

Report on the June 8, 2023 MBTA Communities Public Forum

MBTA Communities Working Group

July 18, 2023

On July 8, 2023 the MBTA Communities Working Group and the Department of Planning and Community Development held a public forum to present a draft map showing potential placement of Arlington's multi-family districts, and to solicit feedback for the next iteration. The purpose of this report is to summarize the event, the process leading up to it, and to capture public input received.

A Review of Section 3A

The multi-family housing requirements for MBTA communities come from Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40A Section 3A, ("Section 3A") which was enacted in 2021. The law requires each MBTA Community (as defined in General Law 161A, Section 1) to provide at least one zoning district where multi-family housing (three or more dwellings) is allowed by right. The district must permit housing with at least 15 dwelling units per gross acre, these dwelling units cannot be age restricted, and the district must allow housing that is suitable for families with children. In August 2022 the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development released their final guidance governing Section 3A, which contained specific requirements for each of the 175 MBTA Communities in Massachusetts, including Arlington.¹ The Arlington-specific requirements are:

- a minimum district capacity of 2,046 dwelling units,
- a minimum district size of 32 acres (50% of this area must be contiguous), and
- no constraints that the district (or districts) be located a certain distance from transit stations. While the intent of the law was to have districts located near transit, Arlington has little developable land in the vicinity of the Alewife T station, and the governing regulations take this fact into consideration.

Arlington's Department of Planning and Community Development held public forums in November 2022 and March 2023, and the MBTA Communities Working Group developed a survey to gather public input on how Arlington should go about meeting the requirements of the new law. 1,033 individuals responded to the survey,² and these responses shaped the iteration of the multi-family district map presented on June 8th.

¹ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/multi-family-zoning-requirement-for-mbta-communities>

² <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/65987>

June 8 Forum Activities

Over 125 residents attended the June 8, 2023 forum where they received an introductory presentation³ from the MBTA Communities Working Group and project consultant Utile, and were asked to participate in a set of table exercises. Each table was given a large copy of the draft district map,⁴ pens, markers, sticky notes, outreach materials,⁵ and a set of questions for discussion.⁶

The map was heavily influenced by public input gathered from the March/April survey, in which a significant number of respondents felt that sustainable practices were important, such as access to transit, having housing in walkable and bikeable locations, and avoiding flood-prone areas. There was also significant support for having multi-family housing in locations that could promote the vitality of our commercial districts. The draft map reflects those preferences, by placing the districts along commercial corridors (which are served by transit), and near existing business districts.

The draft map gets to the issue of *where* -- it is a general sketch of where additional multi-family capacity could be appropriate, given preferences expressed by the community. The discussion questions focused on some of the aspects of *how* -- particularly the sizes and scales of new housing, and how it should relate to the surrounding areas, particularly the nearby commercial districts.

Public Feedback Received

This section discusses some of the themes that emerged from the table exercises. The full set of participant comments is given in Appendix A, facilitator notes appear in Appendix B, and photographs of the maps are contained in Appendix C of this report.

Broadening the map. A number of attendees felt the map seemed very concentrated, and they suggested expanding the multi-family districts into other areas of town. Broadway was frequently suggested for inclusion. Other suggestions included: Poet's Corner, Route 2, Summer St., Russell St., Medford St., and Park Ave. The Working Group explored each of these potential locations and subsequent maps include a Broadway district.

Limiting the district to the area around the Alewife T station. A number of attendees expressed a preference for locating the entire district within one-half mile of the Alewife MBTA station. The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development has determined that there are 58 developable acres in the vicinity of Alewife station;⁷ this would satisfy our requirement for a 32-acre district, and so it is technically possible to place the entire district in that area of East Arlington. That said, the MBTA Communities Working Group believes that concentrating the district around the Alewife T station would be a poor planning choice, and recommends a district that is more geographically dispersed throughout town. Elementary schools are a main driver of this recommendation. Through

³ <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/65774/638219208109370000>

⁴ The map shown during the forum is available from <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/65981>. Earlier and later iterations of the map are available from the town website: <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/Home/Components/News/News/12760/16>

⁵ <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/65557/638198527579430000>

⁶ <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/65760/638219201448730000>

⁷ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/mbta-communities-community-category-designations-and-capacity-calculations/download>

conversations with school officials, we have learned that a district that overlaps multiple elementary school boundaries gives our school officials more flexibility to adjust buffer zones, thereby increasing their ability to respond to enrollment fluctuations over time.

