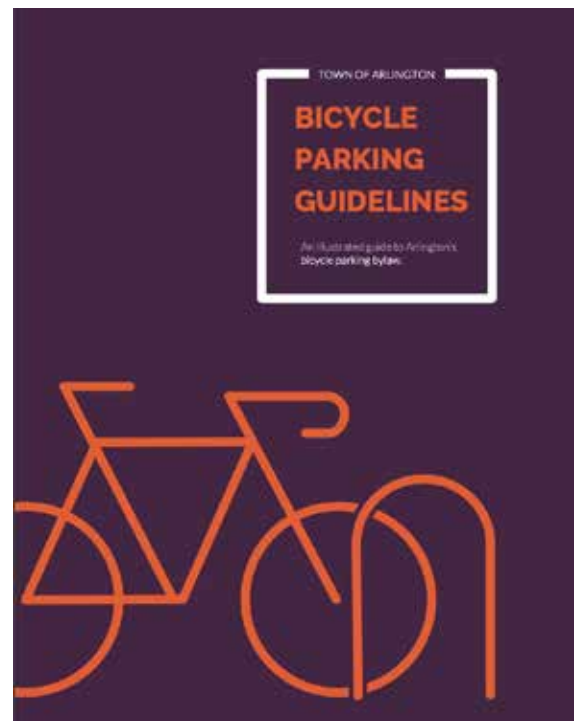
Bike Share

The dockless bike share program, a partnership with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and fourteen other municipalities, continued to be a success in 2019. After a brief hiatus in the winter, the LimeBike program returned in spring 2019 with a fleet fully converted to pedal-assist electric bicycles. Using data provided by Lime, MAPC analyzed over 300,000 LimeBike trips in the 15-community regional service area over 18 months, from April 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019. Over this period Arlington had the fourth-highest number of trips in the region, more than 21,400, and the third-highest number of trips per capita, with 233 trips per 1,000 people. 68 percent of trips that started in Arlington ended within the town, while 22 percent ended in Cambridge, and the rest in various other communities. The research also discovered that the Minuteman Bikeway is very popular with Lime bike riders, especially between Arlington Center and Alewife T station, which is the destination for approximately 10 percent of all trips that start in Arlington. Roadways with high bike share activity include Mass Ave, Lake Street, Pleasant Street, Broadway, and Mill Street, as well as several neighborhood streets in East Arlington such as Herbert Road and Thorndike Street.

Due to the experience of low ridership during the winter months from January 2019 through March 2019, Lime suspended winter operations in December and informed the region in early 2020 that it would not return. The Town is actively working on preparing for the next phase of bike share in Arlington, which has included discussions with Bluebikes and other potential bike share operators. The success of bike share is clear, and the Town continues to consider the long-term viability of a program for residents.

Bicycle Parking Guide

The 2019 Annual Town Meeting approved an amendment to the Arlington Zoning Bylaw to update the bicycle parking standards in section 6.1.12. Both short-term and long-term bicycle parking is to be provided for any development or change of use, and building expansions or conversions in the majority of cases. As a follow-up to this amendment, DPCD developed Arlington's first Bicycle Parking Guidelines to provide guidance on physical location and design of short- and long-term bicycle parking. The guidelines are part of a collection of resources created to provide clear and illustrated descriptions of Arlington's zoning bylaw requirements, as well as industry best practices. They are also intended to create a standard for bicycle parking installed in public spaces by the Department of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, or contractors selected through public projects and programs. DPCD plans to work with DPW and other departments over the next couple of years to begin increasing the capacity for bicycle parking in various locations around town, using these guidelines to ensure that bicycle parking is well-designed and at-



tractive.

Sustainable Transportation Plan

Funding to develop a Sustainable Transportation Plan was approved at 2019 Annual Town Meeting. DPCD is leading this effort, which intends to create a town-wide transportation plan with a 20-year vision that addresses and balances the needs of all transportation modes. It will emphasize transitioning everyday travel to environmentally-sustainable modes such as walking, bicycling, public transportation, rideshare, micro-mobility, and emerging low-carbon technologies, including electric automobiles. In summer 2019 the Select Board approved the creation of a Sustainable Transportation Plan Advisory Committee, which is made up of citizen representatives from transportation-related existing town committees, business owners and residents, local advocacy groups, and several key Town Departments.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was released in fall 2019 to seek professional services from experienced planning, transportation, and engineering firms to assist the Town with the development of the Sustainable Transportation Plan. Four proposals were received. After a thorough review of the proposals by two members of DPCD staff and two members of the Sustainable Transportation Plan Advisory Committee, including individually scoring the proposals and conducting consultant interviews, the proposal review team selected Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates to develop this Plan. Nelson\Nygaard is expected to hold a kick-off meeting with the Plan Advisory Committee in January. The entire project is expected to take 12 months to complete, with the final plan wrapping up towards the end of December 2020.

Public outreach and community buy-in are critical to the implementation of the Sustainable Transportation Plan. Engagement with a diverse and broadly representative segment of the population in a variety of means is expected as part of this plan development. Public outreach will begin in earnest in early 2020.

Safe Routes to School

The Town supports safe walking and bicycling for children to reach their schools to increase their daily physical activity; reduce traffic congestion around schools during drop-off and pick-up times; reduce environmental pollution from vehicle emissions; and promote traffic safety for all street users. DPCD works with the Transportation Advisory Committee and other Town departments to ensure that all schools have safe and accessible routes for children to walk and bicycle to school year-round.

DPCD worked with Stratton Elementary parents, Principal Michael Hanna, and key Town departments to apply for a Massachusetts Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Infrastructure Grant in January 2019. The Town learned in March 2019 that it was one of 14 communi-

ties in the state to be awarded grant funding for a SRTS infrastructure project. Working with Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) consultant AECOM, Town staff refined the scope of the project over summer 2019. The proposed project will provide a fully accessible walking route with safe roadway crossings for children and others walking to Stratton along Hemlock Street between Brattle Street and Dickson Avenue and Dickson Avenue between Hemlock Street and Pheasant Avenue. This will include new curb ramps, new sidewalks, sidewalk repairs, and pedestrian crossing improvements. The estimated project cost, of which the design and construction are fully funded through MassDOT, is \$993,289. The project was approved by MassDOT's Project Review Committee in August. MassDOT will start the project development process and further development of the design, along with public involvement, is expected for 2020.

Complete Streets

As part of Arlington's Complete Streets Action Plan, improvements have been designed for the intersection of Lake Street and the Minuteman Bikeway that will include the installation of a new traffic/pedestrian/bicycle signal at the intersection that would be coordinated with the signal at Brooks Avenue and Lake Street, which will be upgraded. There will also be signage and pavement marking changes, handicap access improvements, and vegetation maintenance as part of the project. The 2019 Annual Town Meeting approved \$750,000 in funding for this project. The project went out to bid for construction in fall of 2019 and a contract will be awarded in early 2020 with construction expected to occur in summer 2020, in between the end of the school year in June and the beginning of the next school year in September. The Minuteman Bikeway will remain open during construction so there is no disruption to the travel of Bikeway users.

Future Complete Streets projects include traffic calming and pedestrian accessibility improvements on Lowell Street near Reservoir Beach; improvements to the Medford Street Rotary; and pedestrian improvements on Park Avenue.

Boston MPO

Arlington is an active participant in the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). DPCD staff attends MPO meetings representing the Chair of the Select Board, Diane Mahon. The Boston MPO is responsible for conducting the federally required metropolitan transportation planning process for the Boston metropolitan area. The planning process is necessary to develop a vision for transportation in the region and to decide how to allocate federal and state transportation funds to transportation programs and projects that improve roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian in-

frastructure. In 2019 the MPO approved a new Long-Range Transportation Plan, *Destination 2040*, which establishes a vision for the region's transportation system and funds both capital investments and research studies to support that vision.

The Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) provides staff support to the MPO and conducts transportation studies and data collection for the Boston region. Arlington participated in one report in particular, "Transportation Access Studies of Central Business Districts", which sought to understand the modes of transportation customers use to access central business districts in the region. The results of the study for Arlington showed that merchants significantly overestimated the number of customers who drove to their stores, and underestimated the number of customers that walked or used other means to get to the business.

Arlington continues to be involved with the development of the plans and studies in the region, including the Transportation Improvement Program, the Unified Planning Work Program, and other projects.

