

Economic Development Committee
Town of Durham
Ute Luxem – Chair

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Town of Durham

JUL 29 2013

Zoning Board of Adjustment
Attn. Sean Starkey, Chair
15 Newmarket Road
Durham, NH 03824

Planning, Assessing,
Zoning & Code Enforcement

July 28, 2013

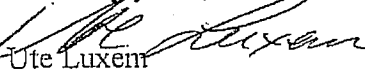
Dear Mr. Starkey,
Dear members of the Zoning Board of Adjustment,

I am writing this to inform you that the Economic Development Committee reviewed the proposed development for Madbury Commons at our meeting July, 16, 2013. The developer informed our committee that the project does not meet all zoning requirements and will require several variances. While we do not wish to interfere with your decision making process, our members would like to offer our opinion on why we feel this is a good project for the Town of Durham.

1. The proposed development on this uniquely large and strategically-placed downtown property creates a connection between Madbury Lane and the Pettibrook Parking lot that will make the area more pedestrian friendly by creating an alternative route into downtown.
2. The buildings are architecturally appealing.
3. The current zoning requires commercial uses on the first and non-residential uses on the fourth floor. The intent of this zoning was the creation of commercial inventory while using high profit residential development, especially student housing, as the economic incentive. While this concept is very appropriate for single building redevelopment, it does not necessarily apply for much larger property redevelopment such as the one in front of you. In the proposed project, first floor commercial uses in the back buildings of the development would not be viable because it would have limited access for customers. Therefore, commercial uses have been moved to the front of Madbury Road and the newly created road connection between Madbury Road and Pettibrook. The EDC supports this strategy with 30,000 square feet of new commercial use space being created.
4. The EDC feels that the creation of such space will benefit the Town. Durham is lacking flex-space for young businesses and this area would be ideal in attracting such business because of its close vicinity to UNH.
5. Members felt that improvements to the Pettibrook will benefit the downtown and will significantly improve the environmental aspects of the brook. Even though the development will be encroaching into setbacks, the encroachments will be less invasive than the current situation.

EDC members voted unanimously to support the Madbury Commons development in the light of the overall benefits to the Town of Durham.

Sincerely yours,


Ute Luxem
Chair