Having a variety of scales, housing types, and price points. Participants expressed a desire for a variety of housing types. Examples included allowing taller buildings directly on the corridors and shorter ones behind, and allowing a mixture of housing types like triple-deckers, small and medium-sized apartment buildings, and townhouses. This indicates support for a range of missing-middle housing options.

Providing affordable housing. Arlington currently requires that 15% of dwellings be affordable (i.e., income-restricted) in new multi-family buildings with six dwellings or more. There was general support for allowing multi-family housing at this scale in order to trigger affordability requirements. Under Section 3A's guidance, municipalities cannot impose affordability requirements of more than 20%, and must provide justification for affordability requirements greater than 10%. The MBTA Communities Working Group and Department of Planning and Community Development plan to submit evidence showing that our current 15% is economically viable, and will not discourage the production of a range of multi-family housing types.

Sizes and scales. As noted earlier, participants expressed a desire to see housing at a variety of sizes, scales, and price points. There was support for smaller 3-4 dwelling buildings, 6+ dwellings for affordability, and some larger buildings with 10-12 dwellings. Discussions seemed to focus more on the number of dwellings per building, with less discussion devoted to height. Where height was mentioned, preferences ranged from three to eight stories.

Considering the relationship between MBTA Communities and commercial and industrial districts. Due to historic policy choices, only a small amount of Arlington's land has been zoned for commercial use; approximately 183 (5.6%) of 3,284 acres, when measured in terms of gross district acreage.⁸ We place a lot of expectations on our commercial districts, and there has been a robust discussion of how they should relate to our goal of creating capacity for additional multi-family housing. Throughout the planning process we have discussed options such as (a) making some number of commercial parcels available for future multi-family housing development, (b) allowing future multi-family development next to (but not in) existing commercial districts, and (c) placing a buffer between the commercial districts and the Section 3A zones, so that the commercial districts can be expanded in the future, and (d) offering bonuses for ground floor commercial in the MBTA communities district. Options (b), (c), and (d) are emerging as the prevailing opinions, provided that site-specific considerations are taken into account.

Transportation. One subset of participants expressed a desire for access to public transit, making it possible for more trips to be done by walking or cycling, and reducing dependency on single-occupancy vehicles. Another subset expressed concern about traffic that new multi-family housing might bring, and about where people would park their cars. Here, we must acknowledge how transportation (and

⁸ Page 4 of Arlington's 2019 *Report on Demolitions and Replacement Homes* provides a chart for visualization. See <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showdocument?id=47415>

automobiles in particular) influenced urban planning in the twentieth century. Prior to the 1950's, Mass Ave was served by a streetcar line; this encouraged a pattern of "streetcar suburb" development, with compact neighborhoods flanking the streetcar lines where residents got around by walking and riding the trolley. Areas developed after World War II were more likely to have been designed around automobiles, with larger parcels of land, more space between buildings, and a substantial amount of space devoted to parking. This is a tension that Arlington along with many other communities in the Boston area face; different areas were designed and planned with different assumptions about transportation (largely dependent on when they were built).

Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is an important part of reducing transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions, and addressing our regional challenges with traffic congestion. Section 3A is not a "fix" for the area's transportation issues, but it is an opportunity to employ "smart growth" practices⁹ that can lead to reductions in VMT, and a more sustainable community. These include things like adding housing near businesses and amenities, providing a mix of housing types and styles to accommodate people at various stages of life, and making it possible for residents to use a variety of transportation options.

Next Steps

After the forum, town staff and the MBTA Communities Working Group created a survey based on the table exercises, so we could continue to receive feedback from residents, particularly those that were unable to attend the forum in person. This feedback will assist us in refining the map, and formulating recommendations on the types, sizes, and scales of buildings allowed. The working group expects to bring the next iteration of the map to the public in late July 2023.

⁹ <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/about-smart-growth>

Appendix A: Comments from Table Exercises

These comments come from participants of the table exercises; they were typically written on sticky-notes, or paper copies of the draft map. Photos of the maps appear in appendix C.

