

Dear Members of the Arlington Zoning Board of Appeals,

I hope that you and your loved ones are able to find joy during these “unprecedented” times - that’s a term we’ll all be glad to leave behind in better days ahead!

I’m writing to ask that you please do whatever is in your power to preserve the Mugar Wetlands. As you’re already aware, this unique area provides myriad benefits to its surroundings. The Mugar Wetlands provides crucial open space, including old growth trees that absorb water flow coming down from Arlington Heights, gradually releasing it to avoid catastrophic flooding in this dense residential area. In addition, the Mugar Wetlands provides critical habitat for wildlife, perhaps some who had to flee the Silver Maple Forest when tragically, a large area was cleared to make way for “The Royale” development - certainly an ironic name given that the developer manipulated 40B/Affordable Housing guidelines to obtain his permit after a decade-long battle with citizens, including myself, who fought to save this rare urban wild, for parallel reasons that the Mugar Wetlands should also be saved.

As a former member of the Coalition to Preserve the Silver Maple Forest/Belmont Uplands, I beg you not to acquiesce to pressure/s in this matter. We ALL want/need an increase in affordable housing in the Arlington/Belmont/Cambridge area but, for myriad reasons, the Mugar Wetlands is a totally inappropriate location to address this need.

Thank you for your consideration,

Allison V. Lenk  
(Belmont resident on Cambridge/Arlington line)