

We the people: on Woodmont.

Prepared by Jack Falvey as a summary of fifteen months of citizen input maintaining a 90 plus person email chain of neighbors and interested others commenting on the transformation of the Woodmont Apple Farm to a proposed new urban village. 12/17/11

If you are in agreement with this citizen view of the Woodmont Project, please sign this document to express your will to the elected and appointed officials of our town:

Londonderry is not River City, Portsmouth, Boston, or some at risk victim of sprawl.

The New Hampshire Municipal Association and the office of State Planning define “Urban Sprawl” as:

“Inflation over time, in the amount of land consumed per unit of human activity, and the degree of dispersal between such land areas, brought about as the consequence of society’s use of automobiles.”

A bias against automobiles is just that.

Those that choose to live without automobiles may do so in an urban environment with mass transit and a mass population in nearby Mass.

We do not have trouble right here in Londonderry or in River City as the Music Man con artist proposed when selling band instruments and uniforms in the Broadway show and subsequent motion picture.

The Woodmont developers want to sell Londonderry on a high density, high profit (For them.) massive subdivision of 1300 dwellings on 650 acres. Under existing zoning laws, which we all are in compliance with, and which they want changed, the 650 acres in question would support less than 300 dwellings if they were crammed in.

Citizens have raised the alarm that a whole new set of very negative consequences will result from the developer’s high density; high profit business model if existing zoning is done away with. New costly expansions of fire, police, highway and schools would be required and these additional costs have not been estimated or addressed as the developer wants the zoning changed first and the costs dealt with after the fact. This document opposes that order.

The developers have paid lip service to concerns of the residents of the town and are in the process of ramrodding their project down the throats of our Planning Board under the newly codified Plan Unit Development ordinance. This citizen document opposes that process and recommends that deliberations be deliberate and complete before a Master Plan, which contains zoning changes, is considered.

Over one hundred specific citizen questions have been submitted to town staff in writing on the Woodmont project and none have been answered or discussed in a public planning board meeting. Long term issues must be on the table before short term zoning changes can be voted on. This document requests full disclosure and full public discussion of all relevant issues. Staff to developer dialog is no substitute for open to the public meetings. Meetings run by the developer are not a substitute for public meetings run by our elected and appointed officials. Zoning changes by town charter are in the province of the town council. They would be a preferred body to discuss zoning changes of these magnitudes (6 dwellings per acre versus the 50 year one acre per dwelling town wide standard.). **This document supports open public discussions of zoning changes before specific plans are considered.**

This project may or may not work for Londonderry but the process definitely does not work for Londonderry. Both the developer and the community are not pleased with progress of either the project or the discussion and disclosure of the details and probable costs and consequences to all the citizens of Londonderry. **This document supports a tabling of the Master Plan application until such time as a complete third party review is submitted and citizen input is heard in public session by that third party and other relevant bodies.**

The residents of Londonderry have invested their savings, taxes, time and energy to build our town into a country living model acceptable to all those who have moved here. This type of town is friendly to the environment both human and wild life with open spaces, natural versus artificial wetlands and forested green spaces. Lacking urban mass transit and concentrated population mass in excess of 100,000 residents, walkable employment is a myth that cannot be achieved on a 650 acre Potemkin village no matter what the density, to include high rise construction which has not been ruled out under the PUD. **This document opposes the destruction of the existing one acre per dwelling economic model of Londonderry that all residents have agreed to for the past fifty years.**

I agree that Londonderry is a world class community with a world class band and we should not let anybody tell us differently.

Sign here: _____

