

Timothy Murphy
Toomerfs, LLC
37 Main Street
Durham, NH 03824

Michael Behrendt
Town Planner
8 Newmarket Road
Durham, NH 03824

January 19, 2021

Dear Mr. Behrendt:

On behalf of Toomerfs, I'd like to address some issues discussed at the January 13, 2021, meeting of the Planning Board. The effect on traffic of our proposal for 19-21 Main Street was discussed, including with Steve Pernaw, traffic engineer. Here are some points we believe are important:

- 1.) Mr. Pernaw's projections assumed growth in traffic of 1.0% per year through 2031.
- 2.) The actual growth in Durham traffic has been *negative* 1.3% per year (Steve Pernaw Memorandum, January 13, 2021), so his projections are conservative.
- 3.) Students are present only approximately half of the year, so Mr. Pernaw's assumptions are even more conservative.
- 4.) There are projected to be ~1,500 cars passing by the entrance to our parking area on Main Street during the busiest hour of the busiest day (12,000 cars per day).
- 5.) During that same busiest hour, there are projected to be 88 entries/exits from our proposed lot, a number Mr. Pernaw described as being *below* the typical variance in day to day traffic ("this expansion project is not going to have an impact any greater than what you are already experiencing" due to random variability, Steve Pernaw, Durham Planning Board Meeting, Jan. 13, 2021, 3:53:40).
- 6.) Using these worst case traffic assumptions and based on standard methods of interpretation from the Transportation Research Board, Highway Capacity Manual 2010, the impact of our proposed parking lot on traffic on Main Street is rated as Level of Service B ("LOS"), which means "<1" cars queueing, and less than 15 seconds to execute a traffic maneuver at that intersection (Fig. 2 and Table 3). Most of the day, it is LOS A.
- 7.) These LOS ratings on Main Street are the same *even if we don't build the parking lot extension* (Table 3, Traffic Study).
- 8.) The proposed lot would have "minimal impact" on traffic operations downtown, and is "not going to affect the flow of through traffic eastbound and westbound on Main Street" (Steve Pernaw, Durham Planning Board Meeting, Jan. 13, 2021, 3:52:40). "This site

driveway will continue to operate below capacity in the year 2031”. Steve Pernaw, Durham Planning Board Meeting, Jan. 13, 2021, DCAT@3:48:45).

- 9.) Commissioner Bubar’s point is a valid one—our parking tenants are likely already in Durham, perhaps with cars parked somewhere else; it’s unlikely we’ll draw anyone into town just for our parking. So, the traffic counts that are projected in 2031 are probably at least in part shifted from elsewhere downtown, not all new traffic volume (James Bubar, Durham Planning Board Meeting, Jan. 13, 2021, 3:55:14). (“Is it really adding traffic to Durham in general? Probably not”. Steve Pernaw, Durham Planning Board Meeting, Jan. 13, 2021, DCAT@3:57:10).
- 10.) Mr. Pernaw’s report shows that the most significant effect would be felt by our tenants, as left turns onto Main Street are projected to be an LOS F, with an estimated wait of 60 seconds and a queue of 3 cars exiting the lot during evening rush hour. However, the parking lot exit is also projected to be a LOS E (35-50 second delay) *even if we don’t build the parking lot extension*. It is the volume of traffic on Main Street, and perhaps the traffic signal at Newmarket Road, that cause that problem at rush hour. The data show an insubstantial contribution of the proposed lot.

There were a couple of questions about the tenant mix, and that might affect the conclusions. Currently we have one parking tenant of 90 that is not a student (including parking across at 18 Main Street). Where is the demand going to come from? There were hundreds of student housing beds built in the neighborhood in the past 10 years between Main Street Apartments (200 beds), the Grange (50 beds), plus Madbury Commons (550 beds) and others. There was also a net loss of over 150 parking spaces related to those developments. Mill Plaza plans another 258 beds of student housing. **The net result is over a thousand existing or planned student housing beds within a few blocks will have no onsite parking.** It is unlikely that a significant portion of our proposed lot would come from outside of this radius, meaning we expect all, or almost all, of the tenants to be students.

We understand the concerns about traffic on Main Street, and delays at the intersection of Main Street and Newmarket Road in the evening, and at the post office in the morning. The evidence in the record presented by Mr. Pernaw clearly shows that our proposed parking lot will not materially impact traffic flow on that road, will affect the volume of traffic less than the typical day-to-day variability, and not change the Level of Service on Main Street. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Timothy Murphy

Toomerfs, LLC.

Cc: Planning Board