Arlington Center Sidewalk Project

The Arlington Center Sidewalk Project is one component of ongoing improvements to the Mass Ave corridor. The Town began working with consulting firm VHB in summer 2019 to prepare a design for sidewalk improvements in the Center. The limits of the project are Mass Ave between Pleasant/Mystic Street and Franklin Street; Franklin Street from Mass Ave to just north of Broadway; and Broadway from Broadway Plaza to just beyond Franklin Street. Improvements include removing the brick sidewalks and replacing them with concrete sidewalks, upgrading curb ramps and improving ADA accessibility, and removing and replacing street trees. The project will begin in the spring of 2020 and will eventually involve reconstruction of Broadway Plaza, which is the location of a Massachusetts Water Resources Authority project scheduled for 2021.

Complete Count Working Group

In 2019 DPCD worked to establish the Complete Count Working Group (CCWG) to promote and encourage residents to respond to the 2020 Census. The CCWG began meeting in November to develop a campaign to raise community awareness of the census. Resident responses to the census will determine the level of federal funding allocated to the town for programs and services such as healthcare, education, housing assistance, transportation, and emergency services, and will also determine congressional and precinct district boundaries. Communications will focus on responding to questions residents have about the census and how the data is used, communicating the message that responding to the census is safe, confidential, easy, and important. The group is a cross section of



Town Departments and local community groups.

Clean Energy Future Committee

The Clean Energy Future Committee (CEFC) was created by the Select Board on July 16, 2018. The mission of the CEFC is to guide the Town of Arlington to a future where, by 2050, net emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions attributable to all sources in Town are zero.

The Committee is charged with identifying short and long-term energy goals; facilitating research studies, projects and collaborations; enlisting the support of residents and businesses; recommending changes to laws and regulations; seeking state and local funding; and taking any other actions necessary for Arlington to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The Committee includes three members of the Department of Planning and Community Development: the Energy and Project Manager, Environmental Planner and Conservation Agent, and Senior Transportation Planner. There are currently 10 other members. The Committee met 10 times in 2019.



CEFC members (L to R) Dan Amstutz, Coralie Cooper, Emily Sullivan, Ryan Katofsky, Adam Chapdelaine, Ken Pruitt, Dave Levy, Marc Breslow and Shelly Dein. Not shown: Dan Dunn, Jim DiTullio, Pasi Miettinen and Nellie Aikenhead. Photo Jenny Raitt

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Net Zero Planning

In 2018 the Select Board voted to commit Arlington to becoming carbon neutral by 2050 (net zero emissions of greenhouse gases from all sources). Following on this vote, Arlington and three municipalities began working with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council after receiving a Planning Assistance Grant from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to develop net zero plans for each community. The Net Zero Plan for Arlington will be completed by December, 2020. The following progress was made on the Net Zero Plan:

- The Town heard from a variety of experts on topics including sustainable mobility, electric vehicles, reducing greenhouse gas emissions from buildings, and the role of street trees in absorbing carbon and cooling neighborhoods;
- Clean Energy Future Committee members participated in formal greenhouse gas inventory training and began work on Arlington's greenhouse gas inventory;
- The Committee held meetings to review and discuss potential building-related greenhouse gas mitigation measures to include in the Net Zero Plan; and
- The Committee conducted Net Zero public outreach, including at the Department of Planning and Community Development's table at Arlington's Town Day.



Environmental Planning

Climate Adaptation and Resiliency

In 2017 the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Core Group was formed to coordinate a community resilience planning process to address the local impacts of climate change. This initiative is the result of a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning Grant, which was awarded to Arlington by the State's Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

Through the MVP planning process, Arlington identified chronic flooding along Mill Brook and extreme heat in tree-deficit areas (like East Arlington and along Mass Ave) as the community's most pressing vulnerabilities and prioritized actions to reduce vulnerability.

In 2018 Arlington received an MVP action grant to increase flood storage capacity in Wellington Park, along Mill Brook, to address flooding along the Mill Brook Corridor. This increased flood storage, which was constructed in Spring 2019, has a capacity of approximately 70 cubic yards. Project construction in Wellington Park included building the flood storage channel, removing invasive plant species, building a boardwalk, installing a porous asphalt pathway, and installing educational signage. In 2020 Arlington and the Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) will lead a design effort for the last phase of the Wellington Park project, which aims to improve the recreational amenities of the park. The project was spotlighted as an example of a local strategic investment to create safer, more resilient communities by the Director of DPCD in her testimony delivered to the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development in March 2019.



The flood storage area slows floodwaters downstream of Wellington Park. Photo Arlington Conservation Commission.

Regional Resilience Collaborations

Arlington is a member of three regional resilience collaborations: the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) Metro Mayors Coalition; Resilient Mystic Collaborative facilitated by MyRWA; and the Charles River Climate Compact facilitated by the Charles River Watershed Association. As a member of these three collaborations, Arlington has committed to climate adaptation and resilience building actions and goals. These actions and goals focus on building capacity for stormwater management, renewable energy, urban heat island mitigation, floodwater retention, public engagement around resilience building, and inter-municipal project and policy alignment. Many of the climate change vulnerabilities that Arlington suffers from are impacting the Town's neighboring communities as well. These regional collaborations strengthen Arlington's resilience through knowledge-sharing and regional projects that more efficiently leverage funding and technical opportunities.

These regional collaborations are particularly effective forums for Arlington to share its stormwater management successes and learn new stormwater best practices. Arlington is the chair community for the Resilient Mystic Collaborative's Upper Mystic Stormwater Working Group. Through its participation in this working group, Arlington and other Mystic Watershed communities received a regional MVP grant to identify locations for large-scale green infrastructure in the watershed.

Hazard Mitigation Plan Revision

Arlington's Hazard Mitigation Plan was adopted in 2012. Per Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements, hazard mitigation plans need to be updated every five years in order to remain eligible for federal disaster mitigation and recovery funding. In 2018 Arlington received funding from Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to update the Town plan. Over 2019 Arlington and MAPC updated the plan through public engagement and technical analysis. The goals established through the MVP planning process and regional resilience collaborations, as well as the Open Space & Recreation Plan and Master Plan, have been integrated into the updated hazard mitigation plan. Although still in draft form, the plan will be adopted by the Town in 2020 after public comment and review.

Stormwater Management

In close coordination with the Engineering Division, DPCD works to improve stormwater compliance. Massachusetts recently revised its stormwater permitting, creating more stringent regulations for nonpoint-source pollution transported through municipal stormwater systems. In 2019 DPCD worked with the Engineering Division to educate residents and businesses on the importance of proactive stormwater management as a strategy for pollution reduction, environmental resource

protection, and floodwater mitigation.

In 2019 Arlington received a Coastal Pollutant Remediation Grant from the Office of Coastal Zone Management to install stormwater infrastructure in East Arlington. This grant was awarded with the partnership of MyRWA. The grant will fund the construction of two rain gardens and 20 infiltration trenches in East Arlington. The rain gardens and trenches will reduce the amount of pollutants entering Alewife Brook and the Mystic River, improving compliance with the state stormwater permit. The rain gardens and infiltration trenches will be constructed in 2020.



A rain garden in East Arlington is vegetated with native plants. Rain gardens slow down stormwater runoff and remove pollutants before the stormwater enters the municipal stormwater system and travels to a water body, like Alewife Brook. Photo Patrick Herron, MyRWA.

Housing Initiatives

The Town of Arlington continued its strong support of affordable housing during 2019. The Housing Plan Implementation Committee (HPIC) continues its work to implement the goals of the Housing Production Plan and is currently considering establishing a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund MGL c.44 s.55C to help advance initiatives to create and preserve affordable housing.

DPCD began work on a Fair Housing Action Plan with assistance from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). The Fair Housing Action Plan will include an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI), as currently required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It will also incorporate some elements of an Assessment of Fair Housing, as previously required under the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Final Rule, to more deeply understand the Town's fair housing issues and to proactively identify strategies to address them. The plan will identify and prioritize contributing factors to fair housing barriers and will set fair housing goals and priorities to address these contributing factors. Engagement with stakeholders will begin in early 2020.

DPCD, in coordination with the North Suburban

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Consortium and the seven other communities that are a part of the consortium, began work on the Consolidated Plan. The Consolidated Plan creates a 5-year strategic plan for spending CDBG and HOME funds on affordable housing and community development activities. Once submitted to HUD, the Consolidated Plan will be in effect for five years, starting in July 2020 and expiring in June 2025.

Lastly, DPCD participated in the discussions around the merger of the Somerville/ Arlington Continuum of Care (CoC) and the Balance of State CoC through active participation in this committee. A CoC promotes a commitment to the goal of ending homelessness, provides funding for these efforts by nonprofit providers and local governments to rehouse homeless individuals and families, promotes access to mainstream programs, and promotes self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Merging with the Balance of State CoC will enable providers in these two communities to access resources in a larger region and refer clients to a wider range of services in Massachusetts.

