

Hello

I live on Mary St and my biggest concern around Thorndike Place is traffic. I am 100% for building more housing in Arlington. But I have a question that no one seems to be asking.

**Can this be built with a total allotment of about 100 parking spaces for the apartment buildings?**

The developer keeps talking about "car-free, public-transit-oriented" housing. How about really going all-in on the "transit-lifestyle"? Let everyone live the car-free lifestyle that the developer is selling...

Why allocate 1.4 parking spaces per unit? How about creating units that, by lease or by sale, simply do not come with parking? This is not out of character with Somerville, Cambridge, or Boston – other towns with "transit-oriented" housing. How about Arlington embracing this trend? Can we think beyond a car-centric development?

**Here is what I am proposing:**

- 75-80 spaces for people with needs (disability, health, age, family) The parking spaces could only be allocated strictly by demonstrated, documented need. Since it is a new development, this should be easy to implement from the beginning. People would know upfront the conditions for getting a parking space. Anyone whose needs change can be put on a waitlist or can choose to move. Anyone who is moving in going forward would know if parking is or is not available for them. Parking would not be by-right but by allocation by management. Draw up a specific set of criteria for applying for a parking space.
- 10 "admin-flex" spaces for current residents that could be emergency use for people with genuine immediate needs who are on the waitlist or have temporary needs. Unused spaces could be day-use for visitors.
- 3-5 Zipcar spaces for shared-use vehicles. Right outside the door. For the person who needs a car only occasionally, this might be an attractive solution. Perhaps a discounted Zipcar membership could be a perk for renters or owners. Since much of the "use study" by the developer includes rarely-used cars, this is something to consider.
- 10-15 Visitor spaces where overnight parking is not allowed except by prior approval by apartment complex management. They will need to agree to enforce this so that these spaces don't turn into defacto resident parking. Apartment residents that don't have parking spots at Thorndike will not be able to park on the streets instead. Because Arlington does not allow overnight, on-street parking, this should be easy to enforce.
- Covered, secure bike parking. If you're going car-free, having a secure, safe, clean, well-lit, attractive, covered spot to store and access your bike would encourage this. You could store

dozens of bikes in the same amount of space as 3-4 cars. And how about adding chargers for electric bikes or scooters? There must be a pay-per-use solution for this growing trend. Maybe even a solar solution so charging could be free.

- Separate issue around cars: are there plans to install electric vehicle chargers on some of the spaces? Perhaps some of the visitor spaces could be allocated for this to encourage a charge-it and move-it system.

**And in a win for the environment and flood-control, this would leave about 2/3 of the previously-planned paved area as open land and could be used as buffer and containment.**

I really struggle with having this additional density in our neighborhood. And I am concerned that the developer has to do an exceptional job at buffering rain water to prevent flooding and providing an attractive transition into the complex from the neighborhood. But I think we need more housing in Arlington.

**Here are my specific concerns around traffic and why I am proposing an alternative:**

The streets in our neighborhood are narrow. When cars are parked on both sides of the street – which is often – it is very difficult for cars to get through. I can only imagine that a large vehicle like a fire truck might be forced to back up and turn around and find another way in case of an emergency.

We have many, many cars that drive over from other parts of Arlington and Cambridge and Belmont who park near Magnolia Field so they don't have to pay for parking or endure the traffic mess that is Alewife. And guess where they park? Right out in front of where Thorndike Place is proposed.

The current traffic on Lake Street is in no way comparable to before the COVID shutdown. Before COVID, from about 3:30-6:30, traffic is backed up behind the traffic signals at Route 2 all the way to Mass Ave. While I hope that the new crossing signal for the bike path will help with the throughput, the volume will return. Any current traffic study is in no way related to pre-COVID reality. You could roller skate down Lake Street at most hours of the day right now and not hit much traffic.

The two access roads that would handle all the traffic are as narrow as any of the other roads – and there is nowhere to expand these roads except right up to resident's front doors. I can't imagine adding another 300+ cars to our already dense neighborhood.

Thank you for reading and considering my very long email.

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