

**From:** [Freedman, Diane](#)  
**To:** [Karen Edwards](#)  
**Subject:** Church Hill Parking Lot Proposal  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2019 11:19:46 AM

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I am opposed to a plan for cutting trees and paving over a now peaceful rural, environmentally necessary area of Durham for the sake of more parking spaces, public or private.

Research shows that we need trees to clean our air, cool planetary temperatures, and improve and protect our psychic and physical health (see Florence Williams' book *The Nature Fix*, which cites medical and psycho-social research on the topic of trees; see the letter to Todd I wrote months back attaching a recent NY Times article on trees).

Moreover, our Town residents have made clear, by resistance to the tree trimming and tree removals undertaken by Eversource during recent "improvements" along Durham Point and Newmarket Roads.

Finally, we have conditional use language that should simply and squarely be applied to say NO: tree removal, paving, and, of coursing, the coming and going of cars in a now quiet and visually shielded area certainly and obviously violates the conditions under which any change in use or landscape MIGHT even be considered—i.e., does not increase noise, congestion, or change the fundamental character of a place in Town.

If public officials keep being intimidated and bowled over by money and lawsuits even when they have right on their side, something is terrible wrong. And we probably need a major overhaul in our local governance, possible returning to Town Meetings.

Enough is enough. I urge all who care about the Town to think about its fundamental character, our actual demographics (aging, not growing younger, with fewer and fewer college-age persons in NH generally), and the mission and philosophy of our Town and Community as repeatedly expressed in mission statements of the past.

Think, too, carefully, about the well-documented climate crisis in which we are enmeshed.

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