

Mary R. LaPolice  
7 Magrath Rd  
Durham, NH 03824

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Dear Members of the Durham Planning Board:

I recently wrote to the Board regarding the Conditional Use issue of the Church Hill proposed parking lot, which would result in destroying perhaps the last and very old remaining urban forest we have left in Town. That forest also provides a very nice buffer between the housing for our sweet elderly in the Church Hill Apartments, the residents of the Faculty Neighborhood. It also shelters the Plaza as our last downtown area void of UNH Student housing and loud nighttime activity in and around residences, not only in the Faculty Neighborhood, but the additional elderly housing on Mill Road at the mouth of the Plaza. I know from personal accounts from other residents and neighbors of Durham, that the downtown area is rarely entered as they seek goods and services from surrounding towns to avoid campus. For some who do not abut, it becomes "out of sight, out of mind." But for some of us proud residents who are close to the downtown core, we have remained loyal Durham shoppers even as student off-campus living continues to encroach into our private lives. This could be the turning point if approved.

In my last letter, I made a comment that this Toomerfs parking lot will not be used by traveling UNH professors, nor will it be used for any business or church parking. It will be solely used as long-term lease or metered parking for additional UNH Student commuter and off-campus parking. I had mentioned in my letter, that UNH is a WALKING campus for aesthetics, density, traffic control, and safety. Durham also claims a pedestrian focus. If a commuting student needs parking, there is already a system whereby they can utilize A-Lot, which is reasonably close to all the UNH classroom buildings and many of the campus housing areas. There is also a reason that in the past only upper classmen were allowed a car on campus unless a dire need is demonstrated. Why are we making exceptions for something that will NOT benefit anyone resident in Durham? The applicants' "traffic studies" aside, with that proposed parking lot exiting on Main Street I ask, have you never tried to leave town via the Post Office section during rush hour? It's backed up sometimes to Libby's all the way to lights by the Irving as it is?

Today, I am writing in support of the Robert Grant in his recent letter to the Board. His family is an important lineage in the fabric of Durham. Below is an excerpt:

*... but now you want to allow 2 additional out of staters to have a say in the development of Durham for their own personal gain. They are attempting to burden the town (and UNH) and its citizens with yet another parking lot despite Conditional-Use criteria that you have an obligation to defend. .... UNH created this traffic chaos and pollution nightmare, the town is not responsible for fixing it by cutting down the Church Hill woods and making parking spaces. Light pollution, added traffic, the loss of a sound barrier to the Faculty Neighborhood, is this the way to run a town. I'd say no, and again refer to current zoning and CU criteria.*

I implore the Board to require a better and "permitted" alternative for the Toomerfs land and to continue to consider Durham as a *Town*, not Durham as the University of New Hampshire. Please deny the parking lot proposal. It doesn't make sense for numerous reasons, as would be even more obvious if a decent project rendering had been submitted. It's time to say "no."

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,  
Mary LaPolice, Durham