Additionally, multiple developments that include affordable housing units, moved forward:

- 20 Westminster Avenue. HCA continued the renovation of this former church into nine units of affordable housing. It is anticipated that the building will be tenanted in early 2020.
- Downing Square. HCA secured all of the funding necessary to develop 34 units of affordable housing through the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development with the support of DPCD.
- 117 Broadway. HCA secured all of the funding necessary to develop 14 units of affordable housing through the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development with the support of DPCD.
- 483 Summer Street. Construction of a new mixed-use building at 483 Summer Street

continued, which will include one unit of affordable housing to be offered through a lottery.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

This past year, the program supported seven public service agencies to assist lower-income individuals and families with daily transportation, access to jobs, access to healthy foods, scholarships to athletic and summer camp programs, and access to mental health services and adult day health services; with CDBG, the social service agencies reached 1,126 people.

The program also supported the Department of Public Works with installation of ADA-compliant ramps to make streets and sidewalks more accessible. The Recreation Department was supported with funding committed for the Wellington Park Mill Brook Revitalization Project and the design phase of the North Union Street Lussiano Playground reconstruction. Food Link, Inc. was supported with funding site work at their new facility on Summer Street. The Housing Corporation of Arlington made capital improvements to existing properties in their portfolio, and will utilize funding to install solar panels at their Capital Square Apartments to help reduce energy costs.

Menotomy Weatherization Assistance Program

The Weatherization Program provides weatherization, heating system, and appliance management assistance to the towns of Arlington, Belmont, Lexington, Watertown and the cities of Cambridge, Somerville, and Waltham. In 2019 the program replaced 72 heating systems, weatherized 15 homes, and audited appliances at 38 homes. The appliance management program subsequently installed 29 refrigerators, 17 air conditioners and seven washing machines. The program receives public utility, state, and federal funds and continues to be recognized by the state as providing high quality energy conservation services for eligible households.



Town and state official gather for Community Development Week on the Council on Aging van. Photo Julie Wayman.

Master Plan Implementation Committee

Zoning Bylaw Working Group

The Zoning Bylaw Working Group is reviewing and proposing zoning amendments as identified through the Master Plan and the recodification processes. During 2019 the Zoning Bylaw Working Group oversaw the preparation of amendments to Arlington's sign regulations in consultation with Lisa Wise Consulting, which were ultimately adopted by Town Meeting. The new sign regulations are clear, well-organized, straightforward to understand and administer, consistent with state and federal law, and representative of best practices. Work also began on the Economic Analysis of the Industrial Zoning Districts, a project contemplated in the Master Plan to modernize the industrial zoning districts. RKG Associates is working with the Zoning Bylaw Working Group on this project and, to date, existing conditions, market analysis, and fiscal impact study have been reviewed. The next steps are to look at scenarios that might inform future bylaw and policy amendments.

Historic and Cultural Resources Working Group

The Historic and Cultural Resources Working Group (HCRWG) includes representatives from the Town's Historic Districts Commission and Historical Commission, the Arlington Historical Society, and DPCD. The group is currently involved in a three-phase, historic preservation project; work is funded by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and CPA. In 2019 the HCRWG released a [Community-Wide Historic Preservation Survey Master Plan](#), which was prepared by consultants Wendy Frontiero and Kathleen Boomer. The Master Plan guides the Town's historic preservation efforts by identifying and prioritizing outstanding needs regarding the inventory and documentation of Arlington's local historic resources. The plan identifies Arlington's local historic resources, including historic buildings and places, cultural and archaeological elements, and other significant objects and structures, for inventory with the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The plan provides an overview of the Town's historic development and existing inventory of historic resources, and offers recommendations for neighborhood areas and individual properties that merit study from a preservation planning perspective.

Although the Survey Master Plan offers these recommendations, it also recommends that resolving record discrepancies and clarifying the inventory process be prioritized over the documentation of additional privately-owned properties, which will be a focus of the DPCD and the HCRWG in the future.

Residential Study Group

The Residential Study Group (RSG) worked on addressing neighborhood concerns about new residential development in existing residential neighborhoods. DPCD worked with the group on the [report on Demolitions and Replacement Homes](#).

The Department presented the report to the Select Board. The report includes baseline data and trends related to replacement homes in Arlington, describes the current regulatory framework, spotlights best practices, and makes recommendations. The Board unanimously accepted the report and recommendations, including establishing Design Guidelines. Town Meeting appropriated funds to develop the guidelines. The Town formed a Design Review Working Group to advise on the development of design guidelines for lower-density residential districts (R0, R1, and R2) and a companion design review process for the Town.

Additionally, the 2019 Annual Town Meeting adopted two amendments proposed by the Residential Study Group. The first was an amendment to the Zoning Bylaw, which brought Arlington's Zoning Bylaw definition of half-story in conformance with State Building Code. This change may result in a decrease in building height when building additions are proposed or new construction is proposed for single-family and two-family dwelling units. The second was an amendment to the Town Bylaw building off of the adoption of the 2017 Residential Construction Notification Agreement, also known as the Good Neighbor Agreement. The purpose of the Good Neighbor Agreement is to promote communication between a property owner (either a homeowner or a contractor) and the surrounding neighbors. When the Good Neighbor Agreement was put into place, the triggers included demolition, large additions, and a few other site preparation thresholds. However, in some cases, a lot is clear cut prior to the start of construction and is done without the knowledge of neighbors. Inclusion of tree removal, in particular trees that are subject to the jurisdiction of the Tree Protection and Preservation Bylaw, would ensure that the Good Neighbor Agreement includes the totality of work proposed on a project site. This adoption of this amendment promotes the express purpose of the Good Neighbor Agreement: clear communication.

Mill Brook Working Group

The Mill Brook Working Group (MBWG) was formed to increase awareness and guide change along the Mill Brook. The MBWG completed an update to the 2010 Mill Brook Linear Park Report in 2019. The [updated Mill Brook Corridor Report](#) supplements the information in the 2010 report and

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examines new opportunities to support the vision for the corridor as an ecological and cultural resource for the community. The report describes planning studies and physical improvements that have taken place since 2010, and identifies specific ongoing, near-term, mid-term, and long-range actions that can be taken to link public open spaces with the parallel routes of the Minuteman Bikeway, Mass Ave, and Summer Street. The report will help the Town target initiatives that prioritize and improve Mill Brook by identifying actions that can be taken in multiple areas: environment and ecosystem management, flood control, recreation, economic development, transportation, historical context, and placemaking. The report also offers simple suggestions on what property owners can do to improve the Mill Brook.



Mill Brook Corridor Report

The OSC participated in the Mill Brook Corridor Report update, facilitated by the Mill Brook Study Group.

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The goal of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) is to enhance 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 (APD) Traffic Division, the Department of Public Works (DPW), and the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), along with Arlington Schools and the Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee.

The TAC was established in 2001 by the Select Board, which serves as the Traffic Authority for Arlington, to advise the Board on transportation matters.

2019 Major activities

Crosswalk Guidelines: As a result of several requests for new crosswalks, TAC instituted a review of its crosswalk guidelines originally adopted in 2003. The existing guidelines did not provide sufficiently specific criteria to help with the evaluation of the several requests for new crosswalks. TAC adopted the revised Crosswalk Guidelines early in 2019.

Arlington High School Traffic Review: A TAC working group continued coordination with the AHS Building Committee regarding transportation at the new high school. The working group met with the committee and the architects in March 2019, to discuss the site plan, and the flow of vehicles, bicycles and people around the site.

Stop Signs on Hayes at Maynard/Mystic Lake: Neighborhood residents raised concerns about the lack of intersection control on Hayes St. at Mystic Lake Dr. and Maynard St., and about speeding and excessive rush hour traffic on Hayes St. TAC noted that STOP signs could not be installed on Hayes St., as requested by neighbors, based on Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) guidance. Traffic volume and crash data collected by town staff was too low to meet MUTCD warrants for traffic control at the intersections but severely constrained sight distance warranted STOP on the approaches to Hayes St. from Mystic Lake Dr. and Maynard St. The signs have been installed by DPW.

Traffic Calming on Kensington Park: TAC was asked to consider traffic calming measures for Kensington Park. Based on traffic counts that showed relatively low traffic volumes and speeds, the TAC voted unanimously to recommend no action.

