

MBTA Communities Working Group

October 2, 2023

Meeting Summary

Attending: Vince Baudoin, Rebecca Gruber, Shaina Korman-Houston, Sanjay Newton, Stephen Revilak, Laura Wiener

Staff: Marisa Lau, Claire Ricker

Working Group Report

Mr. Newton describes a set of changes that he's proposed for the final report. They involve two places where the report mentions four stories and elevators. The report states that the building code requires elevators in four-story buildings, but the reality is more complicated, and involves the building code, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board Regulations, and other regulations.

There's a motion to amend pages 6 and 24 of the report, as suggested by Mr. Newton. Motion passes, 6--0.

There's a motion that the chair be allowed to approve minutes of tonight's MBTA Communities working group meeting, as the working group has no future meetings scheduled. Motion passes, 6--0.

Mr. Baudoin asks if the MBTA Communities working group will be dissolved at some point. Mr. Newton believes the Arlington Redevelopment Board would have to vote to dissolve the working group, as they are the body that voted to create it.

Meeting adjourned.

Documents Discussed

Email correspondence from Mr. Newton to the Working Group, dated October 1, 2023. This correspondence recommended the following changes to the working group report (additions in underline, and removals in ~~striketrough~~):

Page 6:

Each of these subdistricts has distinct setback requirements and height limits. In the neighborhood subdistrict, the side setbacks are larger, and the height limit is lower. The Working Group chose ~~choosing~~ to allow by-right residential to be 4 stories tall in all subdistricts because ~~the Building Code requires that~~ buildings that are 4 stories or taller will have an elevator and meet other accessibility requirements. We have heard from many community

members that a lack of housing with elevators and other accessibility features is a barrier to residents with different abilities finding housing, and a barrier for seniors looking to downsize and stay in Arlington. The full details of these dimensional controls can be found in the “MBTA Communities Proposal” section of this report.

Page 24:

~~The Building Code requires that b~~Buildings that are 4 stories or taller will have an elevator and meet other accessibility requirements. This was a major driver behind the Working Group choosing to allow by-right residential to be 4 stories tall in all subdistricts. We have heard from many community members that a lack of housing with elevators and other accessibility features is a barrier to residents with different abilities finding housing, and a barrier for seniors looking to downsize and stay in Arlington.