

[Michael Schanbacher](#)

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

Lexington has made a commitment to the ideas of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of its policies, but residents sometimes wonder what specific actions they can take to make a difference. The Planning Board is a place where we can make that difference tangible.

For many years zoning has not created enough diverse, affordable, and accessible housing. Therefore, people of different income levels, backgrounds and abilities have not been able to find housing in the Greater Boston area and in Lexington. The Planning Board has moved to address this issue.

In 2023, after months of work by the Planning Board, including multiple meetings with residents and other stakeholders, Lexington became the first community in Massachusetts to adopt the state's MBTA Zoning initiative, which requires a certain amount of residential land near public transportation be zoned for multi-family housing. I was an active participant in creating the design standards for Lexington's zoning bylaw, which specified twelve areas distributed throughout the town. The Village Overlay zones will now permit multifamily housing, including a requirement that each project have a minimum of 10% affordable units. Permitting denser, diverse development near transit will lead to more walkable communities with less need for car trips and will help "missing middle," households be able to live in town. It will also increase our truly affordable housing units.

As the Planning Board continues our work, I remain committed to increasing affordable and accessible housing. I also see the important need to continue to create a diversity of housing types in Lexington, including small accessory dwelling units on residential parcels and moderate sized homes in compact neighborhood developments permitted under the other major zoning amendment passed in 2023.

I ask for your vote on March 5th so I can continue this very important work on the Planning Board.