

Dear Arlington Zoning Board member, Arlington and Commonwealth representatives,

I have resided in my 2 family home at 5 and 7 Osborne Road, East Arlington 02474 for 23 years. Initially my parents lived in one apartment. Since they've been deceased I've rented it to families with children and pets below market rent because I know that is honoring my parents working class (Bronx, N.Y.) roots. I am not a property owner to make a profit. Over these years we have suffered greatly with flooding damage from rainstorms. We've incurred great expenses with cleanup, losses and equipment. The mental and physical toll on us is also worth noting. Like our neighbors our multiple sump pumps run constantly. I had a hose system installed that I set up before heavy rain is predicted that drains into the street. The option to convert some basement space for a family room is out of the question. It is only usable for some storage on pallets.

Our only driving access out is via Lake Street. Over time twice daily it is gridlocked morning and evening during rush hours during the workweek.

From our 1998 arrival, my elderly parents, my middle aged self and 10 year old daughter became active and endeared to this special cohesive neighborhood and town. It served all 3 generations very well. My parents had only known tight knit NYC neighborhoods and ours here was so friendly, supportive and welcoming. This is to say that we love Arlington. I'm a member of the Unitarian Universalist parish. My parents were election poll volunteers and I've followed their footpath. My daughter was a shining academic and athlete student proudly graduating AHS in 2005 (Sean you were there then!).

The proximity to public transportation was ingrained in us which is why we chose this house, which at the time was practically unliveable in such decrepit condition. We have rehabbed it and never looked back. I am a senior myself now getting by on my modest pension from my career as a DCF Social Worker.

My purpose and plea in writing to you is my shock and outrage at the proposed Mugar abomination. This is a FEMA designated flood plain. The vegetation tells us this and the flooding. It is one of the last rare corridors and refuge for wildlife left. The buildings proposed would undoubtedly worsen flooding. A great many trees would be destroyed thereby losing their root absorption systems. I know the developers will tell us they have it all engineered. Well Mother Nature knows better. On many levels this is the worse plan for this neighborhood. We are modest one and 2 family homes and the sudden high rise in congestion, traffic, noise and light pollution would pretty much transform and doom this section of town. It is the wrong area to build up as climate change is real and storms will worsen. The rat population overran us last summer. I hired wildlife control specialists. The construction would unleash more rodents and kill off the animals in this habitat. The traffic already a nightmare (when it's not a pandemic) would be impossibly stressful and dangerous. We have many children who play outside

safely now on these streets. There is simply no way that this neighborhood can absorb and accommodate this massive project of 176 units and huge population increase. We all know from common sense that the construction and transport with it would overwhelm our small streets where trucking is illegal, and damage our house foundations. Finally the removal of precious open natural space would be deadly and decrease public access.

Can the Mugar family be approached that if they must build instead to add several townhouses which would certainly be worth a million dollars or more each? The town can provide honorary tributes to them, say renaming Magnolia or Thorndike fields in their name, building plaques acknowledging their generosity. Can this dialogue be opened to appeal to their greater civic and environmental sense? Or can the town or state purchase the land as a nature preserve or small scale buildout?

I thank you for reading my very lengthy letter. However the reasons to oppose this project are numerous, strong and just basic good judgement. It is way out of scale with the existing homes and the last thing an active floodplain needs.

Respectfully,
Helene Martel
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