Chestnut Street at Chestnut Terrace: At the request of residents of Chestnut Terrace, TAC agreed that APD should write a regulatory note to install MUTCD signage to direct drivers "Do Not Block Intersection".

Speed Safety Zone on Herbert at Magnolia Park: TAC recommended a 20-mph speed safety zone on Herbert Rd. at Magnolia Park that has been installed by the DPW.

Parking and Traffic Direction on Bartlett Avenue: Based on complaints about inadequate space for vehicles to pass each other on Bartlett Ave., TAC evaluated parking restrictions or one-way operation on Bartlett Avenue. A TAC working group developed some concepts to restrict parking in certain locations to provide more room for passing vehicle. The working group will share the options with Bartlett St. residents to obtain feedback for TAC.

Crosswalk on Grove Street: The TAC was asked to consider a crosswalk on Grove St. in the vicinity of Wellington Park to provide a safe crossing for high school students and park users. TAC conducted pedestrian counts at peak high school arrival and departure times. The total volume of pedestrians appeared to meet volume guidelines for installation of a crosswalk, however, those volumes were scattered along a section of roadway and not in one location. Since DPW is planning to redevelop its property on Grove St., TAC will wait to finish its evaluation when DPW plans for its property are more formalized.

Wellesley Road One-Way: Residents of Welles-

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ley Rd. requested TAC to review making it one-way away from the Thompson School. In the mornings, cars use Wellesley Road to get to the school and there is a high volume of pedestrian activity but there are no sidewalks. TAC considered short-term measures, including improving pedestrian access along River Street with crosswalks and stop bars on intersecting streets, installing edge lines to narrow the space for vehicular travel, and adding a sidewalk on Wellesley Road. The TAC working group will conduct outreach to residents to get their feedback on the various options.

Crosswalk on Summer Street at Victoria Road/ Buzzell Field: Based on concerns about the visibility of the crosswalk on Summer St. at Victoria Rd./ Buzzell Field, the TAC undertook a review of the situation. The TAC recommended removing two parking spaces on the Summer St. eastbound approach and one space on the westbound approach to improve visibility. The Select Board approved the parking restrictions which were made by the DPW. It was noted that there was also interest in moving the crosswalk to the west side of the intersection but no action was taking on this as the Town plans major improvements on Summer St. in a few years and the move could be considered then.

Crosswalk Flag Program: Based on previously adopted Pedestrian Flag Program Guidelines, TAC approved requests for placing pedestrian flags at three locations: Mass Ave. at Wyman St., Mass Ave at Water St., and Bates Rd. at Raleigh St. (not yet installed).

Appleton Street at Park Ave: The Select Board asked TAC to evaluate Appleton Street for safety and traffic operations, including the intersection of Appleton St. and Park Ave. TAC analyzed traffic volumes and crash data for the intersection and determined the intersection met MUTCD signal warrants. TAC also conducted additional counts along Park Ave. to determine if a signal at Appleton St. can operate effectively in conjunction with the existing signals at Mass Ave. and Florence Ave. TAC's review of this intersection is ongoing.

Apothca Marijuana Dispensary: The Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) asked TAC to review the Transportation Impact Statement provided by Apothca's engineer. The TAC review was prepared by the Executive Committee and noted some discrepancies between various numbers presented in the report and suggested potentially better sources for traffic and parking generation, including information from existing marijuana dispensaries in Massachusetts. The review stressed the need for developing opening period and long-term traffic management plans in consultation with the APD.

BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC) has continued to work on making Arlington a better place to bicycle within and through. The following de-

scribes ongoing and annual activities:



People bicycle across the intersection of the Minuteman Bikeway and Mill Street. Photo Phil Goff.

2019 Highlights

This was a big year for data collection on the Minuteman Bikeway. ABAC and the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) organized the annual Bikeway counts at Swan Place in May and September to gather data on the volumes of different types of Bikeway users. The count on Saturday, May 18, logged 4,865 trips over 12 hours on the Bikeway, more than any other previous manual count.

Additionally, DPCD worked with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) to install a permanent automatic bicycle and pedestrian counter on the Bikeway near Swan Place. MassDOT funded the counter and the installation as part of their MassTrails Bicycle/Pedestrian Counts Pilot Program. From July through October, the counter recorded over 320,000 trips on the Bikeway. The September manual counts were used to validate the counts of the automatic counter and help the Town to understand how to interpret the data produced by the counter. Next year ABAC is planning to explore counting in other locations to get a better overall picture of numbers of cyclists and Rail Trail users throughout the town. These recent data clearly indicate that the Bikeway is continues to be extremely popular and is a critical local and regional transportation artery, as well as a major recreational destination.

The Winter Social was a success with 50 people in attendance. This year's presentation was given by Scott Mullen of Lime. Scott discussed micro mobility and the issues of "last mile" connections for commuters.

ABAC continued interactions and meetings with the bicycle advisory groups in Lexington and Bedford to discuss common issues, such as unified wayfinding signage and courtesy and safety on the Minuteman Bikeway. Discussions have been held with the two other towns and within ABAC and other groups within Arlington as to how to improve safety via information dissemination, signage and posting an advisory speed limit.

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Members of ABAC worked with the DPCD and DPW to introduce warning signs and pavement markings on the Bikeway at the intersection of the heavily used crossing between the Hurd Field parking lot and stairway at Trader Joe's. This has been the location of a past bike on pedestrian collision and is heavy used by Bikeway users as well as an access point to the stores by occupants of Drake Village.

Arlington's COBWEB (Cops on Bicycles with Education for Bicyclists) continues to attend our meetings.

Committee members participated in Town Day, distributing 60 youth helmets generously supplied by the law firm of Breakstone, White & Gluck PC, sold Minuteman Bikeway 25th anniversary t-shirts to raise funds for future bikeway efforts, and spoke with many residents about bikeshare, local bicycling rules and regulations, and the importance of safety and visibility regarding sharing the road with other transportation modes.

ABAC has been involved with the planning of the transportation issues around the new High School rebuilding plans and as part of the newly formed Sustainable Transportation Plan Advisory Committee.

In May, ABAC conducted its first overall strategy meeting developing a list of action areas that were built around the League of American Cyclists' six Es: engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, evaluation and equity.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Arlington Conservation Commission (ACC) is required by state and town laws to protect and preserve wetlands, waterways, and their surrounding areas. ACC is comprised of seven volunteer Commissioners and two volunteer Associate Commissioners, who are appointed by the Town Manager with the approval of the Select Board, and supported by the full-time professional Environmental Planner & Conservation Agent at bimonthly meetings and onsite visits. ACC is mandated to protect wetlands, waterways, water supplies, fisheries, wildlife, and wildlife habitat as well as regulate floodplain activities through its administration of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Arlington Bylaw for Wetlands Protection.

In 2019 ACC held 24 public meetings, and provided coordination, monitoring, permit review, and consultation on numerous residential, commercial, and municipal projects around Town. ACC reviewed 32 applications. Of the 32 applications, the Commission issued 14 Permits/Orders of Conditions, 10 Determinations of Applicability, and eight Certificates of Compliance. ACC and its Agent conducted over 45 site visits/inspections.

ACC also protects and manages the Town's Conservation Lands and natural resources through collaboration with other entities and grants from various



Deb Berger, DCR; Susan Chapnick, ACC; Cathy Kiley, MassDEP; Emily Sullivan, ACC; Bill Copithorne, Arlington DPW with installed signage at the Mystic Riverfront Restoration Project, November 2019. Photo Arlington Conservation Commission.

sources, as described below.

Mystic Riverfront Restoration Project

Completed in 2019, this project created a native riverbank (riparian) habitat and improved stormwater infrastructure, ultimately improving stormwater quality that enters the Mystic River. The project is located along the Mystic River at the end of Park Street in the area that was directly impacted by oil released from a tanker truck that overturned nearby on Route 60 in May 2013. In the Spring of 2019, ACC organized a community planting event with the local 3rd grade classes of the Thompson Elementary School. The project was funded by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) through a \$47,325 grant under the Natural Resource Damages Assessment and Restoration Program.

Spy Pond Shoreline Protection Project

The goals of this project include preserve, stabilize, and strengthen the pond's banks to control erosion; protect and enhance wildlife habitat; prevent unauthorized paths; broaden and strengthen constituency groups; improve water quality and recreational opportunities; and improve stormwater infiltration. Construction elements of this project include a new porous pathway through the park, a new timber overlook, a rain garden/vegetated detention basin, and native plantings along the pond banks. The project will promote educational opportunities for shoreline protection along Spy Pond and provide maintenance recommendations. Various funding sources are funding this project, including a Community Preservation Act grant (\$552,900), a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmen-

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tal Affairs (\$40,040), a Community Development Block grant (\$94,000), a Mass Audubon's Judy Record Fund grant (\$10,000), and a donation from the Friends of Spy Pond Park (\$5,000). The project will be completed in early 2020.

