



July 22, 2024

To Members of the Conservation Commission:

Thank you for your time and your commitment to Arlington! We appreciate your efforts during this lengthy process.

Here is what we know about the Mugar site...

- Flooding has historically been a serious and ongoing issue documented by many photos, videos and personal references.
- The site consists of 17 acres, of which the majority is in or near the FEMA flood zone.
- Floodplains act as a sponge for nearby groundwater and storm water. If this “sponge” is paved over, the floodplain will no longer serve this essential purpose, and the water will flood into East Arlington neighborhoods.
- Thorndike Field complex, one of Arlington’s largest soccer and lacrosse fields, abuts the site and currently has high surface and groundwater. The proposed development will increase water levels and reduce the number of days the field can be used.
- Residents living between Lake Street, Mass. Ave. and Route 2 know that groundwater flow and absorption is already a major problem. However, the developers state, “groundwater is not our purview.”

In addition, as referenced in the recently published **Boston Globe article (July 10, 2024), As climate toll grows, FEMA imposes limits on building in flood plains**, *‘The Federal Emergency Management Agency will take new steps to ensure that the structures it funds — including schools, hospitals, police stations, libraries, sewage treatment plants, and bridges — are protected from flooding.*

The agency said Wednesday that projects constructed with FEMA money must be built in a way that prevents flood damage, whether by elevating them above the expected height of a flood or, if that’s not feasible, by building in a safer location. The rule also makes it clear that building decisions must reflect risks now and also in the future, as climate change makes flooding more frequent and severe’.

If these measures are being taken at the federal level to ensure building projects are protected from future flooding due to the effects of climate change, then the same should be done at the municipal level to protect its residents. **Continuous flooding of this vulnerable area is a clear indication of what we can expect in the future.**

WE NEED TO TAKE ACTION NOW! As we look ahead, we need to plan for the inevitable!

Thank you on Behalf of the Coalition to Save the Mugar Wetlands,

Jeanette Cummings, 32 Dorothy Rd.
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Cc: James Feeney, Arlington Town Manager
David Morgan, Environmental Planner/Conservation Agent
Ryan Clapp, Conservation Agent
Arlington Select Board
Arlington Land Trust