

Micah Warnock, Chair Town of Durham Zoning Board
Michael Behrendt, Durham Town Planner
8 Newmarket Road, Durham, NH 03824

Re: Property: Schoolhouse Lane, Durham, NH 03824, Map 108, Lot 73-1
Applicants: M.D. Shaad Mahmud and Erika Nauman Gaillat
Proposal: Construction of a 3-story, 4-unit multi-family residential building

Dear Chair Warnock and Mr. Behrendt:

As a resident of 15 Old Landing Road, I have signed the neighborhood objection letter to the two requests for zoning variances by the owners of 12 Schoolhouse Lane that would involve building a 3-story apartment building with 4 separate residential units in a Residential A Zone, and on a lot that does not meet the requirements for a building that size.

My objections to the proposal are that it does not conserve open space, protect natural and scenic resources from degradation, preserve historic sites and structures, or ensure development is commensurate with the character and physical limitations of the land.

My particular concerns involve the loss of Durham's residential neighborhoods. The owners are assuming that because there are student apartments across the street from their property, and because the addition of the Tideline Public House at the other end of School House Lane has increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic, they should be allowed to build an apartment house in the Residential A Zone where their property is located. Coincidentally, also contributing to area density and traffic. The proposal presents the rationale: why not one more.

We've all seen the loss of Durham's residential neighborhoods to student apartments. A drive to the Madbury Road area across from the Durham Public Library, down Bagdad Road, or Coe Drive in the area of the new Middle School are examples of this intrusion.

My second concern is the statement that the apartment building would act as a buffer between the commercial district of Schoolhouse Lane and residential Old Landing Road.

(We already have a natural woodlands buffer.)

The proposal would include a "buffer" of a 9-space parking lot, bicycle/scooter spaces, and a patio for residents to the side and rear of the apartment building. Because many of the Old Landing Road residences are located on or at the bottom of a hill, this would not prevent natural and scenic resources from degradation, as the proposal claims, but add to it.

The recent torrential rain storms we have experienced provided a good example of erosion in our yard without the building of a 3-story building with 4-separate resident apartments on top of the hill.

The property seeking the two variances is also located just outside the Shoreland Protection Overlay District.

Lastly, the proposed 3-story apartment building would be located next to the old School House Lane Cemetery, and, one of Durham's and New Hampshire's oldest houses, c1649, the Hill-Woodman-Frost House, now known as the Three Chimneys Inn. Both in Durham's Historic District.

The Town of Durham has established a lovely park on Old Landing Road, site of the Old Town Landing. One can sit on the benches or picnic tables and enjoy the beauty and history of the Oyster River and the Landing, itself part of Durham's Historic District.

One can sit there and, if this proposal is allowed, see a 3-story apartment building at the top of the School House Lane Hill intruding on the ambience.

I respectfully submit my specific disagreements with the requested zoning variances, in addition to the group neighborhood objections that I also signed, and encourage the Zoning Committee to deny these requests.

Barbara Moriarty