Comment	Table	Location
Varying the mix of housing density (i.e. 3-4 units next to duplexes) to keep the character of the neighborhood within a district	A	
Rezoning my neighborhood	A	
Beware the developer. Think like a \$\$\$ developer and write in control over them.	A	
Include Broadway and parts of Summer St in the "corridor" zone concept	A	
Make sure existing commercial zoned remains that way and not converted to residential unless trade-off for other new commercial	A	
Incentivize: sustainable building construction and affordable housing	A	
Commercial zones: rezone multi-use/mixed at "centers" like Heights/Brattle/Center/East	A	
Let's start w/ 100% compliance not 150% and allow 3 familys, 4 familys, and some 6 familys. This adheres to the LAW not the guidelines.	A	
Commercial trade idea: rezoning residential in business district for commercial use and rezoning some commercial areas as residential use	A	
Neighborhoods of single family, duplexes, 5 unit Victorians, Town Homes, SROs. It works. I live in one. We have YARDS.	A	
I like Utile v.4 which sets back the corridor overlays by 1 or 2 parcels, to allow for future commercial growth	A	
Mill Street/ Summer Street condos as a model	A	
Arlington's affordable inclusionary zoning law is not acceptable to DHCD guidelines	A	
Russell Place development as a model	A	Center
Make districts smaller, 4-6 unit, places where density could benefit businesses	A	
According to DHCD 58 acres are developable not floodplain	A	
Use some of the tall/dense builds to include in a district along Hamilton Road near the bikeway (arrow pointing)	A	East Arlington
Areas closest to Alewife are most transit friendly neighborhood	A	East Arlington
Alewife district drawn in 3/4 mile radius, with 75 acres, out of the floodplain	A	East Arlington
Consider Broadway district	A	East Arlington
Consider district in Center bordered by Russell Street, Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, Medford St	A	Center

Comment	Table	Location
(small) Grocery store in Arlington Center: one big thing that would make it easier for us to not drive	B	
Resident parking stickers!	B	Heights: south of Mass Ave, north of Park Ave
Bigger lots: 6 units and up	B	Center: north of the bikeway near Grove St, Peirce Fields
Here?! Pleasant St (arrow pointing)	B	Center: south of Mass Ave
On-site parking underneath?	B	Center: to the west of Mt. Pleasant Cemetery
What about here? (arrow pointing)	B	Center: Warren St & Franklin St
Broadway? Should we extend? (arrow pointing)	B	East: Warren St & Broadway
3-4 families here?	B	East: north of Mass Ave, near Cambridge
Build 6+ units for affordability	C	Center: north of bike-way, east of Hills Hill
High energy efficiency, but not high rises everywhere	C	
Need to protect existing moderately priced apartments. Should not replace these with luxury apartments	C	Center
Should identify specific moderately priced apartments buildings and exclude these from the new zoning area	C	Center
We should include Jason Heights area in the new zone (at least the area closest to Mass Ave)	C	Center
MBTA accessibility (noted for area south of proposed orange district)	C	East Arlington: south of Mass Ave, north of bikeway
I like leaving multi family zone along Mass Ave not in residential areas	C	Center
Preserve existing trees where possible. Try not to build right up to the sidewalk.	C	East
Does the existing usable open space zoning law still stand with this map?	D	
How can this zoning be done to help with affordable housing?	D	
Do existing town zoning laws about setbacks, driveways, etc. still hold?	D	
Future maps should show effects of 3-, 4-, 6-family etc.	D	
Would this zoning help get the town to 40B exemption, including land area used for affordable housing?	D	
What's the minimum we have to do to meet the law?	D	
Put multifamily by right 3 family near Alewife and in Arlington Center ONLY	D	East