In addition to its Spy Pond Shoreline Protection Project, ACC has also worked closely with the Spy Pond Committee to ensure the health and well-being of Spy Pond and with the MassDOT to permit dredging the Spy Pond sand bar. ACC is generally working towards reducing chemical usage to control invasive plants in these prized environmental resource and recreational areas.



The Spy Pond Project included resurfacing the pathway with an ADA accessible porous pavement.

Water Bodies Oversight

ACC, through its Water Bodies Working Group, continued investigation of the iron flocculation at the McClennen Park Detention Ponds to improve the site's aesthetic, recreational, and wildlife values and functions. These stormwater detention ponds were created during the capping/closure of the landfill in this area, formerly called "Arlington Summer Street Landfill," which was officially closed in 2006 with no further monitoring required. Technical contractor Woods Hole Group (WHG) submitted a memorandum report in 2019 about the evaluation, based on site visits and sampling and analysis of surface water and sediment. WHG concluded that the observed iron flocculation at Reeds Brook does not constitute a condition of "readily apparent harm" (MassDEP terminology) to the environment of the wetland resource area. However, some sediment data exceeded MassDEP sediment screening level benchmarks for arsenic, lead, and zinc and several surface water samples exceeded the NRWQC (National Recommended Water Quality Criteria) for iron. WHG did not identify the exact sources of the contamination, which could be due to stormwater (drainage systems/outfalls feed into the detention ponds), the upstream wetland area, and/or the former capped landfill (which was unlined). ACC does not have groundwater data.

Based on the findings, ACC concludes that there is no readily apparent harm to the resource area. However, given the findings of several metal concentrations that exceed screening levels, ACC is being transparent and reporting these findings to the MassDEP Office of Solid Waste. ACC has requested guidance or recommendations on further actions the Town might take, if any, given these findings.

Conservation Land Stewards



Iron Flocculation at McClennen Detention Ponds / Reeds Brook outfall in Spring 2018. Photo Susan Chapnick.

ACC's citizen-volunteer organization, Arlington Land Stewards (ALS), assists in managing 28 Town-owned conservation lands comprising approximately 53 acres. Land Stewards monitor, coordinate, and maintain conservation land of their choice, with guidance from ACC. Additional outreach was conducted this year to increase stewardship and identify opportunities for clean-up events, including the Earth Day Clean-Up at Hills Hill, with 35 local volunteers. The Land Stewards also hosted an invasive plant species management training for residents interested in learning more about invasive species.

Arlington Reservoir Master Plan

The Reservoir Master Plan was completed in 2018 and the capital improvement projects identified therein were initiated in 2018. The goal of the Master Plan was to assess all aspects of the Reservoir, considering terrestrial and aquatic issues from both environmental and recreational perspectives. Led by the Park and Recreation Commission, DPCD, ACC, and the Reservoir Committee provided input. Phase 1 construction of this master plan began in Fall 2019, and includes a new water treatment and pump system for the bathing beach. Future phases will address some of the broader environmental issues as well as trail system work. Also planned for 2020 is a pilot accessible path improvement near LexFarm.

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Arlington Great Meadows

Arlington's Great Meadows (AGM) are comprised of 193 acres, making it Arlington's largest open space parcel, although located in East Lexington. AGM is mostly wetlands, but contain many upland trails that make connections to the Arlington Reservoir and the Whipple Hill conservation area through the ACROSS Trail System. The Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows (FoAGM) are active in increasing Arlington's awareness of this wonderful area. In 2019 FoAGM organized multiple walks at AGM and distributed information at Town Day.

FoAGM volunteers maintain the trails and boardwalks at the Meadows. This includes removing invasive plants, consisting primarily of Japanese Knotweed, along the Minuteman Bikeway. More information on FoAGM can be found at: www.FoAGM.org.

A current concern is the redevelopment of the former nursing site off Emerson Garden Road that will affect a popular access point. Officials in Arlington and Lexington are committed to maintaining public access at this location.



Former Commission Chair, Nathaniel Stevens, with new Chair, Susan Chapnick. Photo Mike Gildesgame, Arlington Conservation Commission.

Goals and Beyond

ACC will continue to encourage, support, and assist the various volunteer and environmental advocacy groups that are dedicated to preserving the Town's valued conservation lands and other open spaces. These groups include, among others: Arlington Land Stewards, Arlington Land Trust, Open Space Committee, Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows, Friends of Spy Pond Park, Friends of Menotomy Rock Park, and the Mystic River Watershed Association. Additional specific goals include the following:

1. Host additional collaborative community clean-up and educational events
2. Strengthen and update regulations for

performance standards, permitting efficiency, and process clarity

3. Improve the stewardship of conservation lands and other town open spaces
4. Improve communication and educational outreach to residents in resource areas

Acknowledgments

ACC sincerely thanks all individuals and organizations that contributed directly or indirectly to the activities of its 54th year. Many special thanks go to the active citizenry that attended hearings and informed the Commission's discussions and the scores of volunteers who came out for clean-up projects, assisted as land stewards, or participated in the many Friends groups that work to preserve the Town's natural resources and conservation lands. ACC would like to thank Nathaniel Stevens, who served as the Conservation Commission Chair from 2001-2019, for his superb leadership and tremendous commitment to Arlington's conservation efforts. ACC would like to welcome Susan Chapnick as the new Commission Chair and Chuck Tirone as the new Commission Vice Chair.

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Arlington's Open Space Committee (OSC) was established by Town Meeting in 1996. Members, appointed by the Town Manager and approved by the Select Board, include concerned citizens and representatives of key Town departments and commissions. The Committee meets monthly to exchange ideas and discuss ways to protect, maintain, and promote the Town's open spaces and recreational resources. The Committee serves an oversight function but does not have direct management responsibility for Town properties. It seeks to enhance communication and coordination among those entities that do have ownership and management authority. In addition, the OSC works to raise broad-based community concerns and to advocate for the protection, stewardship, and appropriate uses of the Town's open spaces.

The Committee's primary responsibility is to prepare the Town's official Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP), monitor its provisions and goals, and document accomplishments. The current Plan covering the years 2015 to 2022 was prepared and approved as required by the state and adopted as Town policy in the fall of 2015. Printed copies of the complete Plan and Appendices are available at the Robbins and Fox libraries, Department of Planning and Community Development, Select Board's and Town Manager's offices, and other Town departments, and the Plan is posted on the Committee's website.

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An example of one of the Take A Walk Maps.

Take A Walk Maps

OSC's website features several other ongoing initiatives. "Take A Walk" is a digital map-based project to encourage residents to get outside and walk to Arlington's diverse parks and recreational facilities. Committee members worked closely with Arlington's GIS director to identify safe and interesting walking routes that connect open spaces and other significant sites all around Arlington. The website hosts a town-wide map showing all seven interconnecting routes, as well as neighborhood maps for East Arlington North and South, Arlington Center North, South and Central, and Arlington Heights North and South.

The Take A Walk maps can be used with Experiencing Arlington's Open Spaces, an interactive application highlighting 19 major open space sites that are featured in the Open Space and Recreation Plan. For each site there are multiple photographs and a brief description of the property, as well as a map showing access points and internal walking trails.

Arlington Picture Posts

Arlington Picture Posts is an initiative developed by OSC member John Pickle to encourage residents with digital cameras and smart phones to take documentary photos at designated locations at Menotomy Rocks Park and the Reservoir, with other sites, such as Robbins Farm Park, to be added in 2020. This Picture Post initiative is linked to a national database that archives photos documenting the same locations over time so the visual data can be analyzed for future scientific, maintenance, and planning purposes.

Community Education

Committee members also continued to monitor and contribute to a wide range of open space projects and activities that affect the Town and its residents' quality of life. As part of its community education goals,

OSC participates in Town Day each September. In 2019 several members also made presentations about the Committee's work at a What's Up Arlington event at the Fox Library and at the state-wide Open Space Conference held at Mt. Wachusett Community College.

Thorndike Place Development Proposal

An ongoing open space concern is the proposed development of the Mugar property in East Arlington under the state's Chapter 40B provision for housing development. Protection of this sensitive wetland has been a goal of the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan since the 1990s. OSC has joined many Town officials, the Arlington Land Trust, and other local groups to advocate for conservation of the Mugar land rather than development due to potential flooding and related ecological impacts on the neighborhood.

