

ARLINGTON REDEVELOPMENT BOARD

TOWN HALL - ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02174

TELEPHONE 617 643-6700

October 6, 1975

Re: Article 6

Special Town Meeting
Robbins Memorial Town Hall
Arlington, Massachusetts

Gentlemen:

In connection with the proposed modification or amendment of the Zoning Bylaw, so called, relating to the definition of "family", as more particularly set forth in Article 6 of the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting of October 6, 1975, the Redevelopment Board's final report is as follows:

The said Board held a public hearing upon the matter of such proposed amendment in the auditorium of Robbins Memorial Town Hall on September 15, 16, and 17, 1975, public notice of which was given by publication in the ARLINGTON ADVOCATE of August 28, 1975, and September 4, 1975, copies of which are attached hereto. Approximately thirty-five people were present at the hearing.

This article proposes to establish a maximum number to the number of unrelated individuals that may live together as a single house-keeping unit.

At the present time, there is no definition of "family". This article would permit up to four unrelated individuals to live together as a family.

During the public meetings that the Redevelopment Board has held during the last eighteen months, there has been one concern expressed by many citizens. That concern is that the town of Arlington is an extremely densely populated community. Building lots are small and streets are narrow. Many lots and streets were laid out before the automobile became a common means of travel. This has meant that in 1975, it is extremely difficult to accommodate large numbers of people and automobiles on small lots.

Arlington has become an extremely attractive place for groups of unrelated individuals to live. It is close to the universities in Boston, Cambridge, and Medford. The rents are lower than those found in many adjoining communities. Therefore, it is only natural to find an increase in the number of groups living in Arlington. The Redevelopment Board has researched this subject in considerable detail, including interviews with people living in group accommodations, and research into the redevelopment implications of

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controlling unrelated individuals. The Supreme Court of the United States has determined that communities can control the size of groups of unrelated individuals.

A second issue is that of economics. The rent that a group can pay is frequently double that which a family can pay. As Arlington continues to be an attractive residential community for groups, there will be a gradual shift from family accommodations to group accommodations. During its analysis of this problem, the Redevelopment Board has become aware of buildings that have been sold on the premise that the building would make fine accommodations for a large group at the expense of a family.

The Redevelopment Board strongly supports the adoption of this article as one step that can be undertaken to provide minimum controls for this problem.

The Redevelopment Board, by a unanimous vote of all members present, recommends the adoption of Article 6.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen P. Rubin
Joseph F. Bellini
Robert Shuman
Edward T. M. Ten
Philip J. McLanety

I hereby certify that the signatures affixed hereto are those of the members of the Redevelopment Board of the Town of Arlington.

ATTEST:

Christine M. Callahan
Town Clerk