Comment	Table	Location
Protect Industrial zones	E	
Allow height	E	Center: north of bike-way, east of Hills Hill
Allow buildings large enough to require inclusionary zoning (6+units)	E	
Add Summer St and Broadway especially Mill St/Summer St	E	Center
How do you zone it to be most attractive for developers to actually build something on the parcel without upsetting the "character" of the community?	E	
Mixed use	E	Center: along Pleasant St, south of Mass Ave
The current design will change the "character" of our main streets	E	East
Can we prevent buildings from avoiding IZ requirements by building IZ threshold minimum to one 1 unit. Especially since the state has undercut Arlington's 15% IZ.	F	
Figure out how to incentivize IZ development between 5-12 units.	F	Heights
Build higher along main street and then step down in height as you move into residential areas (for pink district); many up votes	F	Center
Poets Corner: development along Route 2 access Road, bus routes, Cambridge is doing it all along Route 2	F	
Would like to keep industrial zone as is	F	
Without a "scale" for distance, I wonder if West of Mystic St and/or east of Washington St is within 1/2 mile of either bus route. #67 bus and/or Mystic St.	F	Center: near Winchester border
Different models of housing as you move into residential areas. Vary housing types.	F	
Upvote for: different models of housing as you move into residential areas. Vary housing types.	F	
Specialized stretch code is very strict for all new construction, so this is not a big reason on its own to push for bigger buildings	F	
Commercial use in existing mixed use developments, very undesirable should not encourage more like that	F	
Residential already allowed in commercial (business) districts. Don't need MBTA act for this.	F	
Varied choices of size with varied price points. Give people choice/also more visually interesting.	F	
I'm in favor of building up on Mass Ave especially where 1 story commercial space exists!	F	East Arlington
District needs to be near Alewife T	F	East Arlington
Not true that 3 families not cost effective. They are being built where allowed. (arrow pointing)	F	Center: Russell Place

Comment	Table	Location
Keeping large buildings near Mass Ave	F	East Arlington
Upvote for: keep Industrial zone as is	F	
Would like to see housing in areas other than Mass Ave and Broadway	G	
More triplex or four-plex homes along bus routes with low service	G	
Art studio space	G	Southwest: Poets Corner
Four story buildings along Broadway and other bus routes like Park Ave	G	
Art studios (arrow pointing)	G	Center: along Route 2 between Pleasant and Highland
Possibly art studio spaces	G	Center: along Route 2 between Pleasant and Highland
Narrow lots feel less massive. Allow/encourage narrow lots and subdivisions.	G	
Retain existing commercial and industrial areas	G	
Avoid "canyonizing" Mass Ave	G	
Utilize Broadway corridor for multifamily housing	G	
Allow low intensity commercial in residential zones	G	East Arlington: near Alewife
GREEN DOTS = SUGGESTED INTERSECTIONS FOR PROPOSED MF HOUSING?	G	
Larger buildings that step back from streets like Mass Ave	H	
Don't want all buildings the same height with different styles	H	
Density is doable; there are ways to make it less overwhelming	H	
Mixed use buildings	H	
More variation in locations, not all in commercial areas	H	
considerations between buildings: open space, green space, gardens, playgrounds, paths, bike paths, 3000K lighting	H	
Don't take away from existing commercial/industrial zone	H	
We like allowing and incentivizing commercial/mixed use buildings	H	
Density is doable in Arlington	H	
Expand Arlington Heights districts across Minuteman Bikeway	H	
Love the idea of having zones NEAR Mass Ave rather than on it - but zones could be bigger!	H	
Must have development standards: local management, noise insulation in buildings	H	
Consider topography to impact building size	H	

Comment	Table	Location
Need to consider parking in the zoning districts along main corridors	H	
4 plus stories feels good; taller stories could work if community spaces (green, retail) were included	H	Heights: near Winchester border
No reason to limit height more in one district than another	H	
Expand Arlington Heights districts across Minuteman Bikeway	H	Heights: near Summer Street
180 units have been done well. Noise concerns, etc. turn out not to be a big deal	H	Heights: near Winchester border
Variety in size and style of buildings	H	Heights: near Summer Street
Why is there not more zones along the Bikeway? Like Lexington did	H	Heights: near Summer Street
At least 6-plex zoning to trigger IZ of 15%	H	Center: south of Mass Ave
Buffer zone between higher storied buildings and residential neighborhoods	H	
Parking location for higher density buildings	H	
Concern about who will be building. We should make sure that the incentives do not go only to the big developers. We empower the average citizen to build too.	H	
Love the map! Perfect as is	H	
With housing by right on Mass Ave, also include mixed use by right or incentivized w another story of two	H	
Not close enough to green spaces (pink district, suggesting extending closer to Spy Pond?)	H	Center: south of Mass Ave
Tallest buildings on Mass Ave, scale linearly down as you move away from Mass Ave	H	
Aim for 10 plus units per lot	H	East
Add a Broadway district	H	East
Density is fine	H	East
We want a grocery store in East Arlington	I	East
Remove open space requirement	I	East Arlington: near Alewife
Multifamily by night everywhere	I	
We need a grocery store in East Arlington	I	East
More than 3 (districts maybe?)	I	
Why leave out Broadway?	I	
One floor units for those aging in place	I	
Village at Cutters Mill: use town homes as a template	I	