Mill Brook Corridor

The Committee's previous work on researching and raising awareness about Mill Brook and the possibility of enhancing that natural resource corridor was adopted as a priority in the Town's 2015 Master Plan. OSC members continue to be involved with the Mill Brook Corridor Study Group, part of the Master Plan Implementation Committee, and with the Mystic River Watershed Association, which has received CPA and CDBG grants to design and construct improvements at Wellington Park and adjacent sections of the brook between Grove and Brattle Streets. The Town also received nearly \$400,000 for flood management and environmental restoration for a related project at Wellington Park through the state's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program.

The Committee is monitoring the many goals and objectives outlined in the 2015-2022 Open Space and Recreation Plan and has established a process for documenting accomplishments in preparation for the next revision of the Plan in 2022. Members are continuing to enhance use of the Town website to disseminate Take A Walk maps and other information about local open spaces and recreational facilities. Members also continue their collaborations with both Town departments and community organizations to ensure that open space and recreation recommendations are fully incorporated into all future town-wide planning.

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ENVISION ARLINGTON

About Envision Arlington

Envision Arlington, established by Town Meeting in June 1992, is a collection of committees and task groups that brings together residents, Town employees and Town leaders to foster an engaged, culturally diverse, and civically active community. The Standing Committee is charged to “create, implement, monitor, and review methods for town-wide participation in the Envision Arlington process.”

Envision Arlington’s focus is on the Town Goals, enacted by Town Meeting in 1993, as statements of Arlington’s values and aspirations. Task groups and committees are organized around specific Town Goals. A modest budget allows Envision Arlington to sponsor public events and develop community programs. Descriptions of Envision Arlington’s task groups and committees can be found at arlingtonma.gov/envision.



2019 Highlights

Envision Arlington presented 1 article at the 2019 Annual Town Meeting. Article 67 appropriated \$50,000 to the Town’s Water Body Fund for the maintenance, treatment, and oversight of the Town’s water bodies.

Several meetings were held to organize a new task group focused on the Town’s Governance value statement. See below for details.

The Envision Arlington Standing Committee and its committees and task groups hosted a booth at Town Day to engage residents around key town issues of sustainability, housing, governance, and sediment, flora and fauna at Arlington’s water bodies.

Task Group Highlights

Diversity Task Group: The Diversity Task Group (DTG) meets monthly to engage residents on issues that affect the voice and experience of the traditionally marginalized within Arlington. The Diversity Task Group seeks to create a space to welcome and include marginalized voices and offer support between residents and Town leadership. DTG endeavors to build the broadest meaning of the words “community involvement” by taking action on issues that affect the community and offering support and education through projects. DTG creates sub-committees as a way to move these values forward and does so in partnership with many residents, organizations, and government entities.

Throughout the year DTG invites organizations and residents that run town-wide operations with educational, social, cultural, and economic impact to share their stories with task group members. Guests in 2019 included: Todd Morse, Director of Afterschool; Jane Lynch, Visions Consultant; Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager; and Julie Flaherty, Acting Chief of Police.

DTG participated in several events including Arlington Reads, for which DTG is the founder and lead contributor; APS Annual Coffee Hour; and supporting the advocacy work of the Human Rights Commission in the Reclaiming Magnolia Park after hate graffiti was found after the Christchurch bombing, the vigils at Town Hall after the fires at the Chabad home.



Envision Arlington booth at Town Day. Photo Juli Brazile, Envision Arlington Standing Committee Chair.

Annual Town Survey

Envision Arlington volunteers work with Town departments and organizations to create an annual survey of the priorities and opinions of people in Arlington. Results of the survey are provided to Town Meeting and to the groups who helped compose the survey; results are also posted on the Town website.

The 2019 Town Survey was administered between January and March. For the second year, the survey was primarily administered online—approximately 99% of respondents used the digital format. A survey notice was mailed to 18,500 households as an insert to the Town’s Annual Census mailing in January. Approximately 25% percent of households responded, providing feedback on transportation, Community Development Block Grants, stormwater management, hazard mitigation, precinct meetings, town meeting warrants, and the Envision Arlington community values. Survey results can be found at arlingtonma.gov/envision.

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Members of the Diversity Task Group engaged in several projects throughout the year.

- Providing ongoing leadership to the Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Committee, advocating for the recruitment, employment, and retention of staff of color in the Arlington Public Schools (APS).
- DTG Parent Diversity & Inclusion Groups (DIGS) organized two Courageous Conversation Forums for parents within APS to talk to their children about race (with over 180 parents at each event) with Dr. Liza Talusa.
- "Meet and Greet Potluck," an evening for families to connect, share various cuisine, and participate in a True Story Theater performance.
- Starting a new DIG at the Ottoson Middle School.
- Endorsing the work of the Black Student Union within AHS and at Town Day.
- Training DIG parents in Active Bystanding, and successfully adding Active Bystanding Training to the Anti-Bullying Curriculum within APS through an AEF grant.
- Working through DIGs and the Superintendent Diversity Advisory Group to support Arlington Public School's commitment to work on cultural competency.
- Communicating with APS regarding issues concerning African American student suspensions, APS's inclusion of METCO students, and concerns about below state average MCAS scores.
- Supporting students in the METCO program at APS, including participation in their "bridging the communities dinner".
- Directing DTG student intern work on the unmarked grave of enslaved people in the old burial ground behind First parish church, and work with ACMi about restorative justice to develop a video that was played to every student during their advisory period.
- Supporting the development of a town warrant article for a culturally sensitive approach to overnight parking exemptions.
- Supporting the letter to the Town Manager and Acting Chief of Police restricting Lieutenant Pedrini to desk duty, working with an impartial, racially diverse, third party to assess the presence of bias within the APD and offer recommendations and training for APD, as well as the establishment of a racially and class diverse civilian review board.
- Developing the Arlington Fights Racism group and creating a community forum to hear from those feeling harmed.

Fiscal Resources: The Fiscal Resources Task Group (FRTG) researches and hosts discussions on topics related to the Town's finances, and reports findings and recommendations to the appropriate town departments, officials and the public at large. In 2019, the following activities were undertaken:

- Citizens Corner: FRTG updated the *Arlington Governmental Primer*, a compilation of a series of articles it has published in the *Arlington Advocate*, summarizing how Town government functions.
- Financial Leadership: As part of an ongoing series of informational interviews with Town financial leaders, FRTG met with School CFO Michael Mason, to discuss the department's operations.
- Long Range Financial Projections: FRTG continued its work on long-range financial planning to help town residents and officials better understand the town's long-term financial situation and how best to seek additional revenues that will foster long-term financial sustainability. Results are shared regularly with members of the Finance Department.
- New Growth Process: FRTG met with Deputy Town Manager, Sandy Pooler, to discuss the new growth recognition process (Building Permit to Tax Bill); and with Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development to discuss various approaches towards fostering growth.
- Town Meeting Warrant: FRTG reviewed the 2019 Annual Town Meeting Warrant. In addition, FRTG made a proposal to the Select Board to reorder the Warrant to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Town Meeting, which the Select Board fully adopted.
- Residential Exemption/Water & Sewer Debt Shift: FRTG met with Select Board members to discuss removing the Water & Sewer debt shift from the tax bill, and to consider implementing a residential exemption. The Select Board committed to removing the Water & Sewer Debt Shift from the property tax levy. The residential exemption will be focus of future considerations.
- Leadership Interviews: FRTG continues to work on a series of short *Arlington Advocate* articles and expanded online presentations of in-depth interviews of Town and School department heads and other leadership to further acquaint residents to their work.

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The fall precinct meeting for Precincts 1, 3, & 5 held at the Thompson School on October 28. Photo Leonard Diggins.

Governance: The Governance Task Group (GTG) organized two large, public events in 2019: Candidates Night in March with the League of Women Voters, and orientation for new Town Meeting Members led by John Leone, the Town Meeting Moderator. In the last few years, GTG has organized spring precinct meetings where residents and Town Meeting Members (TMMs) can discuss the warrant for Town Meeting. In addition, the GTG organized a discussion with TMMs and interested residents on how to make planning and hosting neighborhood precinct meetings simple and expected. Attendees at that discussion felt that fall meetings were important for educating residents about Town Meeting and providing information on how and when to submit articles for the warrant. Nineteen out of twenty-one precincts were able to organize fall meetings; planning for similar meetings in both spring and fall of 2020 is underway.

