

SUPPORT ARLINGTON CENTER'S QUESTIONS FOR THE TOWN:

These questions were generated by the Support Arlington Center community as of August 8, 2016. We are hoping to have answers to these questions before September 1, 2016.

Landlord questions and communications

1. What are the details of the fees for property owners who have empty storefronts.
2. What is the development plan for the three main landlords with the emptiest storefronts; do the landlords want to build up their physical space and that is the hold up from bringing in new businesses/having existing businesses leave?
3. Tell us about your recent one-on-one landlord meetings, what was determined in the meetings and who did you meet with?
4. Have landlords violated any town rule/regulation?
5. How long has the town been watching the storefront situation, and what tactics have they tried to avoid for the current situation (to avoid duplicated dead ends)?
6. Has there been records/proof of the main three landlords with the emptiest property in Arlington Center, working with realtors or developers to upkeep and build out the storefronts?
7. Has the Town reached out to other towns, similar to Arlington, with ideas for improvements? Do they know of specific towns that have succeeded in turning things around?

Fine structure, taxes, lease and rules

1. What can the Town do if landlords won't pay taxes; sometimes for years?
2. Are there tax breaks for businesses with empty storefronts?
3. What is the fine structure for landlords and empty storefronts?
4. What is the time frame and how can the Town prove the landlords are searching for vacancies?
5. What can Town officials do if landlords raise rents so high that tenants cannot stay?
6. What can Town officials do if landlords won't pay taxes; sometimes for years?
7. What leverage do Town officials have over landlords? For example, the Town now has a single tax rate for residents and for businesses. If the Town had a rate for businesses that was higher, couldn't officials then have some sway over businesses? They could offer a tax break in return for some benefit. Would officials consider a split tax rate?
8. How does the Town measure the impact and/or cost of an empty store?

Inspections, development, community

1. When national chains consider moving to Arlington, does the Town provide feedback on the available space? For example, Starbucks renovated, was that at Starbucks discretion?
2. Does the Town conduct regular inspections of all commercial properties for code violations or other public hazards? How about the vacant properties? People in the Arlington Community have heard many vacant properties are in very poor conditions.
3. Can the Town do anything to make sure landlords have properly renovated / painted / kept up their buildings?

4. Is there anything the Town can do to at least compel landlords to bring empty buildings up to code?
5. Are the landlords solely responsible to pay for infrastructure repairs? What if the landlord doesn't want to do infrastructure repairs or cosmetic fixes? Are there historical requirements or Town requirements for them to do so? Can the Town help subsidize the infrastructure to attract and keep business?