



TOWN OF DURHAM
8 NEWMARKET RD
DURHAM, NH 03824-2898
603/868-8064
www.ci.durham.nh.us

Town Planner's Review
Wednesday, March 27, 2024

- X. **Workforce Housing – Potential Zoning Amendment.** Discussion about issues related to potential zoning amendment to facilitate the creation of workforce housing with a possible overlay district encompassing a number of properties including a 117-acre lot of land owned by the Leda M. Keefe Rev. Trust, c/o Daniel Keefe, at 59 Piscataqua Road, Tax Map 209, Lot 39. The Planning Board put aside an earlier proposal and is now working on a new/revised draft.
- I recommend that the board start discussing the various issues related to prospective zoning amendments.

The Planning Board has received a lot of very good feedback on the proposed zoning amendment for Workforce Housing.

Here are various items that we will need to examine closely as part of a revised/new draft. ***Numbers below refer to the numbers in the prior draft under 6) Standards for Specific Uses, P. Workforce Housing (Option A).***

Overlay. This should be set up as the Workforce Housing Overlay District (WHOD) rather than rezoning the subject Keefe parcel to Office Research. I agree that there are several good reasons to do that. The Town Attorney has suggested that the overlay district encompass several areas of town. Areas in the vicinity of Technology Drive and UNH's West Edge make sense as there are large parcels there, water and sewer is available, and the sites are close to state highways. All of the desired standards should be incorporated into the overlay district.

Oyster River Schools. We need to get a good handle on likely impact upon the Oyster River School District. Dr. Morse is speaking to the Planning Board on April 10. This issue will take some time to work through. There has been some discussion recently about strategies to manage this issue: including a certain number of market-rate units, restricting the numbers of bedrooms, providing some amount of senior units, and phasing the project.

HUD standards. We need more information about setting the HUD standard based on bedroom size.

Units for sale. This ordinance is more oriented to rental. I think that rental housing is preferred as it is set at a more affordable level (60% area median income for rental in contrast to 100% of area median income for sales) and is easier to retain at affordable levels in perpetuity. It might be useful to add more language regarding sales though.

Sustainability. Should specific sustainability measures be included?

2. Percent workforce housing. There have been several comments about the mix of units. It seems some percentage should be market rate units (e.g., 25%).

3. Perpetuity. More thought may be needed for how to ensure the units remain as workforce housing in perpetuity.

4. Income requirement. This provision states that while the rent levels must remain at HUD levels in perpetuity, any party can rent a unit. Should we require that only parties whose income falls within the 60% threshold can rent? This would involve more oversight by the Town.

5. UNH students. We need to get a good handle on potential rental by undergraduate students. This addressed partly in 5. We will continue discussing this issue with the Town Attorney.

6. Support facilities. We should discuss this further, perhaps listing more facilities that would be allowed as accessory uses and principal uses.

7. Density. What is the target density?

9. Open space. We should discuss in more detail how much open space should be preserved and what the criteria might be.

10. Housing types. We should talk more with the potential developer about what they have in mind for types of units. A harmonious mix with some missing middle housing is desirable.

11. Design. We can talk more about design issues if desirable.

14. Perimeters buffers. We can talk more specifically about buffers. The Town Attorney has suggested including specific buffers, for example a 200-foot buffer from any public roads and a 100 foot buffer from adjacent property.