Sustainable Arlington: Sustainable Arlington is one of three committees of Envision Arlington's Environment Task Group and also a chapter of the Massachusetts Climate Action Network. It promotes environmental awareness and climate resilience, while engaging residents and Town government in protecting our local environment. Monthly meetings and other events are listed at www.sustainablearlington.org and on the committee's Facebook page.

Sustainable Arlington members served on the following Town groups in 2019: the Arlington High School Building Committee; the Town Manager's Energy Working Group; the Town Manager's Gas Leaks Task Force; the Clean Energy Future Committee; and the Zero Waste Committee.

Sustainable Arlington volunteered with the Town's HeatSmart program throughout the year. HeatSmart is a program of the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center and the Department of Energy Resources, and is based on the successful Solarize Massachusetts model. It educates the public about and facilitates adoption of highly-efficient, all-electric heating and cooling technol-

ogies, plus central wood pellet boilers. Arlington participated as a team with Winchester, completing 532 site visits, 486 quotes, and 191 signed contracts as of mid-December, 2019.

In March, Sustainable Arlington worked with the Town and other groups to produce "Arlington EcoFest Power Day 2019," a free, public event for all ages at Town Hall. This year's focus was on increasing energy efficiency and supporting the transition off fossil fuels to an all-electric future. Electric and hybrid/electric vehicles were displayed, with their Arlington owners on hand to answer questions. The HeatSmart program was presented in detail, with a technical consultant and Arlington coach available to answer questions. Tours of an Arlington Net Zero home showed two of these technologies, air source heat pumps and solar hot water, in use.

Sustainable Arlington supported Town government in registering to vote on provisions of the next version of the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). Building codes affect building efficiency, which, in turn, is a critical part of helping the Town achieve Net Zero by 2050.

Additional highlights of Sustainable Arlington's work include:

- Collaborating with the Zero Waste Committee and Robbins Library to hold two free Fixit Clinics at the Thompson School to repair broken household items and mend clothing, saving residents money and (slightly) reduced solid waste
- Encouraging residents to opt up to 50% or 100% New England-generated renewable energy through Arlington's Community Choice Aggregation electricity program. It presented jointly with Arlington Mothers Out Front to the Select Board, requesting that it authorize the Town Manager to seek a higher default level of renewable energy when negotiating new CCA rates.
- Co-sponsoring three Arlington Community Education classes on the scientific understanding of climate change. A well-attended single evening event in the spring led to two fall classes with four sessions each.
- Working with True Story Theater, an improv/playback theater group, on two performances: "Dare to Repair! Stories of preserving treasure and preventing waste" coincided with Arlington's first Fixit Clinic, and "Standing up to climate change: Stories of environmental activists," took place during the worldwide September Climate week.
- Co-sponsoring Arlington's first artist-in-residence who will be working with the community over a seven-month period from

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

December 2019 to June 2020 to create an environmentally-themed sculpture using plarn (yarn made from recycled plastic bags) for installation on the Minuteman Bikeway.

Spy Pond Committee: The Spy Pond Committee monitors the health of Spy Pond and assists the Conservation Commission and Dept. of Public Works with promoting the health and enjoyment of Spy Pond. See arlingtonma.gov/spypond for details. It is part of the Environment Task Group of Envision Arlington.

The Spy Pond Committee assisted the Conservation Commission in the selection of Solitude Lake Management for aquatic plant surveys and a Spy Pond Management Plan. The surveys were completed in May and August, after which excessive vegetation and algae was removed. In June and July, thirty acres of Spy Pond was covered with snail-seed pondweed and curly-leaf pondweed. In August, algae grew rapidly, particularly by the Spy Pond Condominiums. Eurasian watermilfoil was not a problem this year.

The Committee remains concerned about the health of Spy Pond. While eleven water chestnut plants found and removed in 2018, none were found this past year. The seeds are viable for ten years, however, so continued monitoring is essential. Shallow sections such as the sill between the north and south basins have a deep layer of rich, organic muck. Aquatic plants grow well in this environment.

With help from AMC, MassDOT, Arlington Land Trust, and Town, volunteers planted 45 dogwoods and several arborvitae on Spy Pond Trails Day in May. A network of volunteers watered the new plants weekly well into the fall. Volunteers at the event removed trash from the Rt. 2 path, pulled invasive plants, maintained the access points, and pruned vistas. High school students and neighborhood volunteers delivered 3,300 fertilizer education flyers to homes in the Spy Pond watershed.

Spy Pond hosted hundreds of cormorants. Frequent visitors included eagles, mallards, common and hooded mergansers, buffleheads, great blue herons,



New Dogwood at Spy Pond. Photo Brad Barber, Spy Pond Committee.

and ospreys. Eagles were frequent visitors. There was one day of skating on black ice. As in 2018, the pond remained ice free more than normal. The swans raised five cygnets and the geese had no goslings.

Eroding shorelines continue to be a problem. Spy Pond was 18 inches low due to the shoreline restoration near Spy Pond Park. The Committee and Conservation Commission will study this problem next year.

The Spy Pond Committee reviewed MassDOT's detailed plans for the sandbar near Route 2 and Pleasant Street. MassDOT will use a hydraulic dredge to remove the top three feet of sand. The dredged material will be dewatered on the Route 2 path. Work should commence in Fall, 2020.

Reservoir Committee: 2019 was another busy year for the Reservoir Committee. The Wildlife Habitat Garden had its ninth growing season. The Committee had help from many people on public workdays and from many volunteers. The committee welcomes schools, community groups, and others to participate in the Committee's growth and evolution.

Water chestnut mechanical harvesting continued in the summer under the management of Arlington DPW. Additionally, the Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) organized corporate volunteers for hand harvesting events in the spring and fall.

In 2017 Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding was obtained for developing a Master Plan for the Arlington Reservoir—the first step of a major multi-year capital improvement project. The goal is to assess all aspects of the Reservoir, considering terrestrial and aquatic issues from both environmental and recreational perspectives. This project is being led by the Park and Recreation Commission. The project has now moved into the implementation phases.

CPA funding for phase 1 of the Master Plan work was approved by Town Meeting in 2018. Work is underway at the pump house and new piping is being installed at the beach. A pilot trail restoration project on the dirt path next to LexFarm is planned for 2020. The goals for the future phases of the Master Plan are to address some of the broader environmental issues. Additional funding must be found, and grant options are being explored. Documents related to the Master Plan can be found on the Committee's website.

The Arlington Land Trust maintains a stewardship fund for the work of the Reservoir Committee. This fund has mostly been used for Wildlife Habitat Garden expenses. Those wishing to make a tax-deductible donation can make a check out to "ALT Reservoir Fund" and mail it to ALT, Box 492, Arlington, MA 02476.

More information about the committee's activities, along with photos, can be found at the Reservoir Committee website: www.arlingtonreservoir.org, where you can also join the Reservoir email list.

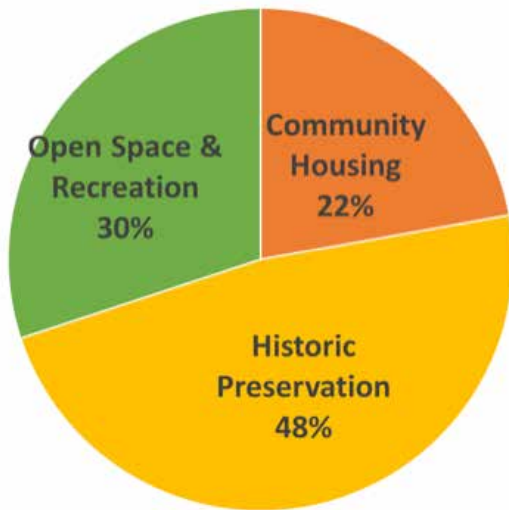
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE

Arlington began implementing the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2015. The CPA allows cities and towns to reserve dedicated funds to preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable community housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities. CPA projects are financed by local revenues collected from a property tax surcharge (in Arlington, 1.5% of the net tax levy minus exemptions), plus annual distributions from the state CPA trust fund.

The Community Preservation Act Committee studies local community preservation needs, recommends CPA appropriations to Town Meeting, and oversees projects funded by CPA. In 2019 the committee reviewed project applications for CPA funding in fiscal year 2020, hosted public applicant presentations, and ultimately recommended eight projects to Town Meeting for funding. The Committee consulted with the Select Board, Finance Committee, Capital Planning Committee, and other Town leaders in reaching our recommendations.

