

RESOLUTION #2014-08 OF DURHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE

RESOLUTION #2014-08 RECOGNIZING THOSE WHOSE STEADFAST EFFORTS RESULTED IN THE HISTORIC 1974 TOWN VOTE TO PROHIBIT CONSTRUCTION OF AN OIL REFINERY ALONG THE SHORE OF GREAT BAY AT DURHAM POINT, ON THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EVENT

WHEREAS, in 1973 in the midst of a national recession and energy crisis, representatives of shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis' Olympic Refineries, Inc., deceptively began acquiring options on Durham properties on Durham Point along the Great Bay to assemble approximately 3,000 acres to serve its plans to build an oil refinery, at the time a use prohibited under Durham's zoning ordinance; and

WHEREAS, leading New Hampshire politicians, businessmen, and the *Union Leader*, the state's powerful statewide newspaper, strongly supported the plans for a refinery located in Durham, believing that Olympic would bring jobs and oil independence to New Hampshire with no ensuing damage to the environment, and therefore aligned themselves with Olympic Refineries; and

WHEREAS, the recently launched local weekly newspaper *Publick Occurrences* and a Durham grassroots group called "Save Our Shores," along with other Durham and Seacoast region residents and University of New Hampshire faculty members, dedicated significant time, creativity, expertise, and effort to defend Durham's right to self-governance, protect the Great Bay, and halt the refinery plans; and

WHEREAS, at Town Meeting on March 6, 1974, voters soundly defeated Article 14, "To see if the Town is in favor of amending the Durham Zoning Ordinance to permit an oil refinery" (1,254 against to 144 votes in favor), sending a clear but symbolic message to the State House; and

WHEREAS, Durham's State Representative Dudley W. Dudley submitted House Bill 18, "AN ACT requiring local approval prior to approval of site plans for oil refineries," upholding a longstanding New Hampshire political tradition of "home rule," which the New Hampshire House of Representatives supported by a vote of 233 to 109 on March 7, 1974, followed by Senate approval and signature by Governor Thomson; and

WHEREAS, the town has therefore enjoyed forty years of self-determination following the "Battle of Durham" and retained its aegis over land use and comprehensive planning;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Durham Town Council, the governing body of the Town of Durham, New Hampshire, hereby approves Resolution #2014-08 recognizing the many current and former residents of Durham and members of the UNH academic community whose steadfast efforts resulted in the historic 1974 Town vote to prohibit construction of an oil refinery along the shore of Great Bay at Durham Point, on the 40th anniversary of the event, and expressing gratitude for their vision and generous devotion to the community.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 5th day of May, 2014 by a majority vote of the Durham Town Council with _____ voting in favor, _____ abstaining and voting against.

Jay Gooze, Chairman
Durham Town Council

ATTEST:

Lorrie Pitt, Town Clerk