

Shane and Katelyn Malavenda  
15 Faculty Road  
Durham, NH 03824  
June 6, 2016

Town of Durham Planning Board  
8 Newmarket Road  
Durham, NH 03824

Dear Planning Board Members:

My wife and I own and live in 15 Faculty Rd and are direct abutters to the Mill Plaza (tax map 6-6-5). Regretfully, we are unable to attend the meeting on June 8 due to work related commitments that could not be rescheduled.

My wife and I purchased the property in December 2014 and chose a property close to downtown so that we could enjoy dining and shopping that a downtown typically offers. We look forward to a redevelopment of the Mill Plaza that would enhance our options for these activities. However, being direct abutters, we have three main concerns with redevelopment of the Mill Plaza: noise, aesthetics, and privacy.

The latest design takes a step backwards from addressing these concerns, and it seems to ignore one of the key components of the Joint Motion to Stay Proceedings between the town and the developers. That key component was the plan to locate the majority of residence on the north side of the property. Instead of concentrating residence to the north side of the property, the new design includes a five story building on the southern portion which sits directly behind my home. We acknowledge that there is a wooded buffer between our property and the Mill Plaza. However, those trees only have leaves in the spring and summer, and, in addition, we anticipate that a five story building will extend above those trees. A large five story building looming over our backyard does not improve the aesthetics and reduces our privacy.

The latest design is also likely to increase the noise that our home and the rest of the Faculty Neighborhood are subjected to. A five story residence facing the neighborhood will broadcast noise from televisions, stereos, and conversations across the neighborhood. Furthermore, if residents of the proposed design have access to the proposed courtyards, these courtyards would likely become areas for gatherings which may become loud and unruly. Already, on Saturday afternoons in the fall and spring, the cheers from drinking games can be heard throughout the neighborhood. We fear that with the proposed design, those cheers would now literally be emanating from our backyard.

We believe that the Mill Plaza property is too small to support the amount of housing and commercial space that the developers are proposing, and the fact that the design includes buildings that disregard the height guidelines established by the town is evidence of this. The current design would add large buildings and an abundance of new residence right on the edge of the Faculty neighborhood, changing the character of the neighborhood which has been a draw to many families for so long. We urge the council and the developers to once again revisit the plan and create a design that better addresses the concerns of Durham residents to provide a usable commercial area while maintaining a family feel in the Faculty neighborhood.

Thank you,



Shane Malavenda



Katelyn Malavenda