

## Melanie Thompson

### **1. Why should people who are about social justice vote for you?**

I am committed to advancing inclusionary zoning policies that provide access to a wider variety of market rate as well affordable housing options. My support for initiatives like Article 34 MBTA Communities demonstrates a dedication to expanding housing opportunities and increases the amount of housing stock for all residents of varying financial means. I also advocate for measures that prioritize the needs of low and moderate income households, older persons, accessibility for individuals with disabilities, and other groups.

I believe in taking a holistic approach to addressing housing justice, considering factors such as transportation access, environmental sustainability, and community integration. Supporting multi-family and mixed used housing developments in the MBTA communities Village Overlay Districts will help to create vibrant, inclusive neighborhoods that provide residents with access to transportation, essential services and amenities. Through collaborative efforts with local stakeholders and advocacy for progressive housing policies, I am committed to building an equitable housing landscape in Lexington.

### **2. Why did you support or oppose Article 34 (Amend Zoning Bylaw Map - Multi-Family Housing for MBTA Communities)? In your answer, please explain how your position promotes housing justice.**

Yes, I strongly supported Article 34, the MBTA Communities Act, and as a member of the Planning Board I spent endless hours creating and refining the Village Overlay Zones, updating Site Plan Review regulations and requirements and much more. Extensive time and thought was put into making this decision. By amending the Zoning Bylaw Map to accommodate multi-family and mixed use housing, I attempted to address the pressing need for more alternative types of market rate housing as well as affordable housing options in Lexington, rather than continue to build only the conventional subdivisions that proliferate.

The MBTA community bylaw aligns with principles of housing justice by promoting inclusivity and equitable access to housing opportunities for residents of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. By diversifying the housing stock with multi-family and mixed use units, we allow individuals and households of varying income levels to live in a very desirable community with proximity to public transportation. Multi-family housing promotes efficient land use, which contributes to environmental sustainability. Additionally, this initiative fosters social cohesion and diversity within neighborhoods, enriching the fabric of our community. By advocating for policies that promote equitable access to housing, we uphold the principles of housing justice and strive to create a more inclusive and resilient community for all residents of Lexington.