

Notes for planning board public comments from Bridget Finnegan, representing the current owner of 15 Madbury, Theodore Finnegan. Please enter this document into the record.

May 21, 2014

Hello, my name is Bridget Finnegan, 26 Cedar Point Road. I am here to speak in favor of the proposed development project at 15 Madbury Road and 8 Mathes Terrace.

The Finnegan family (as one of the owners of the two properties involved) have watched this review process from the beginning and have some observations for the Planning Board as they (you) prepare to vote. I would urge you to realize the boundaries of what you are called to do and stick to the simple truth of whether the project meets the necessary criteria.

**First and foremost, this project aligns with your own vision:**

The Durham Planning Board's development goal is to increase retail space so as to attract new businesses and customers

The board's agreed upon vision is to follow "New Urbanism Principles" which have the following benefits:

They provide an environmentally sound approach of "compact and robust" to reduce student sprawl outside of Durham's commercial zone in addition to an expanded retail footprint

They encourage those who don't live in the downtown area to come to a vital/fun destination to shop and walk (think Harvard Square)

They include the tangible financial benefit to existing business by bringing new customers through proximity

This project meets 100% of your zoning regulations.

**Other similar projects have historically been approved by this Board**

Jenkins Court (former Houghton's Hardware)

10 Pettee Brook (former Thompson Reality and Durham Bike location)

9 Madbury Road which has evolved from a single family home to Scorpions Bar to a small concession store a restaurant a hair salon and then to a multi story, multi use structure.

Madbury Commons which has evolved from housing primarily for families to a student slum/business park/fraternity house to a the new approved multi story, multi-use

building.  
The approved Orion Project on Main Street where two "historic"  
buildings will be torn down to make space for a new  
building.

**From our observations the Developer and their team have shown good faith and due diligence throughout this process by accommodating most, if not all of the requested changes and improvements by the Planning Board to the design/plan including:**

Presenting a plan that aligns with this planning boards own vision for  
the town of Durham by following the New Urbanism  
Principles of "compact and robust"  
Reducing the size of the original project occupancy scope  
Adjusting the design of the building to align with this board's own  
requests to retain the esthetic of the Four Square style  
Have made changes to the design to be a good neighbor to all abutting  
properties  
Have adjusted the design to accommodate the wetlands set back  
completely. While other properties adjacent to this  
project appear to us to not comply with this  
requirement

**They have also:**

Presented a true spirit of collaboration with the town of Durham by  
complying with the new architectural standards even though  
they were under no requirement to do so as this project was  
submitted prior to the ordinance being required.

**We have all shown infinite patience with this board when this project was placed at the end of several meeting's agendas to only be moved to subsequent meetings due to "lack of time."**

**Given the Planning Board's own vision, criteria and previous approved projects, plus the good faith efforts of the Developer we fully expect that the board will follow its mandate and approve this plan.**

Mathes Terrace has not been a family neighborhood for at least 30 years when 11 Madbury Road became a bar. 15 Madbury will never be a "single family home" again and the property should be developed in alignment with the long term strategies already approved by the town. This project IS in alignment with those strategies.

I respectfully request that you approve this project as soon as possible.

Thank you.

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