

# Dear editor...

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Arlington, Mass. -

- ARLINGTON, MASS. - Experience, energy and empathy

John Worden is the best candidate for representative for the 23rd Middlesex District for three reasons: his experience, his energy and his empathy. Consider, for a moment, the work that John Worden has done in the public realm for the town of Arlington. You probably know that he served as Town Meeting Moderator for 19 years, and that his service in that position has been widely acclaimed from all quarters. He has also been in Town Meeting for 38 years, and not just sitting there, but participating in, and in many cases leading the debate on important issues that have made Arlington a better place to live. I have personally witnessed John's dedication during my 32 years in Town Meeting and 34 years residing in Arlington.

He also has served as a director of the Animal Rescue League of Boston (one of the two major humane organizations in Massachusetts), president of Arlington Preservation Fund (which provides low cost loans to owners of historic properties), president of the Arlington Conservation Association (an early environmental group that did a lot of good work in the 70s), member of the Historic District Commissions (which protect seven of our most historically significant neighborhoods), almost all of the offices in the Arlington Historical Society (which operates the Jason Russell House and the Smith Museum), member of the Real Estate Bar Association's Affordable Housing Committee (a group of lawyers involved in affordable housing issues), trustee of the Farmer Trust (financial aid for needy seniors), director of the Sanborn Foundation (aid for local cancer victims and their families) and many others.

A graduate of Harvard Law School, he's been in private practice for over four decades, and is familiar with laws, the making of which is the primary business of the legislature. His knowledge of the community and pro-environment positions make him the ideal candidate to be your voice on Beacon Hill. His professionalism is widely known and his ethical standards are beyond reproach. His energetic contribution to all segments of our community are signal accomplishments deserving all of our support. Please join me in voting on March 4 for the best-qualified candidate — John Worden.

Charlie Foskett  
Brantwood Road  
Worden knows what's important

John Worden knows what's important and what we need to do to make Arlington and Medford great places to live and to bring change to make them better. He works with

young and old to do that. He has been particularly concerned about financial burdens on citizens and lack of priority given by the legislature for local aid. He suggests that a “foundation budget” be established to provide adequate local aid off the top of the state revenues.

John brings suggestions for improvements to many boards and committees or to individuals serving on them. For example, recently he emphasized to Selectmen that they should keep the Town Meeting warrant open for a sufficient time so that citizens can file articles that they want Town Meeting to vote on. He works with neighbors and the Historic District Commissions to establish Historic Districts. Arlington has seven beautiful Historic Districts in East Arlington, Arlington Center and at Mount Gilboa. He seeks Selectmen support for these districts and also the help of Massachusetts Historical Commission and legislators in establishing even better protection for them.

He has encouraged change after change over the years to protect and acquire open space and to require responsibility in development. Recently he presented testimonies at Zoning Board of Appeals hearings on a 40B project on Brattle Street after which the developer reduced by two the number of units so that there is at least a small amount of additional open space in the center of that crowded development. Even as a young Town Meeting Member prior to becoming Moderator John frequently argued for necessary changes to our bylaws and zoning bylaw. For example, early on he opposed massive construction at the Mugar site (in East Arlington abutting Thorndike Field) of three huge towers on wetlands (fortunately they are still unbuilt) and similarly later at Summer Street he supported the plan replacing the large development originally planned for the area by what we have now - McClennen Park.

He helped stop bad development threatened at Redevelopment Board level by helping found two activist groups — Arlington Residents for Reasonable Redevelopment and Arlington Citizens for Responsible Development. The former succeeded in bringing Millbrook Apartments’ height down from 13 stories to 5 stories thereby avoiding a massive structure on the floodplain of Mill Brook; the latter removed the possibility of an Osco Drug being built at the already-failing intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Mill Street.

To enable John to continue his outstanding service for us, please join me in voting for him on March 4.

Ruth Daley  
Worden looks out for people

Many letters have been written to your newspaper about all the good work done by John Worden in his service to Arlington as Moderator, and on many public boards and committees. What is perhaps not so well known is that he also helps individuals.

For example, the Farmer Trust, of which he is the trustee, provides stipends to elderly needy women and couples in Arlington. The Sanborn Foundation, of which he is a director provides aid to the victims of cancer and their families.

Many years ago, when he was a young Town Meeting member, a retired member of the Arlington Police came to him for assistance. In those days, retirees from town service had received a pension based on the salary they had received while in service. Some of these elderly men, who'd been retired for many years, filed a warrant article to accept a state statute, providing that their pensions be adjusted to keep pace with inflation. The article got no traction with the Selectmen or Finance Committee. But John got up and argued for it, the article was passed, and since then, retired town employees have seen their pensions adjusted upwards — and I don't think many remembered how that came about; they all should be grateful to John, and join me in voting for him for state representative on March 4.

Lyman G. Judd

#### Putting the community first

How many people have tried to keep approximately 250 highly opinionated fellow citizens, some of whom may have strong personal agendas, deeply involved in discussion and decision-making, and at the same time maintain order and polity while lightening things up with some humor? This is not a job for the faint-hearted but is the work that our well-prepared moderator, John Worden, did for the past 19 years. His leadership abilities enabled him to do it, but his skill in conflict resolution and outstanding empathy and respect for Town Meeting members were the cornerstones of his tenure.

