

Dear Town of Durham Planning Board Members,

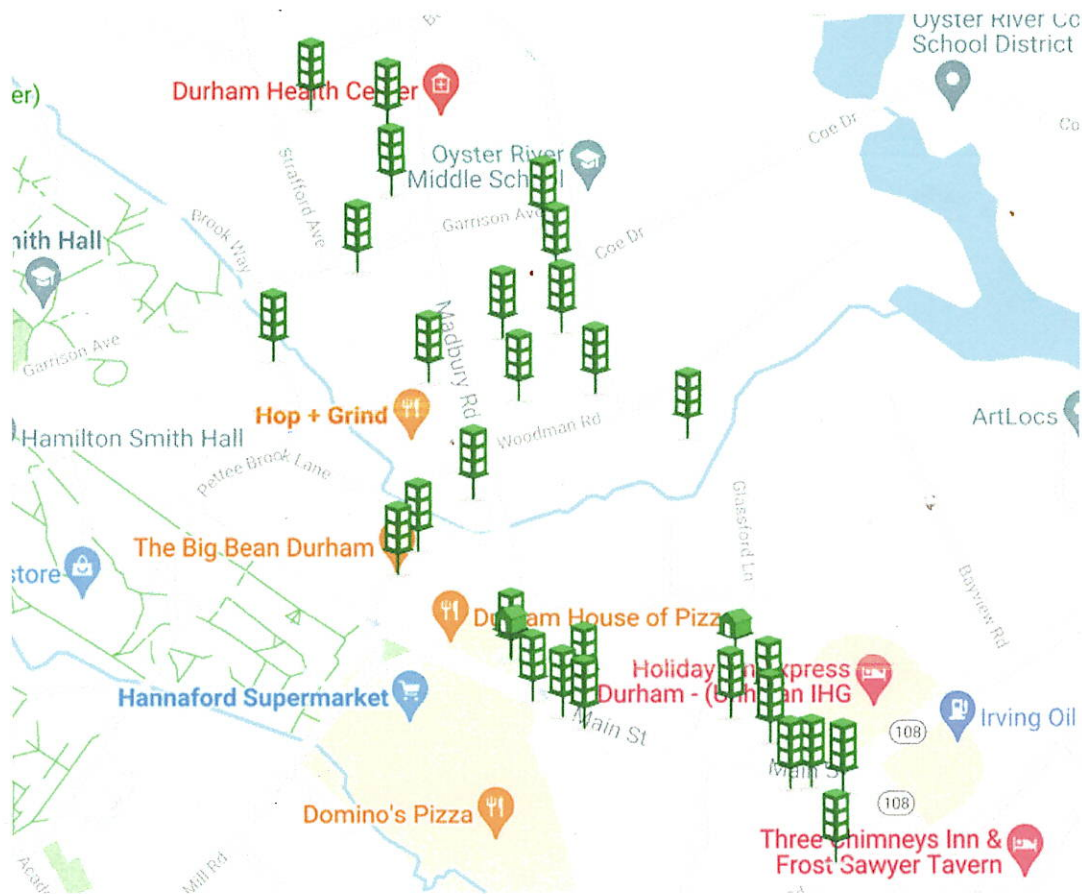
I am writing to voice concerns about the proposed Mill Plaza Development plan and its likely impact on the downtown area of Durham. This letter also addresses concerns associated with the Toomerfs parking proposal, so it can subsequently be used for that project as well.

While I understand that there are specific criteria, conditional use, etc, that the planning board has to consider when it looks at application I am concerned about the lack of consideration for the totality of what is happening in the core area of Durham. I would think that consideration for these impacts would fall under the purview of the planning board and the town planner, and yet it appears as though this is not the case.

First, the amount of off-campus student housing that has been inserted into the core downtown area over the past 10 years has led to a downtown that is no longer as resident friendly, especially in the evenings or on the weekends. The large concentration of students in this area is a ticking time bomb should they decide to throw a party or convene in the streets to celebrate, or demonstrate, or just commune. The increase in the amount of trash on the streets is also evident with this increased student concentration. Adding 258 more student beds to this area is a recipe for failure.

