



## *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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### **To the members of the Arlington Conservation Commission:**

I write to you today in my capacity as a state representative whose district encompasses the site of the proposed Thorndike Place development. First off, let me state that I greatly respect your service and also deeply appreciate the difference between local versus state issues. As such, in my 10 years as the State Representative for the 24th Middlesex District, very rarely do I offer testimony to local governmental bodies. The significance of this project compels me to do so.

I have expressed my opposition to this proposed development in the past, as has Arlington Town Meeting, the Select Board and the overwhelming majority of town residents. While I am already on record, I would like to briefly reiterate a number of concerns about the current proposal. First off, one of the most pressing worries is the prospect of increased flooding. The builder proposes to undertake construction on 7 acres in the wetlands—5.5 of which are in the FEMA floodplain. These wetlands act a “sponge” for the surrounding area. Failure to preserve this natural safeguard may well lead to increased flooding in the neighborhood, affecting homes and businesses, including the Thorndike Field complex used by Arlington’s children and students. Over time, as climate change worsens and precipitation events become more intense, we can expect flooding to grow more extreme.

In addition, the area around the proposed development is one of the largest remaining open spaces in Arlington. As the Greater Boston region is faces more development, our remaining wild spaces become more precious. Deer, foxes, birds, and a variety of other wildlife call the wetlands home. Paving over these wetlands would irreversibly damage one of the last refuges for wild animals in Arlington at a time when biodiversity and habitat loss are important concerns.

Of course, increased traffic and the corresponding increase in harmful emissions is another concern. Those emissions will degrade air quality in town, particularly in East Arlington.

I am aware that the Conservation Commission has asked for extensive peer reviewed studies, particularly pertaining to hydrology, and I appreciate the countless hours of work from the Conservation Commission that has gone into evaluating this project already. As the body whose mission it is to protect and preserve Arlington’s wetlands and conservation lands, I humbly and respectfully request that you to continue to consider fully all of the deleterious environmental and ecological impacts of the project. In doing so, I hope and trust that every possible effort is made under the law to protect our local environment and the community at large.

Thank you for your time, and for your consideration of this important matter.

Regards,  
Dave Rogers

State Representative  
24th Middlesex District  
(Arlington/Belmont/Cambridge)