

Dear editor...

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Arlington, Mass. -
ARLINGTON, MASS. - Undeserved heroes

Sensitivity and understanding

John Worden has walked the line between all the varied constituencies and politics in our community with sensitivity and understanding that can derive only from desiring the very best for all of us. He brought out the best from all segments of the community. Skilled in conflict resolution and getting to yes - no controversies, no matter how heated, ever got out of control under his guidance.

Although, after being elected moderator, he was thereby precluded from taking the floor of Town Meeting to argue for various causes he nevertheless found ways to promote them outside of, and often in preparation for, an educated decision by Town Meeting.

John advocates for holding the line on taxes while finding ways to prioritize local aid and adequately fund education, libraries, transportation and services. He is a strong voice for affordable housing and healthcare while achieving historic preservation and protection of open space. You can read about his work at www.worden2008.com or at www.democratsforworden.com. His work has given our community a better quality of life.

Above all he has worked to protect the environment. Conservation and preservation of natural resources is something he has been involved in all his life. His children follow in his footsteps — two sons are involved in manufacturing renewable energy components and his daughter is a distinguished oceanographer. He is a member of the Trustees of Reservations, Audubon, Conservation Law Foundation and Arlington Land Trust etc. He gave the town a conservation restriction on a little woods so that it would always be open space for the neighborhood. As president of the former Arlington Conservation Association, John went to Town Meeting with an extensive agenda, including moving the salt supply away from Mill Brook, studying the (even then) poor conditions of Spy Pond, and requiring deposits on beverage containers sold in Arlington. In other endeavors he worked to reform zoning in order to reduce heights and expand open space. He supported the change in plans from a housing development to a park at Summer Street and the acquisition of the Window on the Mystic Lakes etc. This information is on his web-site www.worden2008.com and www.democratsforworden.com.

He advocates reduction of global warming by use of alternative fuel vehicles and public transportation on which he commutes to Boston and he will continue to do if elected. He

drives an electric plug-in vehicle manufactured by his son who was ahead of his time and has electric cars on exhibit in several museums. He consistently protects against over-development. When several tall towers similar to the Wasserman Towers at Alewife were planned for the Mugar property near wetlands abutting Thorndike Field risking flooding he and others opposed them and they have never been built.

Please elect the best-qualified candidate, John Worden, as State Representative on March 4.

Robert L. Tosi Jr.
Inverness Road
Worden is best candidate

I encourage every resident of Arlington and West Medford to vote for John Worden on March 4! John will bring experience, energy and leadership to the job!

If you do not know John then go to his Web sites at www.worden2008.com and www.democratsforworden.com to learn more about him and I'm sure that once you do you will agree with me that John is the best candidate for state representative.

As a resident of Arlington for some 40 years, John has dedicated much of his time to improving the quality of life within our community. He has been able to do that through his role as town moderator, a position he held for 19 years. He has also been involved with the Animal Rescue League of Boston, the Arlington Historical Society, the Historic Districts Commissions, the Arlington Conservation Association, and the Mystic River Watershed Association to name a few. Thus he has proven that he is committed to our community.

Through this commitment he is also very aware of the challenges that we face at the local level and will work to help improve local aid funding as well as to help us preserve our community and environment. All of this along with John's integrity makes him the best-qualified candidate!

Please vote on March 4 for John Worden.
Amy Lee Slade
Allen Street
Worden is the right candidate

I write to endorse John Worden for state representative in the 23rd Middlesex District (Arlington-West Medford), and I ask you to vote for him also.

Most of us in Arlington recognize John from his role as moderator of the Town Meeting. It's no easy feat to run a Town Meeting, but John made it look so for 19 years. It takes consummate knowledge of the issues and procedures, strict fairness and openness to all sides of a debate, and not a little wry humor to keep us engaged. Whenever people have

asked me how I could bear sitting through the hours of discussions, I've told them it's John's leadership as moderator.

His campaign is about those personal qualities, and much more. John isn't running on a platform of promises, but on a career of accomplishments in the public sector. The ones I know best are his successes in local historic preservation. He's worked for decades to preserve the character of our communities that we cherish. You can't take a walk around town without feeling this sense of history that we're so proud of in New England. Without John's leadership, we couldn't point out to our children that's where Revere carried the alarm, and that's where the patriots fought.

This zeal for preserving the history and character of our towns flows through all of his policies. His stand on housing creation is clear: we need more affordable housing, and we must end the abuse and exploitation of Chapter 40B housing development. Read the details at www.worden2008.com, and you'll be convinced that John is the candidate who can make it happen.

