



Warrant Article 11: Fossil Fuel-Free Bylaw Language Changes

Arlington Annual Town Meeting 2024

Department of Planning & Community Development

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Purpose of Warrant Article 11

- **Include large additions and changes of use in the definition of Major Renovation** in the Town's 2023 Fossil Fuel-Free Bylaw.
- These types of projects would be fossil fuel-free, in addition to large alterations.



Background: Fossil Fuel-Free Bylaw & Demonstration Program

- Arlington Special Town Meeting (Oct 2023) voted to adopt new Fossil Fuel-Free Bylaw
- Bylaw **enables Arlington's participation in Municipal Fossil Fuel-Free Building Demonstration Program** ("Demonstration Program")
- Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) formally accepted Arlington into Demonstration Program on February 21, 2024
- **Bylaw will take effect on May 21, 2024**



DOER Recommends Revised Definition of Major Renovation

- Revision would **align Arlington's definition** with **DOER's Model Rule** and Demonstration Program regulations
- Per DOER, revision would provide **more complete picture of the impact of Bylaw on major renovations**
- Town's **Clean Energy Future Committee voted in support** of recommendation



Requirements for Major Renovations in Existing Fossil Fuel-Free Bylaw

- **Equipment or appliances** used for space heating, service water heating, cooking, clothes drying, and/or lighting **that utilize fossil fuels may not be installed as part of major renovations**
- **Exemptions exist** in the Bylaw for: research/medical facilities; hot water for large buildings; utility-side connections; backup generators; portable propane appliances; extension or modification of existing fossil fuel heating systems; and repair of existing, unsafe piping
- Provisions for **waivers and appeals** exist in Bylaw



Current Definition of Major Renovations in Bylaw

- Low-rise **residential alterations** exceeding 50% of the existing conditioned (finished) floor area AND exceeding 1,000 square feet (sq ft)
- **Commercial alterations** exceeding 50% of the existing conditioned floor area OR exceeding 20,000 sq ft



Proposed Amendments to Definition of Major Renovations in Bylaw

Add the following to the existing definition in the Fossil Fuel-Free Bylaw:

- **Low-rise residential additions** exceeding 1,000 sq ft OR exceeding 100% of the existing conditioned floor area
- **Commercial additions** exceeding 20,000 sq ft OR exceeding 100% of the existing conditioned floor area
- **Low-rise residential changes of use** exceeding 1,000 sq ft
- **Commercial changes of use** exceeding 20,000 sq ft or equal to 100% of the existing conditioned floor area



Expected Impact of Update to Definition

In 2023:

- **4** residential additions >1,000 sq ft or >100% of conditioned floor area
- **0** commercial additions >20,000 sq ft or >100% of conditioned floor area
- **0** residential or commercial changes of use over thresholds

In 2022:

- **2** residential additions >1,000 sq ft or >100% of conditioned floor area
- **0** commercial additions >20,000 sq ft or >100% of conditioned floor area
- **0** residential or commercial changes of use over thresholds

