

Thomas D. Lee
471 Packers Falls Road
Durham, NH 03861

November 12, 2014

Town of Durham
Planning Board
Durham NH 03824

Members of the Durham Planning Board:

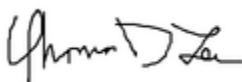
I'm a resident of Lee who works and shops in Durham. Despite the Lee residence, I'm a Durham taxpayer, owning about 5 acres in Durham. Professionally, I am a plant ecologist on the UNH faculty. Almost every day I drive or bicycle Route 155A (Mast Road) from the Lee town line to Main Street in Durham. In fact, this route used regularly by many UNH employees and students as well as others with business in Durham. The route serves as a gateway to Durham.

As the Lodges at West Edge have become a reality, I've been surprised by the degree to which the view from Route 155A has changed. What was once a rural, agrarian landscape and a pleasant welcome to Durham now includes a rather stark, regimented urban component that does not blend well with the surrounding farm land and natural vegetation. I was very disappointed that the new construction did not include a substantial buffer of woody vegetation (trees and shrubs) to ease the visual impact of the new construction.

I was pleased to hear that such a buffer is now being considered. To be effective, a buffer should include several ranks of trees and shrubs that vary in size and it should take into account not only the concrete wall, but the west facing sides of all three of the large townhouses. In the most recent plan (11/11/14) the proposed plantings do not provide sufficient screening to change the impression of a traveler on Route 155A. To deal with the concrete wall and fence at two or preferably three ranks of trees, rather than one, would be required for effective buffering. And the number of trees proposed to buffer the buildings (2 spruce, 1 maple, 7 arborvitae) is clearly inadequate. A more extensive planting between the fence and the buildings would be necessary to provide a truly effective visual buffer.

I regret I cannot attend the Planning Board hearing on 11/12/14.

Sincerely,



Thomas D. Lee