Source: <https://www.rentcollegepads.com/off-campus-housing/new-hampshire/search>

Green poles represent student rentals



of Current Student Rental Properties located in Durham Core

... Do we really need more? Why isn't UNH developing their land to offer more housing?

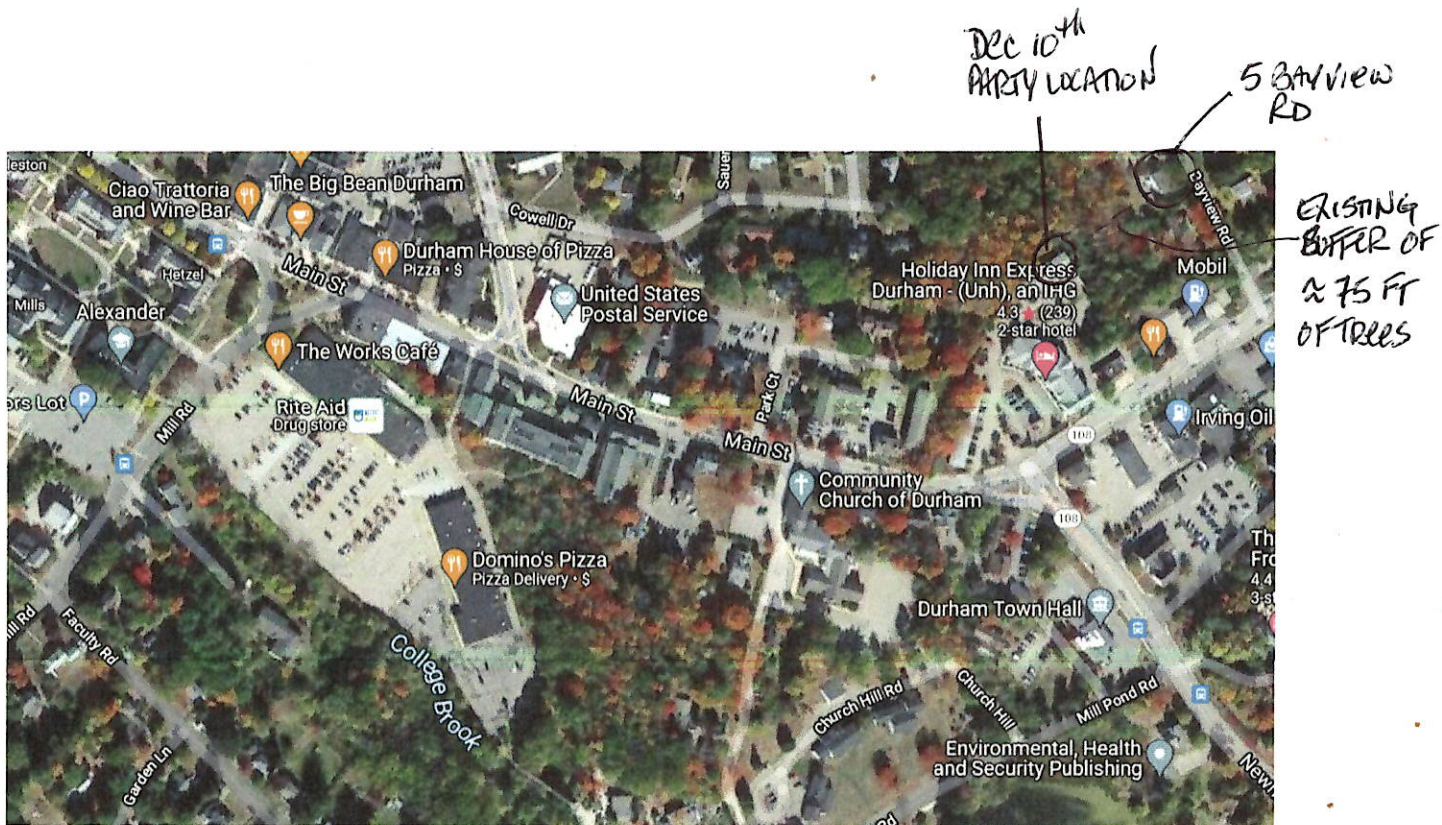
Madbury Commons, 21	20 Main St	42 Garrison Ave
Madbury Rd, Durham,	5 Main St	28 Dover Rd
1 Main St	Davis Court	33 Madbury Rd
10-14 Straffors Ave	1 Madbury Rd	12 Jenkins Court
9 Madbury rd	9 Woodman Rd	2 Mill Pond Dr
18-35 Main St	10 Main St	Rosemary apartments
28 Main St	Park Court	21 Park C

