

Article 12 - MBTA Communities Act Presentation for STM 2023

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ARFRR

ARLINGTON RESIDENTS FOR
RESPONSIBLE REDEVELOPMENT

mbta.arfrr.org

Do the people we serve want this in Arlington?

The Public are broadly asking us to meet but not exceed the law: 1/2 to 2/3rds of the public favor reducing the size



740+ Signatures and Counting

Petition For a Responsible MBTA Communities Act

As residents of Arlington we recognize that all communities served by the MBTA are being required by the State of Massachusetts to change their zoning to allow for more housing to be built throughout the region.

As an "adjacent community" (one that is adjacent to an MBTA hub) State regulations require Arlington to create a new zoning overlay district of 32 acres with the capacity for 2,046 units of multi-family housing that can be built "by right."

We further note that the Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development's *MBTA Communities Working Group* has proposed [a much larger plan](#) that would create capacity for up to 7,300 units of multi-family housing or 3.5 times what the State requires, in an area that currently holds 3000 homes.

We believe this is unnecessary overreach that could have numerous problematic consequences for Arlington.

Depending on how many people occupy each of the additional dwellings proposed in the current plan, our current population of more than 46,000 could see a dramatic increase in size.

With these facts in mind, **we ask that the MBTA Communities Working Group alter its current plan so that it meets the requirements of the MBTA Communities Act but does not exceed it.**

CLICK HERE TO ADD YOUR NAME TO THE PETITION!



Jordan	Weinstein	Robin	Bergman	Elizabeth	Kulbach
Aram	Hollman	Eugenia	Grigoris	Mahenthiran	Venugopal
Patricia	Worden	Carl	Wagner	Sarah	Molloy
Beth	Melofchik	Alla	Wagner	Gomathy	Mahenthiran
Nancy	Mara	Eric	Peterson	Emily	Kathan
Lori	Leahy	Lygia	Grigoris	William	Jackson
Mary Claire	Malek-Odom	Paul	Parise	Elizabeth	lock
Martin	Heermance	Kristan	Schoen	Daniel	Petrie
Charlotte	Keys	Cheryl	Dressler	Laura	Goldstein
Andrew	Fischer	Michael	Scelfo	Smitha	gollamudi
A	Mozina	Gustavo	Pardo	John	Payne
Rebecca	Peterson	gary	shostak	John	Leone
Elizabeth	Pyle	Anne	Ehlert	Pauline	Leone
Beth	Benedikt	Joanne	Batziotegos	Loma	Leone
Robert	Tosi Jr	Laurel	Kayne	Annaliese	Scheer
Amy L.	Slutzky	Michael	Hogan	Susan	Mortimer
Betty	Dakopoulos	Agnes	Parise	Joanne	Cullinane
Antonios	Dakopoulos	Genevieve	Oba	Russell	Keim
Nick	Karras	Scott	Tower	Charles	Foskett
Maria	Karras	Jason	Fisher	Ann	Cantalupa
Ian	Goodsell	Rob	Shaffer	Jo Anne	Preston
Wynelle	Evans	Edda	Shaffer	Ginger	Tower
John	Worden	Laura	Wilcox	Marilyn	Sullivan

THE STATE
OF THE NATION'S
HOUSING ²⁰/₂₃

JOINT CENTER FOR HOUSING
STUDIES OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY

**Affordable Housing is a Real Problem
... but MBTA-C is not the answer**

*Millions of households are now priced out of homeownership
...including a disproportionate share of people of color.*

*...multifamily construction has remained strong, with a record
number of apartments under construction.*

*However, most of this new housing supply
targets renters with high incomes.*



Save our affordability!

The *PROMISE* of the MBTA Communities Act



The REALITY of the MBTA Communities Act

- Affordable housing by building more of it and of greater variety
- Increased use of public transportation
- Greater sustainability through greater density

- Our 1 in 6 unit, 60% Area Median Income existing Bylaw might even be rejected by the State.
- The Act specifies that **no more than 1 in 10 units (10%)** can be affordable and at a higher rent level
- **Bus service inadequate, no overlay near Alewife**
- **All open space requirements removed**

Slide 5: Promise vs Reality
of MBTA-C- other issues



**It's also not about
the MBTA**

**It is not about housing
choice, economic diversity,
or equity**

**It is not about a Missing
Middle**

**It is not about Family
Housing**

How will Finances be affected?

Goal/ Claim/ proposal

- taxes will be reduced
- town deficit will be reduced

Reality - per FinCom Report below

- recently built multi-units produce tax revenues **below** the Town's average per capita cost
- Even at the minimum MBTA expanded housing capacity, Arlington expenses will grow faster than revenues
- The Town can constrain expenses, but only at a cost of reduced service levels
- From a financial perspective in the model a capacity expansion of 3,069 units, drives an **additional annual deficit of \$4.1 million**

Source: Fin Com Financial Dimesions- dated October 5, 2023: at <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/66997>

Slide 7: Actual deadlines,
the Fossil Fuel Ban and our
options

**We actually have until DECEMBER 2024 to get
this right - it's too important to get wrong.**

Fossil Fuel Ban Pilot Program: We could help area pollution reduction even if we don't join the pilot program - and benefit from the program's lessons to be learned...

