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<sorourke@town.arlington.ma.us>  
**Date:** 08/25/2020 04:53 PM  
**Subject:** Fwd: Opposition to Thorndike Place Development

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Just got this, FYI.

Rick

Richard J Vallarelli  
Zoning Board Administrator  
Building Inspector, Town of Arlington  
Massachusetts

From: "Zoning Board of Appeals" <ZBA@town.arlington.ma.us>  
To: "Rick Vallarelli" <RVallarelli@town.arlington.ma.us>  
Date: Tue, 25 Aug 2020 16:51:09 -0400  
Subject: Fwd: Opposition to Thorndike Place Development

From: rachel roth <rachel.roth@earthlink.net>  
To: zba@town.arlington.ma.us  
Date: Tue, 25 Aug 2020 13:01:20 -0400 (GMT-04:00)  
Subject: Opposition to Thorndike Place Development

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Christian Klein, Chair  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
Arlington, MA

### **Opposition to Thorndike Place**

Dear Chair Klein and members of the board,

Since 2016, a hotel and hundreds of apartment units have been built on or next to Route 2, with more still being built as we write. One of those complexes was built on land that used to be a forest. All of this construction this means the burden of traffic and impact of flooding have already changed since 2016.

Prior to the pandemic, stalled traffic on Lake Street was the norm, with particularly long waits during rush hour.

We understand that the entire greater Boston area needs more housing, especially affordable housing. We are not opposed to higher density housing. We've lived in multi-family buildings most of our lives. Like many of our neighbors and elected representatives, we oppose this specific project and encourage developers to focus on more suitable sites.

During this pandemic, people in Arlington are taking advantage of the Town's natural resources for our mental and physical health. We need to safeguard our homes, parks, and sports fields from flooding as we brace ourselves for further destructive climate change. We need to keep our open spaces and our wetlands.

We urge you to reject permits for this project.

Sincerely,

Peter Ferguson  
Rachel Roth  
Arlington MA 02474

William Fuchs  
7 Cleveland Street  
Arlington, MA 02474

July 13, 2020

Zoning Board of Appeals  
Town of Arlington  
Arlington, MA

In their letter to Peter S. Mugar, Arlington Land Realty, LLC c/o Oaktree/Greenline, LLC dated December 4, 2015 that is included in the Applicant's proposal, MassHousing stated: on pages 4-5 under the

*Based on MassHousing's site and design review, and in light of feedback received from the Municipality and abutters, the following issues should be addressed in your application to the Zoning Board of Appeals, and you should be prepared to explore them more fully in the public hearing process:*

- *Development of the site will require compliance with all state and federal environmental laws, regulations and standards applicable to existing conditions and to the proposed use relating to floodplain management, wetland protection, river and wildlife conservation, water quality, stormwater management, wastewater treatment, and hazardous waste safety. The Applicant should expect that the Municipality will require evidence of such compliance prior to issuance of a building permit for the Project.*
- *The Applicant should be prepared to provide sufficient data to assess the Project's potential traffic impacts on area roadways including traffic volume, crash rates, and safety and level of service (LOS) at the site entrances and area intersections.*
- *The Applicant should be prepared to address Municipal concerns relative to the size, scale and density of the Project and its impact on the character of the surrounding neighborhood, and to fully describe the proposed measures to address and mitigate these concerns.*
- *The Applicant should be prepared to provide detailed information relative to proposed water and sewer use, potential impacts on existing capacity, and proposed mitigation.*
- *The Applicant should provide a detailed planting plan identifying existing vegetation which will be preserved along with new planting.*

heading *MassHousing Determination and Recommendations* that:

The current application submitted to the Arlington Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) does not meet MassHousing requirements in the following ways:

The applicant has not submitted required information including current wetland delineations; current site elevations; calculations used to determine stormwater volumes, storage capacity, impacts or stormwater management structure design and placement; documentation of adequate storage of sewerage to prevent site sewerage from entering wetlands through CSO during storm or flood events; a finalized report on traffic impacts; or a detailed plan identifying existing vegetation which will be preserved and new plantings.

Additionally, several of the documents submitted are also incomplete or in draft form. These include the "Traffic Impact and Access Study" (Marked "Draft" on the cover, the site plans (which lack basic information including current wetland and floodplain delineations, stormwater collection infrastructure, and lack sufficient detail for effectively evaluate the project and the projects potential benefits/impacts), planting plans (which lack information on planting locations and species, invasive species populations, invasive species control plans, and appear to propose converting vegetation in wetland resource areas from natural habitat to lawn) and the "List of Requested for Waivers" which appears for be a draft document (lacks column headings, contains text in strike through font, has blank rows and cells, lacks sufficient detail to evaluate individual requests). As noted in the several of the comment letters submitted with this package, the proposal lacks sufficient detail for effective evaluation.

