

November 12, 2019

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

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Town of Durham

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Planning, Assessing  
and Zoning

Dear neighbors,

We writing to describe some reasons the Planning Board should reject the request for special permission to create a parking lot behind the Red Tower.

We know Durham well and care for the qualities it affords its residents. We have lived in town since 1989. Dennis is Emeritus Professor of Policy at UNH and Suzanne has served on various committees and commissions.

The proposal to cut down the forest behind the Red Tower in order that a 150 car parking lot can be constructed to facilitate the massive redevelopment of the Mill Pond Plaza is an extraordinarily bad idea for several reasons.

1. It will create a traffic nightmare at the blind peak of Main Street in front of the Red Tower. Visibility is poor enough in that section that one person was killed trying to cross the road there. Can you imagine that stretch with 150 cars entering and leaving that driveway? Turning left out of the parking lot and turning left off of Main Street to enter the parking lot will be difficult and dangerous at all times and impossible during time of peak traffic. Cars are already often backed up behind the light at that point on Main Street. There will be daily grid lock! Noise and light pollution associated with the parking lot will be extremely disruptive to many Durham residents.
2. The town is already confronting the costs of dealing with the environmental deterioration of College Brook caused by the Plaza's parking lot. Runoff from that area has filled the Mill Pond with sediment, which will impose multi million dollar costs on the town whether we decide to keep the dam or remove it. The problems will become much worse if the new parking lot is constructed. It will put more salt, sediment, and petroleum derivatives into the reservoir.

3. The existing Red Tower forest lowers noise and reduces light and air pollution in the center of town. Cutting the forest will eliminate those amenities - and for what gain? This proposal offers no benefits to any Durham resident. Its profits will go to those who live outside of Durham.
4. For good reason this proposal requires a special exemption. Granting it will bring high costs and no benefits to the citizens of Durham. The request should be denied.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,



Dennis Meadows



Suzanne MacDonald

34 Laurel Lane, Durham