

December 10, 2020

RE: Church Hill Parking Lot

Dear Karen Edwards:

It saddens me that a parking lot on Church Hill is being seriously considered. I feel so fortunate that a walk from our house into town includes going “over the river and through the woods.” It’s like a mini vacation. Seeing a parking lot or tall retaining wall (even behind a row of trees) when I’m still in the woods, as opposed to after I’ve emerged and turned the corner on the path to the plaza, would really damage how I feel about living near town.

I don’t understand what benefit the parking lot is to the Town of Durham. I understand that the purpose is for tenants of the Mill Plaza. I don’t see any benefit to Durham residents there. I only see a lost pocket of nature; I see more cars, pavement, traffic, noise, pollution.

If it passes, I feel particularly bad for neighbors who would be living right next to it. I hear there is only a five-foot setback. That is not fair to the neighbors. The noise, smell, and absence of trees is not why they paid the price they did for those houses. Would you want a parking to next to your house?

I don’t understand how it fits the current Conditional Use laws. Why do we have the Conditional Use criteria if our town officials are not abiding by it? I thought the town officials were supposed to be the ones enforcing it.

I don’t understand how a town as concerned about the environment and proud of being green can be considering razing a beautiful patch of woods near a beautiful little brook...for what benefit?

I just saw recently how Durham received a good financial rating, so it doesn’t seem to be about money. I really don’t see either the benefit to the town or the legality of the project.

Please don’t allow the project to continue.
Thank you so much for your consideration.

Thank you,

Maura Slavin
Burnham Ave