I've never voted for a Republican candidate before; I've been voting strictly Democratic ever since I organized my seventh-grade social studies class for George McGovern. This year I'm going to make some personal history and change all that, because the issues are deeper, and the accomplishments of the candidate are greater, than the thin endorsement of a party label. John Worden is the best candidate, the right candidate, the one we can all be proud to elect as our next state representative.

A. Michael Ruderman
Alton Street
Worden can bring positive change

In less than two weeks, most of Arlington and West Medford will choose a representative to fill the vacant 23rd Middlesex District seat in the State Legislature. This creates an opportunity for positive change at both the local and the state level — if we choose the right person for this position. John Worden is the right person.

We need a state representative with demonstrated experience in both the private and public sector, not one who aspires to be a career politician. Senator Marzilli, the former holder of this seat, wrote of one of the unsuccessful primary candidates that he has the professional and real-life experiences that are needed to be effective on Beacon Hill. The same is even more true of John Worden.

We need a state representative who is fiscally responsible, particularly with the state facing more budget deficits. As readers of the "Beacon Hill Roll Call" in this newspaper know, our legislators routinely override the governor's line item vetoes of their excessive spending, thereby adding to the state's financial problems. They have done this during the terms of Governor Patrick and his predecessors. I am confident that John Worden will show greater fiscal discipline.

We need a state representative who has not aligned himself with special interests. John Worden has neither sought nor received financial support or endorsements from those who stand to benefit from legislation that will come before him as a legislator. John possesses the independence to act in the best interests of all of those he represents.

We need a state representative who has shown that he can get things done. John Worden has been making Arlington a better place to live since before one of his opponents was even born. Other letter writers have already described his many accomplishments, and you can read more about them at www.worden2008.com.

Those who know John understand how his appeal transcends party lines. That is why he was elected to six successive terms as Arlington's town moderator. And that is why Democratic, Republican, and Independent voters alike will be supporting him in the general election for state representative. Please join me in voting for John Worden on March 4.

Christopher Loreti
Town Meeting Member, Precinct 7
A pledge is a pledge
Community over party

On March 4, I will, for one of the very few times in my life, cross party lines and vote for a Republican. I am vigorously supporting John Worden to fill out the remaining months of Jim Marzilli's seat in the State Legislature as the Middlesex 23rd's representative. John makes this pretty easy to do, as virtually all John's political and civic work has been performed within the local Arlington community and government, and they are entirely non-partisan by design.

Why this particular Republican, and why now? Because John Worden is a remarkable man with a remarkable record of service to the town of Arlington. And John will bring the same dedication, discernment, rectitude and wisdom to bear for the people of West Medford as he represents us all in our State Legislature.

Since the early 1970s, John has served in Arlington Town Meeting. For the past 19 years he has also served as town moderator. John is famous for his attention to both detail and decorum and for his scrupulous fairness, all while displaying a wry wit and gentle humor only slightly masked behind his familiar gruff exterior. And John displays an unbridled confidence in our system — in the rule of law, in our tradition of Town Meeting and in our country. Above all, John is a master of the law, of our town bylaws, and of the process of legislation. These processes and legal skills will redound to our community's benefit with John Worden representing us in the Statehouse.

When Bob Havern decided to leave the Senate, he created an election calendar disaster. Our community is lucky to have a chance to take a breather and prepare for our usual "orderly" fall campaign. John Worden is both a strong candidate on his own merit, and he is an ideal choice for voters of all parties who wish to avoid a rush to judgment — do we

want to elect someone who will park in the seat for another 17, or 27 years? I believe it would be altogether fitting to have John finish out Jim Marzilli's term, while allowing us to honor him and his service at the same time. We can look at the field of candidates in the autumn, and re-decide whom we wish to send to the House. It may well be John Worden again.

John Worden's contributions to our community are too many to enumerate, but let me try...

- He is a dedicated, longtime conservationist
- He is a strong open space advocate
- He is a proven and powerful proponent for affordable housing
- He will be very effective in increasing Arlington and Medford's share of state local aid dollars
- He is a preservationist who is committed to our community's historic legacy, and
- His roots are deep within our local soil

Please visit John's Web site for details: www.worden2008.com, and please join with me in proudly voting for John L. Worden on Tuesday, March 4.

Charles Gallagher
Town Meeting Member, Precinct 18
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

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