Stakeholder Inclusion: Other Towns, like Lincoln, included a broad spectrum of stakeholders in their Working Groups: **Affordable housing advocates** and officials, **Schools** and affected services representatives, **Open space**, tree, and environment groups, advocates, **social justice, equity** and inclusion representatives, municipal **finance** and **tax payer** advocates

Harder to remove than to add density in Massachusetts: 50% vote to increase, 66.6% vote to decrease. **We should move carefully. The unamended plan is not careful.**

SUMMARY

- **Most of the the public who have spoken do not want Town Meeting to exceed the required State mandate.** They are worried about negative and unintended effects beyond simply making market rate housing.
- **The MBTA-C is NOT an affordable housing Act;** it seeks to make higher priced housing than we have for higher income renters. Making more will not make more affordability.
- **Art 12 has a negative impact to town deficits and your constituents' property taxes and rent costs.** The negative financial/tax effect grows as we add more units and density. **More Article 12 makes Arlington poorer.**
- **Without amendments Article 12 is too large, will make living here harder for people on fixed, middle and lower incomes and promote only an affluent class.**

Amendment: preserve required open landscaped space and setbacks
What is better for climate Change mitigation, CO2 sink, green canopy?

with open space required



without open space required

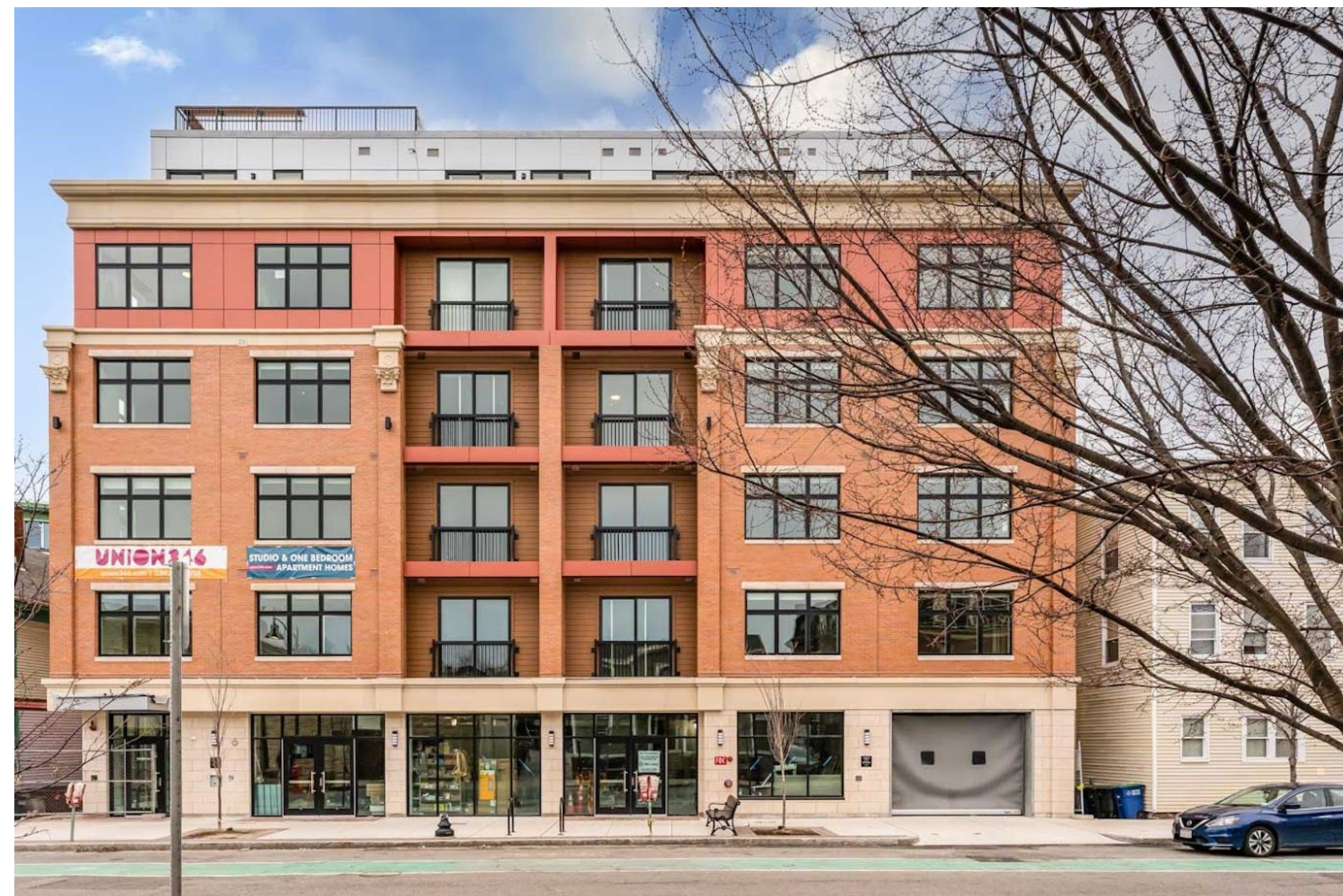


Preserve required open landscaped space and setbacks

with open space required



without open space required



Preserve required open landscaped space and setbacks

with

without



Preserve required open landscaped space and setbacks

with



without



Preserve required open landscaped space and setbacks

with space

what is coming soon - Mirak



Please only support an Amended Article 12 at STM



Please support ONLY an Amended Article 12:

These Amendments are before you are supported by ARFRR because they reduce the negative or unintended consequences of Article 12. **Look for unit and size reductions.**



Please Reject

increases in unit count, building masses, density, financial deficits or that reduce our open space, tree canopy, congestion and traffic situation.

Reject an unamended Article 12 that is too big, expensive for us

Read summaries on phone/laptop of the Amendments on the ARFRR Guide to Articles: <https://tm.arfrr.org>



Thank you for listening to the presentation

Please only vote to support an **Amended Article 12** that reduces units, density and building sizes to fit the Commonwealth's requirement and fits Arlington better!