

**From:** Christine Soutter <[csoutter@ci.durham.nh.us](mailto:csoutter@ci.durham.nh.us)>

**Date:** Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at 2:34 PM

**To:** Rick Taintor <[rtaintor@ci.durham.nh.us](mailto:rtaintor@ci.durham.nh.us)>

**Subject:** Mill Plaza comments

Hi Rick. I just tried calling you but for some reason the call wouldn't go through. I know you guys are discussing the financial impact analysis tonight and I wanted to share a few thoughts in regards to the letters that were sent to the Board. I'm not sure if you can pass my comments with the Board or share them aloud during the meeting. I'm not familiar with the protocol but I simply need to respond to some of the comments and make a few of my own:

1. I am not aware of any data that shows a negative effect on homes that are in proximity to a redeveloped shopping plaza. When investments are made to a building, or a group of buildings it either has no effect on value or increases value. Value, to a certain degree, is a personal opinion. What will have a negative effect on surrounding homes and buildings, is a plaza that is neglected and unoccupied.
2. The presence of housing, likely to be occupied by students, does not mean the plaza will become a circus environment. Not only will there be professional management of the residences, but Durham Police Department is highly capable and respected for their diligence in maintaining a safe environment for the community.
3. Additional housing means more competition in the housing market. Competition is a good thing. Competition encourages property owners to make sure they are providing the best possible product. Competition is good for the market. If you take away competition people often lose their motivation to maintain excellence. We want excellence in Durham.
4. UNH continues to invest in themselves because they know they are not going to shut their doors or become an online university. Even if there are a few less students in the coming years, there will remain a need for quality housing. If there were no demand, we wouldn't have students living in surrounding communities commuting to Durham each day.

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5. While there may be a couple of typos in the report and, while no report can guarantee exact fiscal impact, the report shows a positive fiscal impact on the Town and I support that conclusion.

Thanks and I hope you have a positive meeting tonight,

Christine J. Soutter  
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Office hours are Monday through Wednesday, 8am-5pm