Comment	Table	Location
More here! (mixed use)	I	Center: Mass Ave & Pleasant/Mystic
Relax Arlington building code to make it less expensive to build 3+ family homes	I	
Better access to the bikeway	I	
Adding pedestrian lanes on the bikeway	I	
Rows of townhouses (north of pink district)	I	Center: along Summer Street
Focus on incentives for multi-use in commercial zones	I	
Housing along the bike way (arrow pointing)	I	
Connect separated bike lanes across Mass Ave and Broadway	I	
Spreading out allows for school enrollment diversification	I	
"Trick or treat" test for building height	I	
Make access to bikeway easier!	I	
Increase bikeway width!	I	
Different types of housing appeal to different types of people! For different life phases	I	
Preserve commercial; more open space include Broadway	J	
Needs creative incentives for affordable housing and for assembling our small lots for "pocket parcels"	J	
Arlington heights is missing public open space!	J	Heights
Don't forget how steep Park Ave is for walkability	J	Heights
~6 units/building just off Mass Ave; declining to 3 units as you move away from Mass Ave	J	Heights
Avoid sharp zone edge with large building next to singles	J	Heights
All Park Ave should be zoned 2-3 + units for zoning!	J	Heights
Change "Neighborhood business" zoning to have more usable/desirable businesses	J	Center
Already has 2 families off of Mass Ave	J	Center
How many units already exist in these parcels?	J	
Proposed district: BLUE DOTS = 6-8 story apartment/condos; with parking underneath buildings; open space for Heights behind; "exit strategy" for current owners	J	Southwest: along Frontage Road
Proposed district: GREEN DOTS = OPEN SPACE	J	Southwest: along Frontage Road
Keep housing out of business and industrial	J	
Not walkable to Center or Heights (pink district; around Grove Street)	J	Center

Comment	Table	Location
Set back MBTA housing one or two parcels from Mass Ave to allow future commercial growth	J	
Stay as close to 2046 units as possible so town can decide how to grow	J	
Not right along Mass Ave. Move housing back from corridor	J	
Why not Broadway?	J	
Upvote: why not Broadway?	J	
Add open space in return for adjacent higher density	J	Center: Between Park Ave & Spy Pond
Maximize walking to Alewife	J	East: near Alewife
Flood zones?	J	East: near Alewife
Read Broadway corridor design competition suggestions	J	East
Out of flood plain	J	East
Bus to Green Line; build here	J	Northwest: adjacent to Medford/Somerville
Broadway between Center and Route 16 (arrow pointing)	K	East Arlington
Agree. More access to affordability - either greater percentage in IZ or requiring larger buildings	K	East Arlington
Can we propose a minimum FAR for this zone and force buildings to have more than 6 units?	K	East Arlington
More zones away from Mass Ave: Summer St, Park Ave, Broadway	K	
Shows Mill Brook; restricted development areas and flood zones	K	
[why include] Peirce St: this neighborhood already has several 3+4 family units including several HCA buildings of all low-income units	K	Heights: near Mass Ave/Appleton
More lower 3-4 story buildings over broader area; fewer 4-6 story buildings depending on the neighborhood	K	Heights
Increase % of affordable units in IZ i.e 20% of more = 1 in 5 units	K	
Depicted a mixed use zone on Broadway possibly including commercial uses near Silk/Michael/Sunnyside	L	East
Commercial parcels forming "Gateway to town" on Mass Ave emphasized	L	East

Appendix B: Facilitator Notes from Table Discussions

This section contains notes taken by table facilitators, during discussion of the questions on size and scale of buildings and how the multi-family housing should relate to Arlington's commercial districts.

