

October 3, 2021

Dear Chairman Klein and Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals –

Thank you for your continued dedication to concerns of our town.

Affordable housing is needed in Arlington. My objection to the proposed Thorndike Place development is that the specific location is inappropriate for development. On a high level:

- Building on a known flood plain puts lives and property at risk for both current and proposed residents and its staff. This development, as proposed, will put an unnecessary and preventable stress on individuals and town resources.
- Negative environmental impacts will occur with this build, including the wetlands and habitat.
- A development of this size with only one local road egress (Littlejohn Street) puts an undue burden of traffic on a single residential neighborhood. This proposal is unlike any other development in the area where it does not have direct access to a main roadway.

About the proposed building's use:

- While the ZBA may focus on building design, I officially note my opposition of the proposed way the Applicant intends to run this facility. To paraphrase what I heard from the Applicant and their experts during public ZBA meetings, the Applicant intends to establish a proposed community *where residents will be removed when they are close to death to not drag down the morale of the other residents (paraphrased)*. Such an idea is draconian and does not reflect the care current residents of this community have for each other, nor how we should embrace end of life. As some of my neighbors more eloquently stated on calls, we need to support people's desires to age-in-place. We need to do better as a community to support the wide range of services aging-in-place requires, including supporting each other through life's final stage. This ideal applies across all socioeconomic status.

As I understand it, the edits documented in the Draft Decision dated 9/24/2021 are the edits of the Applicant. In my review, the Applicant's edits to the ZBA's draft decision make numerous misrepresentations. To summarize, the Applicant's edits:

1. **Minimize local concern:** The applicant removes key context of public record that was drafted into this decision. I urge you to reinstate all context so that it maintains clear and concise reference to the significant local concerns that have been captured during the public comment period.
2. **Inaccurately describe our neighborhood.** Along with the removal of key descriptors of our neighborhood, the Applicant inaccurately suggests our neighborhood roads are "No Right Turn" between weekday evening hours only. For years our neighborhood has clear "DO NOT ENTER" signage M-F, 7-9am and 4-7pm¹. To me, this suggests the Applicant has made inaccurate assumptions which likely impact its proposed construction operations and in the assessment of the neighborhood impact the proposed development will have. I urge the ZBA to ensure the record of the neighborhood is accurately described and all context to describe the neighborhood is reinstated.

3. **Brazenly attempt to write the ZBA’s position.** The Applicant introduced language to state “The Board finds the Approved Project to represent a notable improvement to the prior project design...”, removes reference to the Board maintaining its rights to the determination of Project Eligibility due to the project changes and the Safe Harbor claim, and the Applicant approves its own Waiver Decisions. I urge the ZBA to ensure that any characterizations of the ZBA’s position documented in the Draft Decision are indeed the ZBA’s own.

I urge the ZBA to work with the Applicant to extend the public hearing period. There has not been sufficient time for the public to thoroughly review and respond to the Draft Decision. The edits to the document are significant in number and impact.

Respectfully submitted –

Heather Keith-Lucas
10 Mott Street

¹ Signage at the corners of Wilson Avenue, Littlejohn Street, and Homestead Road indicates **DO NOT ENTER** between 7am-9am and 4pm – 7pm.

The signs are consistently marked as follows:

