



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

**SENATOR CINDY F. FRIEDMAN**  
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*Chair*  
JOINT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE FINANCING

*Vice Chair*  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

November 1, 2024

Arlington Conservation Commission  
730 Mass Ave. Annex  
Arlington, MA 02476

RE: Thorndike Place at the Mugar Wetlands Permit

Dear Members of the Commission:

I have followed the public review process of the proposed Thorndike Place development at the site in East Arlington owned by the Mugar Family for the past several years, and I still remain in strong opposition to this project. My office has worked on this issue since I became Senator, and before that I was involved as chief of staff to the late Senator Donnelly. As a private citizen and Town meeting member, I voted against this project at least three times.

As you know, the site serves as a critical area of flood retention that has helped mitigate the constant flooding that occurs in this neighborhood. Without it, it is clear that the neighborhood will experience increased levels of flooding further jeopardizing their homes, safety, and health. The problem is only exacerbated by the effects of climate change as well as more frequent severe weather events that our state and nation are experiencing. I have not seen any movement by the developer to acknowledge this reality or the environmental impact and quality of life issues this development will have on the neighborhood, town, and larger area in which this site is located.

I urge you to consider this project and its ramifications seriously, which I know you are doing. I am a strong proponent of smart development and transit-oriented housing. However, allowing any housing to be built regardless of whether an area can environmentally support it without causing hardship to the area residents is neither smart nor sustainable. And having been involved in this issue for quite some time, I do not believe any conditions that the Town may put on the developers will be enough to mitigate the harm the project will cause.

I have not observed anything over the last several years of public review that has changed my position on this development project. In light of this, I remain strongly opposed to it and ask you to issue an Order of Conditions denying the project based on impacts to this resource area that the project cannot possibly mitigate.

In closing, I would like to thank you all as members of the Conservation Commission for your work and diligence on this project, and for the time you volunteer to serve our community. I greatly appreciate your focus and patience and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cindy F. Friedman