Second, both the Mill Plaza plan and the Toomerfs parking proposal greatly reduce the in town forest, (We are a Tree City, right?), and reduce the buffers between the plaza, parking and adjacent homes. I have listened in these meetings, and during site walks as engineers have tried to say that the buffers will be enough and to that I say hogwash! Below I am showing the current buffer between my property and some adjacent student housing and when the students are partying it is woefully insufficient. The homes on Chesley, Church Hill and Faculty Road will all be within easy earshot of the car noise, headlights and partying noise. There will also be increased light pollution by both the lighting that will be required to make those areas safe and the building lights, that will burn all night long.

Example:

On Dec 10, 2021 at 11:30PM I called the police regarding loud student noise coming from the three houses located behind the Holiday Inn Express. I called because I could hear the expletives being used inside my house, with my windows closed. (listen to submitted video recording of noise prior to police arrival to shut down the party.) When the hotel was built and these houses were moved to this location we were assured that the houses would be occupied by hotel students helping to run the Holiday Inn Express and that there would be no problems. This is an example of one of several calls that I have made and given the current proposals I decided to record what I heard. Prior to fencing my yard I also had students from these properties trespassing on my property. This buffer is significantly larger than the buffer between the proposed plaza student housing and parking. How many calls will the town police have to respond to once this development is completed?

Annotated map showing proposed deforestation, increased pavement and reduced buffer for adjacent residential neighborhoods.



(SEE ATTACHED PAGE FOR GENERAL DEFORESTATION)

Finally, when I mention considering things in totality I have to mention the recent tree decimation that has occurred on Young Drive and the likely future impact of that atrocity. For starters, the trees... What are we going to do once all of the green is gone from the downtown area? The existing and potential new buildings on Young are now, and will be clearly visible from Rte 108 and from the yards of the residences on Bayview Rd. The minimal protection for the watershed was put in place after the trees were felled. Is this what will be allowed during the Mill Plaza construction? We have very few stands of trees left in the core area of Durham and as we deforest and turn these areas into pavement we are just amplifying the impacts of future storm drainage and watershed pollution issues. When does it stop?

I hope that the Planning Board will strongly consider all of the resident input on these projects and there long term, probable negative impact on the core area od Durham.

Respectfully submitted, Glendowlyn Howard, 5 Bayview Rd, Durham (since 1970)

