

Precinct 9 Town Meeting Member

7 for 3 years

1 for 1 year

Question for Town Meeting Member candidates:

Do you favor more commercial development in Lexington to offset residential development? If so, where would you choose to locate it?

Incumbents

Victoria Lawrence Blier

VB@Blier.net

781-862-1804

Recent Community Activities: Co-Chair of the Selectmen's Tax Deferral and Exemption Study Committee, Member of the Selectmen's Residential Exemption Study Committee (Ad Hoc), Moderator of the Town Meeting Members Association Email Forum
Volunteer, Mock Town Meeting for Eighth Grade Students

Zoning articles are some of the most anguishing votes we take at Town Meeting. They involve the longest debates and are the subject of the most heartfelt concern from residents. We need to carefully guard the rights of our neighbors. But we also have to be responsible and realistic and give a fair hearing to proposed projects that can potentially reduce the share of the budget that homeowners pay. Even though Lexington is thought of as a "rich" town, many of us experience significant housing-cost stress due to fixed retirement incomes, high mortgage costs, the need to save for retirement, the cost of our children's college tuition or even the lingering payments for our own college loans.

Maintaining our excellent public schools consumes about 75% of Lexington's entire Town budget, and our residential taxes are very high. Commercial properties in Lexington pay a higher tax rate than residential properties and new commercial development can contribute significant tax revenue without increasing our school population. Lexington taxpayers are facing big tax increases to pay for replacement or expansion of our over-crowded high school and the replacement of our antiquated and obsolete fire and police stations. We can't ignore the important role that commercial development can play in easing the financial burden of these projects on our residents.

I believe that commercial development should be actively encouraged in parts of Lexington where there is good access to highways and where commercial density makes public

transportation feasible. The Hartwell Avenue commercial district meets these criteria. We need to revise Hartwell zoning to make new building projects feasible for developers while continuing to require developers to help fund road improvements and shuttle services to reduce traffic impacts.

With every new development in Town, the Planning Board and Town Meeting, if involved, must be strong advocates for neighborhoods abutting proposed projects, pushing to minimize impacts and maximize natural buffer zones and provide strong protections from light and noise intrusions.

As much as we'd all like to freeze Lexington just as it was when we first got here, the fact is that we need commercial development to offset residential taxes. I support encouraging appropriate commercial development of appropriate size in appropriate locations with appropriate protections for abutters because it will give us the important tax support we need to help reduce housing-cost stress in Lexington.

Rodney Cole

Margaret E. Coppe

Email: mecoppe@gmail.com

781-862-2637

Community Activities: League of Women Voters of Lexington, Town Meeting Member, School Committee (2007-2016), 2020 Committee, Tourism Committee, Hanscom Field Advisory Commission, Hanscom Area Towns Committee

I favor expanding commercial development in town as it is one way to increase revenue without unduly increasing residential taxes. Since the town will be faced soon with building a new high school that may cost in the hundreds of millions, increasing revenue will be essential. The only areas in town that are candidates for large increases in commercial development are Hartwell Avenue and Hayden Avenue.

Thomas O. Fenn

Pamela Kumari Joshi

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Community Activities

Human Services Committee, Mental Health and Wellness Task Force

The premise of this question implies that we need to sustain Lexington through development in a zero sum game. There is an embedded assumption that Lexington has to grow. I think it makes sense to think through how to diversify Lexington's existing commercial base and then consider how to expand it.

Christina M. Murray

Janet M. Perry

New Candidates

Scott F. Burson

scottburson02421@aol.com

(781) 863-8367

Community Activities: School Committee, 2000-2006; Cary Library Trustee, 2000-2006; Town Meeting Member 1997-2016; Cary Memorial Library Foundation, 2006-2012; Board of Selectmen's Policy Advisory Committee, 2013- present

I believe residents of the town will benefit if we permit more commercial development. We can achieve this by allowing more flexibility in uses, especially ancillary service uses, in existing commercially zoned areas of the Town. I think our existing zoning and land use provisions are overly restrictive, and can be relaxed to permit more commercial development without unduly burdening the residents of the town or intruding into any existing residential neighborhoods. This will result in a more equitable sharing of the local tax burden between residents and commercial entities.

Nancy C. Cowen

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phone number: 781-538-5210

Community Activities: Town Report Committee; Co-Chair, Community Liason for Lincoln/Fairland Development; Hastings & Diamond Green Team; Hastings Family & Friends; Hastings Room Parent; LUSC Soccer Coach; First Parish Lexington Member

As a long time resident of Lexington, I feel that any development needs to be carefully thought through and well executed. Consideration must be given to the impact on town infrastructure, and its residents. Any type of development needs to align with Lexington's Comprehensive Plan.

Potential locations for commercial development are Hartwell Ave, Route 2 and Spring Street. Which I would consider only after a detailed evaluation that development does not negatively affect surrounding neighborhoods, has adequate traffic mitigation, provides pedestrian and bike safety, and uses sustainable building design.

Dilip H. Patel

My Email: dpatel0320@gmail.com

My phone : 781-835-6728

Community activities: New at this.

I favor more structural, sustainable commercial developments.

I will let experienced personnel guide me about site.