Note	Table	Question
Identify existing moderately-priced multi-family homes, and remove them from the proposed district. The goal is to preserve existing moderately-priced rental apartments	C	
Be conscious of the way that taller buildings could shadow nearby residential areas.	C	Size and Scale
Look for areas in town where multi-family housing is under-represented.	C	
No place in town should be sacred, and exempt from having multi-family housing	C	
The wealthier areas in Jason Heights should be included in the multi-family district, even though this is a historic district. The historic district has several apartment buildings, so it should be okay to add more, as long as the architecture is appropriate.	C	
Being able to walk to things is great, and we should encourage more walkability. We should make it possible for people to get around without needing a car.	C	
It's important to have a sense of community.	C	
The multi-family district shouldn't be solely located on the corridors. It should extend further into the neighborhoods.	C	
We should be careful to avoid putting apartments in areas where you need a car to get around. That will just lead to more traffic.	C	
The MBTA needs to improve it's quality of service. Buses should be more frequent and more reliable.	C	
The buildings should be large enough to trigger inclusionary zoning, in order to provide affordable units.	C	Size and Scale
We discussed allowing apartments large enough to trigger the higher energy efficiency standards in the state's enhanced stretch code. I got the sense that participants liked the idea of having more energy efficient buildings, but were concerned that it might make them more expensive.	C	Size and Scale
Point that we agreed on: We should allow buildings that are large enough for affordability requirements to kick in	C	Size and Scale
Point that we agreed on: We should try to preserve existing moderately priced apartment buildings, by removing them from the multi-family district	C	
Point that we agreed on: We should try to provide access to transit while trying to improve the quality of transit service	C	

Note	Table	Question
A point that we were still discussing: Whether it was important to have multi-family housing in all neighborhoods. Several of people at the table felt this was important, though several were skeptical. Car dependency may have been one reason for this skepticism, but we didn't get far enough in the discussion for me to say that with confidence.	C	Size and Scale
How big does the zone have to be - 3 families?	D	Size and Scale
Coordinator - pretty, nice, nature	D	
Aesthetics of Arlington	D	
Accountability	D	
Form-based zoning	D	Commercial Districts
Usable open space?	D	
Pulling back is a good idea for commercial vitality	D	Commercial Districts
Achieve similar aims by looking at Arlington	D	
focusing on Arlington near Alewife preferred	D	Size and Scale
traffic problem	D	Size and Scale
maximum density?	D	Size and Scale
wants to see different options based on housing unit size	D	Size and Scale
affordability - 40B - how does it affect?	D	
massing/size of zones	D	Size and Scale
avoid historic districts	D	
vote for modeling showing size/scale to accompany future district maps	D	Size and Scale
Industrial zones lack street life, feels empty / scary, especially at night.	E	Commercial Districts
The proposed corridor plan is not neighborly / neighborhood-based, it seems too concentrated.	E	
We need a balance / mix of scales, not all big buildings all grouped together in one area.	E	Size and Scale
Let's start / build on what we already have (Capitol square...).	E	
We could allow mixed use in order to expand Arlington's commercial areas.	E	Commercial Districts
Walgreens parking lot would be a great spot for development.	E	Commercial Districts
Mixed use is really important.	E	Commercial Districts
We don't have the luxury of much empty land.	E	
Would be okay on a case-by-case basis to include some commercial or industrial parcels in the district (note, not everyone at the table agrees).	E	Commercial Districts
Turning old houses (even historic houses) into multi-family condos (3, 4 units) would be a good way to restore / reuse these old properties.	E	Size and Scale
If we want to promote housing, we need to think about what a developer would find it economical / profitable to build.	E	Size and Scale

Note	Table	Question
Let's preserve the character of Arlington's neighborhoods. (How to define this character didn't get fully answered).	E	
Like that map leaves business/industrial zones as is	F	Commercial Districts
Should be higher building closer to main road. Step down close to residential to transition from commercial to residential area.	F	Commercial Districts
Seconded - Should be higher building closer to main road. Step down close to residential to transition from commercial to residential area.	F	Commercial Districts
Incentive 6-units so developers don't stop at 5 units	F	Size and Scale
Don't incentive 12-unit development	F	Size and Scale
Put housing near Turkey Hill, closer to Winchester? (group still discussing without agreement)	F	
Za? (2A?) Poet's Corner? [guessed these were other suggested development locations]	F	
What does the contiguous requirement involve? Why is that required?	F	
Can you tell us the assumptions in the map re: # units	F	Size and Scale
Would like to see a map showing a range of units and capped at 6 stories (other maximums suggestions given)	F	Size and Scale
Group asked what the highest building on Mass Ave was currently	F	
Point of agreement: preserve industrial and commercial districts	F	Commercial Districts
Point of agreement: incentivize different kinds of housing (affordable, appropriate for families, couples, seniors, etc.)	F	
Point of discussion: should multifamily housing be located along Route 2 or not? Also discussed Summer St and Broadway as potential locations	F	
Point of discussion: does the multifamily overlay district need a maximum height in stories and where; a lot of concern about number of stories allowed by right	F	Size and Scale
One thought: it might be worth doing something as a larger structure and make sure it's stepping down near Mass Ave. What would fit in structurally in this district?	H	
Someone in the group pushed for lab space. Reach out to entities and ask what are they looking for.	H	Commercial Districts
We spent most of the time on size and scale of buildings. Variety in scale with common elements (gave example of Arlington Eats building).	H	Size and Scale
Density is doable, we can do this!	H	Size and Scale
Landscaping would help blend new buildings into the landscape	H	
Variation in building scale is good	H	Size and Scale
Everyone generally liked the location of the district! But it was pointed out that it's not close to green spaces so that's an equity issue. Please keep in mind.	H	

