

Master Plan Implementation Committee  
Report to Town Meeting  
April 25, 2016

Town Meeting in 2015 voted to endorse the Arlington Master Plan, “Your Town Your Future” with approximately 75% of its members voting in favor of the Master Plan. In the year that has followed, the Town began to implement many of the recommendations contained in the Master Plan.

In the fall of 2015 a Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) was appointed. Members are as follows:

Name	Appointing Authority
1. Andrew Bunnell	ARB representative
2. Andrew West	ARB alternate
3. Adam Chapdelaine	Town Manager, ex officio
4. Michael Byrne	Inspectional Services, ex officio
5. Joe Barr (Co-Chair)	ARB appointee
6. Wendy Richter	ARB appointee
7. Ann LeRoyer	Town Meeting Moderator appointee
8. Peter Howard	Finance Committee appointee
9. Charles Kalaskas (Co-Chair)	Selectmen appointee
10. Ralph Willmer	Selectmen appointee

The Committee has met six (6) times since its first meeting in October 2015, plus additional Working Group meetings. Three (3) Working Groups were established: Residential, Mixed Use and Commercial, and Historic. Staff from the Department of Planning and Community Development has worked closely with the Committee and Working Groups.

During this first six (6) months, the MPIC focused its attention on zoning amendments that will come before 2016 Annual Town Meeting, to meet the following Master Plan goals and recommendations. Specific references to the plan are given in parentheses:

- Unlock the development potential of business zoned land. (#8 p. 43)
- Promote development of higher value mixed use buildings by providing redevelopment incentives in business districts. (#4 p.11, #1 p.13, #8 p.43, #1 p.105)
- Promote vibrant, attractive commercial centers by encouraging mixed use redevelopment. (#5 p. 11, #9 p.43)
- Make sound fiscal plans and realistic choices [by promoting responsible development] (p. iii)
- Modify parking requirements to reflect actual need for parking, and to encourage multi-family housing and mixed use development in commercial areas. (#3 p.10, #11 p.44, #4 p.89)
- Control the size and scope of development in existing residential neighborhoods. (p.88, #21 p.186)

The MPIC worked closely with the Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB), supporting their efforts to advance zoning warrant articles that promote growth in the commercial corridors along Mass. Ave. and Broadway, and put some controls on the size of new housing development in residential neighborhoods to protect the existing character of neighborhoods throughout the town. The MPIC endorsed those Warrant Articles, 6 through 10.

A number of near-term and mid-term recommendations of the Master Plan have already been implemented or are in process.

1. The Master Plan Implementation Committee was formed (#35 p.188)
2. A Housing Production Plan is underway, and will be finished by July, 2016. This will include specific recommendations for increasing the town's deed-restricted affordable housing, and include specific sites recommended for future housing development. (p. 13, #11 p.186, #49 p.189)
3. Commercial District Design Standards were developed and adopted by the ARB. (August, 2015) (#6 p. 43, #4 p.185)
4. A parking study was conducted for multi-family residential and mixed use development, to determine actual parking usage, and project parking need. (March, 2016) (p. 13, #25 p.187)
5. A Complete Streets policy was adopted by the Selectmen (April, 2016), and now awaits approval by MassDOT. (p. 67, #39 p.188)
6. The Community Preservation Act funding process was established and implemented. Recommendations for the first year's project funding is before the 2016 Town Meeting. (#12 p.16, #24 p.187, #10 p.124)
7. The recommendations in the Arlington Center Parking Management Plan are partially implemented. Multi-space meters in parking lots have been replaced and single space meters will be installed in the upcoming fiscal year. (p. 68, #15 p.186)
8. A proposal for regulating removal of mature trees is before Town Meeting this year, developed by the Tree Committee. (p. #42 p.188)

During the coming year, the highest priority for the Committee is to oversee the rewriting of a new Zoning Bylaw, also known as "recodification". Our current Zoning Bylaw was written in 1975. While it has been amended many times over the past 40 years, many of the definitions and uses are outdated or not in compliance with state regulations, and the Bylaw does not reflect the current thinking in national, state and regional zoning and planning. The Master Plan Zoning Assessment noted too many uses, too many by special permit, and too many zones. During the coming year we will start the process of streamlining our zoning to better reflect the goals of the Master Plan, and of the Town. This year we went forward with a small number of amendments we wanted in place right away, before the recodification begins, which could take a year or more. We hope that next year Town Meeting will be reviewing and adopting a new zoning bylaw, or at least part of one.

Other priorities for the coming year are an operating plan for the rest of the Master Plan, with prioritization for implementation. Some of the items we expect to address are:

- Promoting preservation of our historic properties and cultural resources (p.16, 123)
- Implementing the recommendations of the Housing Production Plan (p. 88, 186, 189)
- Planning for the future of the Mill Brook corridor (p. 17, 144, 186)
- Prioritizing projects and applying for funds under the MassDOT Complete Streets program (p. 188)
- Continuing implementation of the Arlington Center Parking Management Plan (p. 186)
- Seeking Massachusetts Survey and Planning Grant funds to complete an historic resources survey. (p. 15, 186)

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Kalaskas, Co-Chair  
Joseph Barr, Co-Chair