

Continuing concerns about proposed Thorndike Place and flooding

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Fri 2/9/2024 10:17 PM

To: ConComm <ConComm@town.arlington.ma.us>

 1 attachments (6 MB)

Flooding between Edith St. and Thorndike Field_020724.jpg;

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Dear Conservation Commission members,

Thank you for the excellent presentation by Scott Horsley and the probing questions raised by ConComm members at the February 1 meeting on the proposed Thorndike Place development.

I have been thinking a lot about Ms. Chapnik's question, "where is all the water going to go?" The answer for winter 2023-24 is "it stays." Attached is a photo of flooding between Edith Street and Thorndike Field, taken on Feb. 7, to add to my previously-sent photos of flooding in this area, taken on Dec. 25, 2023 and Jan. 10, 2024: it is clear that the water is staying.

A logical follow-up to Ms. Chapnik's question is "if Thorndike Place is built, where will all the water be going 10- or 20-years from now?" A recent Boston Globe article noted that Boston has had 9 inches of rain since January, and rainier winters are likely to continue (see <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2024/02/02/metro/boston-weather-rainfall-snow-winter-season/>). Clearly, water problems are increasing due to climate change. I am glad that the ConComm members asked the developer to provide more detailed plans for flooding remediation, but I am concerned about the narrow focus on sump pumps and basements. If Thorndike Place is built, the groundwater will likely stay around longer, making Thorndike Field soggy and less usable for soccer and other recreational activities, exacerbating the flooding problems in our neighborhood, and bringing more mosquitos and mosquito-borne diseases, such as EEE, to East Arlington. The fundamental question is "do we want to leave that legacy to our neighbors and our Town?" I hope not. And I hope the ConComm members agree by rejecting the proposed Thorndike Place development.

Sincerely,

Lisa Fredman

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