The moderator in towns with a Town Meeting form of government is charged by law with keeping good order, recognizing speakers, regulating the debate, taking votes and declaring the votes. John Worden's in-depth understanding of the law and its interpretation, together with his ability to oversee the interplay among Town Meeting members, town officials and legal jurisdiction of the various authorized boards was testimony to his outstanding intellect. During his time in office, he never missed a meeting and was re-elected, without opposition, for five terms after his initial victory in a field of four candidates, all of whom were attorneys.

Prior to Town Meeting, the moderator reviews the warrant (agenda) and helps put it into shape. He also advises citizens who wish to submit articles on how to do so. During the meeting, he must review and pass upon the validity of proposed amendments, substitute motions, and the like. After the meeting, he must review the town clerk's record of the votes passed for accuracy, before they are transmitted to various departments; or the attorney general for approval; or — for home-rule petitions — sent to the Legislature. In

addition he must make appointments to various committees. He always sought out the best people for the job regardless of political affiliation.

John Worden was available at any time to help anyone with questions about Town Meeting and related matters. Even after his decision not to run for re-election as Moderator last year he nevertheless made himself immediately available to serve for another year after tragedy struck the family of the newly elected Moderator.

John is a man who puts the welfare of the community above all else. His skill and dedication are outstanding.

Please join me in voting for him on March 4.

Eva Arnott  
Lake Street

Worden has leadership, character, judgment

After reading the reasons why Caroline Kennedy finally choose to speak out for a presidential candidate, I felt compelled to do the same for our own but equally important upcoming election. for state representative. Ms. Kennedy spoke eloquently of the need of her own teenage children to feel inspired by someone as people were by JFK .in the 60s. Obviously inspiration does not have an age requirement. The ability to inspire happened here in our beloved town in the person of Charlie Lyons who as a teen became a Town Meting member. Or Peg Spengler, who after having raised five wonderful sons, became the first woman to serve on the Board of Selectmen. Then went on well into her 80s to continue to work for our town.

The requirements for inspiration are threefold: leadership, character, judgment. John Worden, who I have known for over 40 years, has shown leadership by his years as moderator at Town Meeting. He understands the process and knows how to use his leadership and judgment to accomplish what must be done. His integrity is without question. Nothing motivates John except what is best for Arlington. And should he be elected, the same driving motivation would underlie his decision making for his West Medford constituents. Nothing can take the place of experience, and John's brilliance as a skilled advocator, his deep moral commitment for the rights of the individual, his intense desire to see that the best possible decisions are made for those who place their trust in him are more than sufficient proof of that needed experience.

We have been fortunate through the years with a noble list of dedicated people who have supported our values of community. So many come to mind, and I apologize for any memory slips or forgotten greats: Arthur Saul, Bill Walsh, Peg Spengler, Patricia Fitzmaurice, Horace Homer, Dot Stein, Horace Greeley, Bill Shea, Bob O'Neill, Charlie Lyons, Donald Marquis and so many others. Along with this list of some of the most respected leaders of Arlington's past, may be added John Worden, who has the leadership, character and judgment not only to inspire the young but also to continue to bring hope and promise to us all. I have long ago chosen not to follow a party line but to,

as an Independent voter, choose the person best equipped for the job. It is with a great respect and admiration my vote for John Worden is cast.

Helen Devine

Venner Road

### The fight for affordable housing

One of the issues in my campaign for election as Arlington/West Medford's representative in the Legislature is the urgent need for reform of 40B (so-called "affordable housing" law). Many are aware of the damage done by this statute due to what is described as "the disaster on Brattle Street." There are seven cases currently pending in the Supreme Judicial Court dealing with 40B (*Globe NorthWest*, February 7). One of the worst results of the law is that it has emboldened developers to attempt further destruction of property rights and local control by promoting 40R and 40T.

40R promises state subsidies (although there is no guaranteed source of funds) to municipalities if they create overlay zones where developers can do pretty much whatever they want, without design review or planning board oversight, as long as it's within guidelines which the municipalities must prepare in advance without seeing actual plans. Anything can be built "as of right" — a privilege typically only given for single houses. A particularly unfair aspect is that property owners are effectively prohibited from challenging developer projects in court, due to the requirement to post a bond to cover the developer's costs if they lose. This goes against hundreds of years of legal tradition, and means that only the very wealthy have any chance of achieving justice.

Now, an even worse law called 40T is again before the Legislature. This statute would allow developers who promise some "affordable housing" to establish their own private domains within municipalities, including the property of other people, and, within those domains, be, in effect, the government and the tax collector. Last year, this was passed by the Legislature, but vetoed by Gov. Romney.

Affordable housing is an important social policy. I believe that everyone should have a roof over his or her head. But it is not so important that we should sacrifice, in its name, the essential liberties established for all Americans by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. In the 1770s, the British army occupying Boston wanted to provide affordable housing for its soldiers — so they required ordinary householders to put up those soldiers in their own homes! This was one of the misguided policies that brought about the American Revolution.

As your representative in the Legislature, I will fight such laws, so that we can provide affordable housing without the need for another revolution to keep the developers from taking over our cities and towns.

John Worden

27 Jason Street