Note	Table	Question
Housing is a critical need. Community based development, benefits should back into the neighborhood/community. Community land trust so we own the redeveloped areas?	H	
Developers will pay closer attention to Arlington when it has a multifamily zoning district	H	
Does this take away from Industrial/Commercial space?	H	Commercial Districts
Net stretch code! Having an option to do various sized building to take advantage of this opportunity. Avoid cookie cutter sized buildings.	H	
We should be realistic that the multifamily housing is going to bring in new families. Point is families need cars, working class people don't take buses at night? Geography/topography – how will zoning standards take these variations into account in different districts?	H	
Transect approach for design standards	H	
Be careful of creating “holes” or gaps if Mass Ave ends up with many multistory buildings	H	Commercial Districts
Small enough to walk up and down without having to use an elevator.	I	Size and Scale
Re: number of floors if no elevator: Prefer triple deckers similar to Cambridge and Somerville	I	Size and Scale
Loved the mid-rise options that were shown, avoiding high rises = drastic changes to the landscape	I	Size and Scale
Usable open space requirement	I	Size and Scale
Different types of housing appeal to different people. Having different options is a great incentive.	I	Size and Scale
Where do the cars go for residents of newer bigger housing developments?	I	Size and Scale
Expanding the bike path would be critical for increased foot and bike traffic	I	Size and Scale
Better access to the bike path	I	Size and Scale
Whole Town should be zoned for multi family	I	Size and Scale
Relax zoning bylaws for three family	I	Size and Scale
Makes sense to be walking distance to Alewife.	I	Commercial Districts
Re: proximity to Alewife: Locating as close as possible takes environmental concerns into consideration, more people can take public transportation instead of driving to Alewife.	I	Commercial Districts
Developers don't like to build mixed use because commercial loses money. What is going to be the incentive for developers to bring in commercial.	I	Commercial Districts
Re: development incentives: Arlington has a lot of barriers and hoops to jump through to get permits, can we make it easier?	I	Commercial Districts
Re: development incentives: Lack of grocery stores in East Arlington	I	Commercial Districts
Why was the Center/Town Hall area left out?	I	Commercial Districts
Spread out across the three zones increases diversity in schools and doesn't burden a single district taking on more students	I	Commercial Districts

Note	Table	Question
Why leave out Broadway?	I	Commercial Districts
Apartments along the bike path (Dudley Street) similar to the industrial style ones on the bike path from Davis Square to Mass Ave	I	Commercial Districts
Surprised to see how much of Arlington is residential.	I	
Zone for more commercial space or at least as much as now	J	Commercial Districts
Historic structures	J	
Better commercial spaces	J	Commercial Districts
Away from commercial districts. Market forces will destroy it. Side streets. Allow 3,4 or 5 units but allow 6 units close to Mass Ave	J	Commercial Districts
Route 2 corridor for multifamily housing?	J	
locate housing 1-2 parcels away from commercial corridors to allow room for commercial growth	J	Commercial Districts
use a parcel by parcel decision basis - fine grained zoning	J	
Affordable housing. Use this to increase affordable housing	J	
Possible incentive: open space requirement; trade-off for more density	J	Size and Scale
Possible incentive: only along Mass Ave - offer more density in return for open space (but why not Broadway too?)	J	Size and Scale
Desirable outcome through zoning incentives: blend height with existing neighborhood structures	J	Size and Scale
Possible incentive: More density near Alewife	J	Size and Scale
Possible incentive: make accessible to Green Line - more housing in northeast corner	J	
Why doesn't the map include Broadway?	K	
Large scale housing	K	Size and Scale
Minimum floor area ratio	K	Size and Scale
Thinks the district should incentivize/require the minimum number of units per building for the inclusionary zoning regulations to kick in (more affordable housing)	K	
New zoning should be sensitive to not creating varied height differences in neighborhoods. i.e. 3 stories should be the max in many neighborhoods	K	Size and Scale
Confusion over locations not included	K	
This map is too concentrated	K	
Easy access to bus routes is important	K	
Providing affordable housing for lowest income populations is important	K	
Show Mill Brook on the map	K	
This map is too concentrated and needs to focus on other areas near lower income neighborhoods (meaning East Arlington/streets like Sunnyside?)	K	

