



TOWN OF DURHAM
Heritage Commission
8 NEWMARKET RD
DURHAM, NH 03824-2898

Andrew Corrow, *Chair*
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Vice Chair
Charlotte Hitchcock
Mike Hoffman
Bill McGowan,
Planning Board
Rep.
Carolyn Singer
Aaron Wolfson-Slepian
Jennifer Dayhoof
Alternate

March 9, 2021

Mr. Christopher Clement
Chief Operating Officer and Vice President for Administration
University of New Hampshire
Thompson Hall
Main Street
Durham, NH 03824

Subject: UNH and the Heritage Commission

Dear Chris,

I am writing this letter as the Town Planner on behalf of the Durham Heritage Commission, at the request of the commission.

The Historic District Commission is responsible for reviewing development within the designated historic district in a regulatory capacity. The role of the Heritage Commission (composed of the same members as the HDC) is to advocate for and assist with historic preservation throughout the community (but without any regulatory authority).

The Heritage Commission recognizes and appreciates the exceptional beauty of the University of New Hampshire campus and its fine architecture, as well as the impact that UNH has had on the town's history (and vice versa). Members of the commission have observed over the years, however, that, in certain cases, some worthy buildings have been demolished, especially smaller wood frame structures. These more modest buildings can provide a welcome contrast with the larger masonry structures and are an important part of the historic fabric of the community. We hope that the university will consider preserving such buildings or when a significant building must be removed, that you will consider relocating the building.

The University works closely with the Durham Planning Board in presenting plans for new projects for nonbinding comments in accordance with RSA 674:54 – Governmental Land Uses. The Heritage Commission respectfully requests that we develop a simple process where the commission would have an opportunity to offer nonbinding comments when demolition or significant alteration is contemplated for an existing historic structure or other significant cultural feature (such as a monument, sculpture, or other art installation). We would propose this process only for projects that are not already being

presented to the Planning Board (as we can offer comments in that venue). Given the background and expertise of the members, we believe that the commission could be a helpful resource for the University.

The Heritage Commission hopes to conduct a townwide survey of historic and cultural resources in Durham in the next few years. We would like to coordinate with the University in that process to include important structures on the campus. Such a survey could be used to help the Town as well as UNH better understand and plan for the community's resources. We hope that you would be receptive to coordinating with us on such a valuable project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Behrendt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Michael Behrendt
Durham Town Planner

cc via email:

Bill Janelle, Associate Vice President for Facilities and Operations
Doug Bencks, University Architect and Director of Campus Planning
Todd Selig
Audrey Cline
Heritage Commission
Planning Board