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TOWN OF ARLINGTON
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December 27, 2001

Dear Members of the Town of Arlington Special Town Meeting:

We are very pleased to present to you the documents that provide information on the proposed acquisition by the Town of the former Symmes Hospital property currently owned by Lahey/Advantage Health. The Board feels strongly that acquisition of the site is in the best interests of the town. The cornerstone of this belief is the certainty that the property will be developed regardless of ownership. Your decision whether to approve this transaction, in order to ensure Town ownership, will determine whether future Town Meetings will be in control of this process. The alternative is to allow the process to be controlled by a developer over whom the Town can exert only limited control. A so-called Chapter 40B development providing affordable housing can trump all the provisions of our zoning by-law including height and density constraints.

Our studies have shown that the most economic reuse of this property is for high density residential use. This kind of development would likely be less sensitive to neighborhood concerns regarding traffic control and other factors. It would moreover make uncertain the continuation of much of the site as open space. The Selectmen's goals and commitments to the electorate in support of the debt exclusion vote of March 31, 2001 include appropriate commitments to the neighborhood concerning traffic and other factors that might affect the neighborhood's quality of life; the maintenance of open space and the providing of tasteful affordable housing on the site. Another goal of the Selectmen is the maintenance and expansion of medical services on the site, which would almost certainly be eliminated if a private development proceeded substantially free from Town control. The Board has committed also to make the development at least revenue neutral for the Town over time. All of the foregoing provide an outline on potential uses of the site. Town Meetings now and in the future must make these final determinations.

Our Town is at an historic crossroads. This property was gifted to the Town in 1851. It was given by the Town to the Symmes Hospital Corporation in 1903 for a community hospital. Now, nearly a 100 years later, the Town can reacquire this dominant and central site in the Town with its panoramic view of the Boston skyline. We urge your support on January 14th when Town Meeting reconvenes. We do not take your support for granted notwithstanding the nearly two to one favorable debt exclusion vote in March. As you know, the general electorate stated loudly and clearly its support for this acquisition when they voted in effect to raise their taxes.

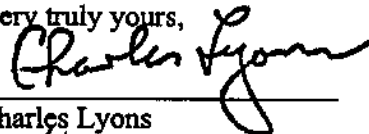
Birthplace of "Uncle Sam" - Our National Symbol
Samuel Wilson - Born in the Town - September 13, 1766

In this packet you will find a letter of support from the Chief Executive Officer of Lahey Clinic; a summary prepared by the Town Counsel of the provisions of the Purchase and Sale Agreement; the Purchase and Sale itself with the Lease Back Terms Sheet outlining the business terms of the proposed lease between the Town and Lahey; a summary of the environmental provisions of the acquisition prepared by the Town's environmental counsel; two appraisals prepared by Hunneman Consulting and Appraisal Company, one dated March 15, 2001 and the other dated October 15, 2001; and a report of the physical condition of the buildings as prepared by the Town's consultant TWB Associates, Inc.

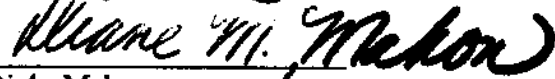
You will receive a subsequent mailing early in the week of January 7th containing the proposed main motion, which the Board will ask the Finance Committee to adopt on January 2nd. There will also be materials related to a preliminary approval of the property as an urban renewal site prepared by the Arlington Redevelopment Board under the provisions of Chapter 121B of the General Laws. This is a critical component of the financing plan since it will permit the operating expenses of the project to be paid from the proceeds of the sale of Bond Anticipation Notes and eventually Town issued bonds so as not to impact the operating budgets of the Town. Finally, the Symmes Advisory Committee will provide materials which will contain financial information showing income and expenses and how the bonds will be amortized. These financial documents will show the projected impact of the project on the average homeowner in the Town.

The Board and other Town officials look forward to discussing this matter in greater detail on January 14, 2002.

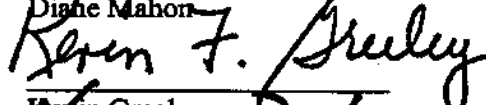
Very truly yours,



Charles Lyons



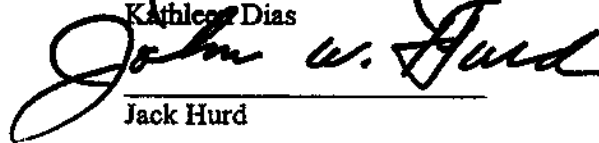
Diane Mahon



Kevin Greeley



Kathleen Dias



Jack Hurd

JFM

cc: Finance Committee
Redevelopment Board
Symmes Advisory Committee
Town Manager
Town Treasurer