



Durham Town Planning Board  
8 Newmarket Road  
Durham, NH 03824

March 13, 2024

Dear Members of the Durham Town Planning Board,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed amendment to change the status of a piece of property from Residential Coastal to Office Research.

I serve in two roles that give me a front-row seat to both our community's challenges and its opportunities:

- 1) Senior Minister of Four Rivers Church
- 2) Director of Four Rivers Project, a non-profit.

Our community excels in solving problems and I believe this amendment aligns with our community's needs for growth and development while addressing the lack of affordable housing, a root cause for many challenges in our community.

Durham is the town where our church and non-profit are incorporated and Durham also serves as our base of operations. Solving real problems drives both organizations and since our founding in 2019, more than a thousand people have come together to work on the challenges in this region such as Foster Care, Homelessness and Refugee Resettlement.

Affordable housing is a 4-way win for the community and we have seen this on display as our church has sponsored seven refugee families and welcomed them into our community over the last two years. The win has come from the following:

- 1) Fostering Community Generosity & Unity:
  - Our community is generous and finds great delight in sharing with the families that we have welcomed to this community. They have gladly shared mother-in-law apartments, vehicles, and finances.
- 2) Cultivating Leadership:
  - Leaders from every sector of our community have worked together to see the families settle into the community and begin to thrive.

[www.fourriversproject.org](http://www.fourriversproject.org)

&

[www.4riverschurch.org](http://www.4riverschurch.org)

3) Attracting a Skilled Workforce:

- Local employers are benefitting from the arrival of motivated and skilled individuals to our region, who are eager to work hard and enrich both our workforce and drive economic growth.

4) Enriching Families Across Generations:

- The Durham community thrives when it sees the refugee families benefit from the wealth of resources and opportunities in this community. These families will see multiple generations benefit from affordable housing in this community.

The lack of affordable housing options in Durham has been a significant concern for years, forcing many potential members of Durham to seek housing solutions outside the town's boundaries. This not only creates challenges for individuals and families but also impacts the vibrancy and inclusivity of our community.

By passing the proposed amendment, Durham has a unique opportunity to address the issue of affordable housing while fostering economic growth and innovation. The creation of more affordable housing options would not only benefit the groups our congregation and non-profit works with but will also contribute to the overall well-being and diversity of our town.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact that this amendment will have on Durham and the surrounding area.

Thank you,

Wes Dillon  
Senior Minister, Four Rivers Church  
Director, Four Rivers Project

m - 603.205.4543

email - [wes@4riverschurch.org](mailto:wes@4riverschurch.org)

[www.fourriversproject.org](http://www.fourriversproject.org)

&

[www.4riverschurch.org](http://www.4riverschurch.org)