FY2020 CPA Projects



CPA Projects Funded for FY2020

Following the recommendation of the Committee, Town Meeting appropriated a total of \$2,255,073 in CPA funds for FY2020 projects supporting local community housing, historic preservation, and open space and recreation:

- \$500,000 for Phase 2 of Arlington Reservoir-recreational improvements.
- \$540,429 for Phase 1 of the Whittemore Park Revitalization Plan.
- \$500,000 for building envelope repair at Winslow Towers.
- \$379,144 for Phase 1 Restoration of the Old

Burying Ground.

- \$154,000 for exterior rehabilitation of Whittemore Robbins Cottage.
- \$125,000 for rehabilitation of the North Union Playground.
- \$53,000 for a study of the Spy Pond Field Bleachers.
- \$3,500 to restore Tercentenary Historic Markers.

For more information, please visit arlingtonma.gov/communitypreservation.

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 Select Board, Finance Committee, and School Committee, a representative of the School Committee and in addition the Town Manager, Superintendent of Schools, and Facilities Director or their designees.

Activities in 2019

The Committee devoted most of its meeting time in 2019 to finishing a series of projects started in prior years. These included the Stratton School, Gibbs School, and Thompson School projects, as well as the Hardy School project which was issued its temporary Certificate of Occupancy in January 2019.

By the end of 2019, and due to the diligent accounting work of Jim Feeney in his role as Interim Facilities Director, the Committee was able to approve the close-out of the school projects noted above as well as the Community Safety Building project. Through this close-out process, the Committee returned approximately \$850,000 to the Capital Planning Committee for possible re-use on other Town capital projects.



Overview of DPW Town Yard

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Exterior of Public Works Town Yard

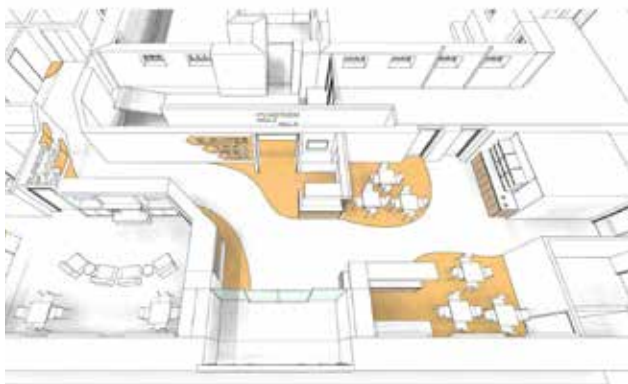
Upcoming projects

Public Works Town Yard project (renovation): At the end of 2019 a construction management selection committee met and made a unanimous recommendation to move forward with the firm that ranked highest in the selection process. The Committee will vote to endorse this selection in early 2020, with full construction expected to start in the summer of 2020.

Central School (renovation): Detailed construction documents for this complex, multi-phase project in the historic Central School building were completed in 2019. This renovation project for the ground, first and second floors of the Central School is expected to move into the construction phase in early 2020.



Central School – Community Center project
Exterior of building (above) Interior design (below)



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

In 2018 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 eleven petitions. Since its inception in 1946 the Zoning Board of Appeals has heard and rendered decisions on over 3,300 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 and two associate members. 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 atarlingtonma.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.

2019 Petitions Heard By ZBA	
Petitions for Variance	2
Applications for Special Permits	17
Appeal of Decision of Inspector of Buildings	0
Amendments to SP/Variances	0
Comprehensive Permits	1 Mugar Continuance
Totals	
Total Petitions filed with Town Clerk	20
Total Hearing Continued by the Board	2
Total Petitions withdrawn	0
Total Petitions sent to ARB	5

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



4 Winslow Street, Arlington, MA 02474 p: 781-646-3400 f: 781-646-0496

ARLINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Arlington Housing Authority (AHA) is proud of its distinction of being the largest single provider of affordable housing in the community.

Our mission is to provide adequate, affordable and safe housing to low, very-low and extremely low-income families from the Town of Arlington and surrounding communities through collaborative partnerships with community agencies and to manage Housing Authority finances in a fiscally responsible manner. This year marks the Housing Authority's seventieth year offering housing to low and moderate income persons either through direct housing in government owned developments or subsidized housing in privately owned dwellings.

The Arlington Housing Authority manages 1,156 housing units: 520 units for the elderly and disabled at Winslow Towers, Chesnut Manor, Cusack Terrace, Drake Village, Decatur Gardens and the Hauser Building, 179 units of family housing at Menotomy Manor, with ten handicapped accessible wheel chair units, the Donnelly House for 13 developmentally challenged residents, and 422 Housing Choice Vouchers that help participants live in privately-owned dwellings throughout the community.

The Authority is a quasi-governmental agency created by Arlington's Town Meeting in 1948 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*, Brian Connor, *Vice-Chairman*, Nicholas Mitropoulos, *Treasurer*, Gaar Talanian and *Members*, Richard B. Murray and Joseph Daly.

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

Year in Review

In 2019, the AHA continued 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. Below are a few highlights of successful projects at each building.

Cusack Terrace, 67 Units 8 Summer Street

In 2019 AHA installed a new elevator and refurbished a second. The driveway was partially repaved to eliminate potholes and increase resident safety. Upcoming projects include the replacement of the buildings ballasted membrane roof and the conversion of ADA common area bathrooms.

Winslow Towers, 132 Units 4 Winslow Street

The fire pump room was completed at Winslow Towers as well as a building envelope evaluation. A dozen cherry blossom trees were planted along the mystic street side of the property as well as the installation of new picnic tables. Current projects planned are the replacement of windows that have been leaking and causing damage to the units and to update common area bathrooms to meet ADA compliance.

Chestnut Manor, 100 Units 54 Medford Street

Modernization projects that were completed in 2019 included the upgrade of the buildings fire alarm system, repair of the handicapped ramp and the replacement of the hot water system with energy efficient furnaces. Current projects include the resurfacing of balconies. Future projects include ADA common area bathrooms.

Drake Village, 72 Units and the Hauser Building, 144 Units 37 Drake Road

In 2019 AHA renovated its interior to build an office for the new on-site Property Manager. The AHA continues the ongoing project to replace windows and storm doors at the cottages at Drake Village and has a current project for exterior building renovations. Future projects include ADA common area bathrooms.

Monotony Manor, 179 Units Freemont Court

2019 marked the successful completion of the new Life & Skills Center. Additional projects included the replacement of unit locks, the installation of a new privacy fence and removal of dead trees. Future projects include parking lot and walkway resurfacing.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

998 Mass. Ave.

Special Needs Housing

Completed projects include siding and porch replacements as well as a new driveway. Interior renovations will commence this year and are to include new bathrooms and kitchen, and the installation of a new egress door.

Community Partnerships

2019 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 quality of life for our residents has improved with the helpful resources that Minuteman Senior Services provides.

In 2019 the Fidelity House continued afternoon programs in our Menotomy Manor Development that provides transportation to children, free memberships and financial assistance to make summer programs more attainable for families and their children. 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 continued 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 annual cookouts for the elderly and disabled residents were held in each of our four elderly/handicapped developments. Residents continue to enjoy the good food, music, and great company. The 2019 family housing Christmas party held at the new Life and Skills Building was a great success; 250 parents and children met Santa who arrived curtesy of AFD.

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 average rent in our 520 units of elderly/disabled housing is \$440 per month and includes heat, hot water, and electricity. The average rent in our family

units at Menotomy Manor is \$651 per month with the resident paying their own utilities. Over 95% of the residents living in the Arlington Housing Authority's public housing units would not be able to afford the new affordable housing units being built in Arlington. A continuing challenge for the AHA and state-aided public housing industry is the demand and need of funding for capital improvements. While the AHA applies for all funding opportunities available, and utilizes 100% of the funds received, there is still a great deficit in the funding needed to ensure optimal quality of life for our residents.

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. Applications for housing can be completed through online links or downloaded from our website.

Wait Lists

DHCD has rolled out the new state-aided public housing waiting list called CHAMP or Common Housing Application for Massachusetts Public-Housing. Applicants are able to submit and self-manage their applications through the on-line portal from a computer, smartphone, or tablet and apply for available public housing across the Commonwealth.

Stated-Aided Elderly/Handicap One Bedroom Units

Total: 2,019 applicants

State-Aided Family 2-Bedroom Units

Total: 3,286 applicants

State-Aided Family 3-Bedroom Units

Total: 1,672 applicants

Section 8 Wait List

Arlington Applicants: *555

**Because Arlington is on a centralized wait list, the Section 8 wait list is extremely long; therefore, only Arlington residents and those employed in Arlington are listed for this program.*

Acknowledgments

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