Note	Table	Question
Broadway considered more density corridor 4-6 units with stepped back in height approaching residential	L	Size and Scale
Incentive add commercial/mixed use 32% density bonus	L	Commercial Districts
Low-lying area at muffler/Mass Ave near Alewife; gateway to Town	L	
Anything that is one story should be incentivized to be knocked down	L	Size and Scale
Arlington needs more affordability; density and affordability are not necessarily the same	L	
From Grafton to Bates Road; this part of Mass Ave is underutilized	L	Commercial Districts
consider attractiveness/style of multifamily buildings	L	
important to be able to attract new businesses	L	
On Mass Ave most buildings are going up to 3 stories (not 4 stories) with commercial on ground floor	L	Size and Scale
point of discussion: Parking - values for cars or houses? We need to decide	L	
MBTA - frustration about lack of frequency of buses; bus lanes have helped	L	
I agree mixed use is a good idea if it's truly mixed use.	L	
What has the state settled on for permission for % of affordability	L	
point of agreement: incentivize mixed use on corridor	L	Commercial Districts
point of discussion: balancing density and affordable units	L	
map feels timid; could allow more multifamily in more of town and include more area coming off the main corridors	M	
Broadway should be included; also summer street	M	Commercial Districts
Incentive mixed use in commercial corridors; create more charming cityscape on Broadway for example	M	Commercial Districts
Brick and mortar stores "crushed" by internet. If we create more retail will that succeed?	M	Commercial Districts
Question: I thought we couldn't require mixed use and commercial under MBTA communities	M	Commercial Districts
5-6 stories feels too high for some participants	M	Size and Scale
Other participants think 5-6 stories could work, with some height set back or taller maybe	M	Size and Scale
No one likes recent buildings with no setbacks, directly on sidewalks. How can we get more setbacks?	M	
also plain block designs - how to get nicer designs?	M	
80 Broadway has interesting setback features	M	
What about future transit service? Will these zones continue to relate to transit service?	M	
Like that zones cut through all of Arlington, especially since East Arlington is already denser, rest of town should do more	M	

Note	Table	Question
Zones should be spread out throughout give opportunity to people anywhere in town	M	
There's nothing wrong with multi-family housing/It's part of Arlington's history	M	
I wouldn't want to go over 4 stories. Arlington Eats buildings is tall enough. Less height; larger parcel area	M	Size and Scale
More height closer to corridors, less height further back	M	Size and Scale
What is inclusionary zoning?	M	
we should build # of units in buildings up to trigger more affordable units	M	
more density will help make more affordable units possible	M	
more housing = more tax base = less need for overrides	M	
Mixed use so important; Mill Street and Mass Ave townhouses used to be Buick dealership. Couldn't do mixed use at the time and now that street has nothing interesting there.	M	Commercial Districts
Doesn't the MBTA communities law not allow affordable housing?	M	
Confused that you can't restrict the housing unit number vs. not allowing	M	
Prefer larger buildings that will trigger inclusionary zoning vs. allowing a street of 2 family houses to be converted into market rate 3 or 4 family buildings	M	
People in Arlington today seem more concerned with location and local amenities than years ago maybe	M	
Will this impact schools?	M	
School impact will be mitigated if development spread out over time (and town)	M	
Consider Park Ave	M	
Park Slope, Brooklyn is so vibrant! Density matters	M	
Include Broadway but keep slightly more focus on Mass Ave	M	
Would be interesting to revisit Broadway Design Competition to help inform	M	
Be good for Town to consider pedestrian only areas to align with parts of new zones. Can greatly enhance a commercial zone, close to transit	M	
Would a pedestrian only area near Medford St/regent theater work?	M	
If you add so much housing do you need to add more parks (probably not)	M	
a good reason to build up near open spaces is that is enhances quality of life	M	

Table L