DEFORESTATION IN DOWNTOWN DURHAM

1/6/2022

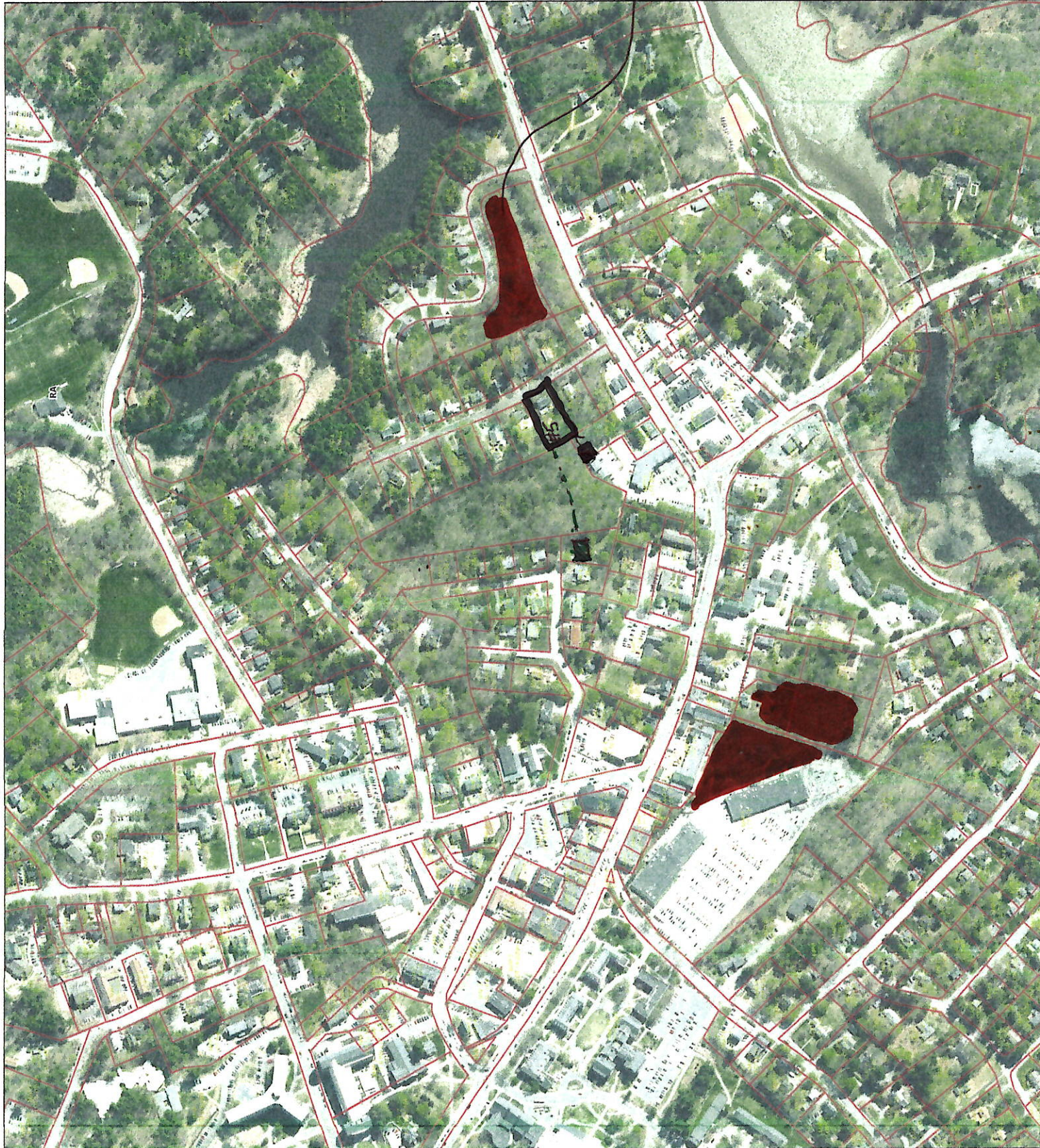


Zoning Map Downtown Districts Durham, NH

LEGEND

- CB - Central Business
- CC - Coe's Corner
- C - Courthouse
- CH - Church Hill
- DBP - Durham Business Park
- OR - Office And Research Rte. 108
- PO - Professional Office
- RA - Residence A
- RB - Residence B
- RC - Residence C
- UNH - UNH Properties

Recently cut
TREE BUFFER ON
YOUNG DRIVE
DEFORESTATION



Map produced by
Karen Edwards
April 29, 2013
Revised March 16, 2017

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY
THIS MAP IS NOT INTENDED TO
REPRESENT LEGAL DESCRIPTION
OR CONVEYANCE

PG 4