Finally, the application does not document any of the calculations or assumptions used to calculate stormwater generation or storage, infiltration rates in stormwater management structures, possible contributions to neighborhood flooding, etc. Lacking this data, effective evaluation of the project is not possible.

Based on the Applicant's incomplete application and failure to comply with MassHousing's requirements for this application and failure to provide other significant information needed for the ZBA to fully evaluate this Project, I respectfully ask that the ZBA either continue the public hearing until the Applicant provides this and any other relevant documentation not currently in the application or deny the permit based on the Applicant's incomplete submission not providing the ZBA with sufficient information to effectively evaluate the project.

Thank you,

/Bill Fuchs/

Chris Klein  
ZBA  
Arlington, MA 02474

July 7, 2020

Dear Members of the Board,

I am a homeowner, long time resident of Arlington and neighbor of the Mugar Woods. We love living in this community and we raised our children here. **My family and I strongly oppose building a large apartment development in the Mugar Woods.**

This corner of town is a remnant of the Great Swamp that are the headwaters of Alewife Brook leading to the Mystic River. There have been many flood events in this low land since we have lived here. There are still old peat deposits nearby.

The area also used to be a tidal swamp. There were old tide mills on the Mystic River. There was even an old saw mill on the Mugar property.

We are protected from tidal flooding by the Amelia Earhardt dam downstream. The dam helps to relieve us from floods from the Mystic drainage and increases in precipitation from global warming. We could use the fourth pump at the dam to bolster that protection.

It does not make any sense to put more buildings, houses, and pavement on the Mugar property.

That property helps to alleviate flooding on our adjacent properties in its current land use, as open space and heavily vegetated. The plants, trees and soils are sponges soaking up the groundwater, giving floodwater space to spread out. Sewage overflows (mainly from Belmont and Cambridge) enter the Alewife Brook and Little River with big rain events. This proposal would add more sewerage flow to that system that already has trouble handling all the new developments along Route 2, in the Quadrangle in Cambridge, in the Belmont Uplands.

The Mugar property currently houses a large homeless encampment. While it may seem connected that the “affordable” units in this development could serve as housing for that number of individuals, it still doesn't help those people. These people have many more problems than just homelessness. They need services as well. I don't have answers for these problems, but I don't think creating more buildings and less green space is going to help matters.

As the pandemic has made us all keenly aware, density is not always a good thing. At least some of our yards are big enough to go outside and sit and be at a safe space without fear of spreading this deadly virus. I don't think bringing 200 plus units of housing to this corner of town will keep us safe or quiet or engender a sense of community. We have these now in our neighborhood. Lets leave it that way.

I would also say that allowing the existing lots to be built along Dorothy Road to continue with two-family townhouses is the only part of the proposal that seems reasonable and in scale with the existing neighborhood. It does need to be done so that they are not flooded overland or by groundwaters, and get mold, mildew, and have to replace utilities in the basement.

Thank you for your consideration.  
Sincerely, Cori Beckwith

From: **Don Seltzer** <[timoneer@gmail.com](mailto:timoneer@gmail.com)>  
Date: Mon, May 25, 2020 at 10:49 AM  
Subject: Questions regarding the Thorndike Place proposal  
To: Christian Klein <[cmgklein@gmail.com](mailto:cmgklein@gmail.com)>, <[zba@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:zba@town.arlington.ma.us)>

To: Arlington Zoning Board of Appeals

In reviewing the recent plan and Wetlands survey submitted for Thorndike Place, I noticed a few points of concern which I bring to your attention.

1. The new survey differs from the Arlington GIS survey in one significant detail. Both show a Wetland area in proximity to the proposed location of the East Wing of the main building. The recent survey by Oaktree Development claims this Wetland to be nearly 100 feet south of the building. The GIS survey shows it to be instead almost centered on the proposed location of the building, with most of the building within the 100 foot buffer zone.
2. The southeast corner of the lot is a federally designated Regulatory Floodway. The plans make no mention of this, and indicate an altered landscape with walking path within this protected zone.
3. The extent of the FEMA floodplain as shown is somewhat less than the town GIS survey. It does show that four of the proposed duplexes to be built along Dorothy Road are within this floodplain. The design for these duplexes include garages and basements below grade.
4. The plans show that two and a half acres of the northeast corner of the lot, currently within the floodplain, will be filled in

and raised by about four to five feet. This will in effect create a levee around the property, with an exterior string of drainage ditches or moats separating it from the surrounding neighborhood. The drainage ditches will be linked by several culverts. Is there a stormwater study that analyzes whether these ditches are intended to simply handle the runoff from the Thorndike Place property, or have they been sized for handling the drainage from the surrounding neighborhood?

5. Where will the large volume of fill (18,000 cubic yards?) for raising the grade of the northeast quadrant come from? Will it be trucked in, or will it be soil excavated from other areas of the lot?

I would be glad to address the Board in greater detail on these questions at the May 26 meeting.

Don Seltzer