

**Minutes
Town of Lexington Appropriation Committee Meeting
March 28, 2011**

Time and Location: Ellen Stone Room, Cary Hall, 6:45 p.m.

Members Present: Glenn Parker, Chair; John Bartenstein, Vice Chair and Secretary; Joe Pato, Vice Chair; Robert Cohen; Mollie Garberg; Alan Levine; Eric Michelson; Susan McLeish; Richard Neumeier; Rob Addelson (non-voting, ex officio)

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 p.m.

Article 4 Amendment. The Committee discussed Patrick Mehr's proposed amendment to Article 4 seeking the creation of a five-person committee to "conduct a retrospective review of the accuracy of fiscal impact projections, including school enrollment and increased tax collections, used to support rezoning actions brought to Town Meeting over the last ten years."

Comments were made on a number of aspects of the proposal, including the critique Mr. Mehr had circulated with his motion of the projections of tax revenue and student population that were made for the 2004 Avalon Bay project. Mr. Michelson noted that the Town had engaged its own consultant to review the data contained in the Connery Report prepared for Avalon, but that the Town's consultant was paid for by Avalon.

Mr. Michelson said he supported gathering the data suggested in the amendment but wanted to discuss whether the proposed committee is the most appropriate mechanism for doing this. Ms. Garberg expressed concern about the staff time and other resources that would be needed. Mr. Neumeier favored getting a detailed understanding of the issues but suggested conserving resources by looking at re-zonings that were done over a span of time shorter than the ten years proposed. Ms. McLeish agreed that the while the goal of the amendment is worthy, the proposed review timeframe is too extensive, and suggested that the most important concern is to establish a sound process for making fiscal projections going forward.

It was noted that broader economic and other trends that were not foreseeable may have had an impact on the experience with Avalon Bay, and that it is important in particular to consider the recent unexpected increase in school population and the need for town services, as well as changing economic factors, all of which would need to be tracked quantitatively and qualitatively. In response to a question about other projects, Mr. Addelson observed that consultants brought in to provide analysis and projections for the Shire project had done a thorough job. He emphasized the value of moving forward and considering the best investment of collective time. Mr. Pato suggested that the type of research sought by the amendment could be useful and productive but the proposed committee might not be the best mechanism.

March 28, 2011

A Motion to approve the Article 4 amendment as written by Patrick Mehr was made and seconded. Vote: 2-6-1. The Committee discussed comments that would be useful to convey at Town Meeting to communicate its concerns.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

A list of documents and exhibits used at the meeting is attached.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Yepez
Recording Secretary

Approved April 6, 2011

March 28, 2011

**Exhibits
Town of Lexington Appropriation Committee Meeting
March 28, 2011**

1. Meeting Agenda, posted by Glenn Parker, Chair.