

Town of Durham
Planning and Zoning Board

Dear Planning Board Members,

I am a Durham Resident living on Deer Meadow Road. I do not live near town but am very distressed at the current plans by your Board to approve the Mill Plaza development.

I have recently read Carol Tuvesan's March 9 letter to you and am incensed by what I read. Among other things she suggests that your board is not taking seriously the thoughts of those of us who you should be serving and dismiss the findings of experts who do not agree with you. These are serious issues and should be considered as such.

It seems the developers in town are lining their pockets with either student housing beds or fees for seasonal student parking. Plans for Mill Plaza and the Church Street parking area indicate that the Planning Board will allow more revenue for developers to rent to students at the expense of trees and walkways and a convenient and pleasant shopping area for Durham residents. According to the Tuvesan letter your Board is willing to change zoning restrictions in order that the developer is allowed to cut trees, build a 20 foot retaining wall, and change the ecology of the community surrounding the Mill Pond Plaza. The run-off from an ecological standpoint of paving more of The Town of Durham is a huge concern to all of us.

My biggest complaint is that the Town of Durham is not serving us, the taxpayers of Durham. Durham is not a "user friendly" town, nor by design is UNH a "user friendly" university. The university has taken over the town and what is not student housing is a giant parking lot for students. There is no convenient parking for Durham residents to visit downtown to shop, hike, or to attend any of the many on-campus activities because there is NO PARKING AVAILABLE. What parking is available is rented out. With no convenient parking available on a daily basis, and no limits put on student car ownership by the university, we are left with Durham.....a giant paved parking lot and not the "City of Trees" which it so proudly claims to have been for the last 40 years.

Where is a nice little town park with paths to stroll and benches to sit and lick an ice cream cone with children or grandchildren? IN EXETER? Where have the ice cream stands gone? Where are the places to stroll in the evening with a dog? Impossible unless one lives in town. I ask that the Planning Board put on their planning hats. Stop serving the interests of UNH and start serving the residents of Durham. Make it an attractive community that attracts new business because the families of their employees want to live and work there.

Carol Ehlen
Deer Meadow Road

