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Dudley Planning Board
71 West Main Street
Dudley, MA 01571

Subject: Comments related to Nichols College Town House project application

Gentlemen,

After attending the initial meeting held on Wednesday July 13, 2022, I wish to submit the following comments in writing to the Planning Board in advance of the next meeting scheduled for August 10th.

Big Picture:

I feel strongly that the location of this proposed project is not in the best interest of both the Town of Dudley and the residents who live nearby. There are numerous lots already within the campus footprint that are available for buildings of this type. In my view, the college should re-develop these existing parcels prior to being permitted to break ground on a parcel that is former agricultural land and that until recently was a hayfield.

It is very gratifying to know that much of the land near Nichols College is still farmland. There are also large tracks of land that are protected from development through the hard work of local residents and the Dudley Conservation Land Trust (DCLT). This town takes great pride in its agrarian roots. It just does not seem right that this particular parcel be developed when there are other parcels within the campus that are currently available.

Having lived at 93 Center Road since 1985, my wife and I, and our children have been fortunate to witness the coming and going of the wildlife that we share the land with. Bald eagles, deer, fox, coyotes, bobcat, woodchucks and turkeys are just some of the animals that call this area home. The use of this field for town houses will certainly impact their habitat and travel through this wildlife corridor.

Specific Concerns Related to 93 Center Road:

Negative impact to our real estate value.

Noise and trash control during construction

Storm water run-off during construction

Light pollution from streetlights, buildings and vehicles

Stormwater detention basin abutting our property line

Trash blowing into our yard during occupancy

Noise from vehicles and from students after occupancy

The loss of our ability to view spectacular sunsets from our backyard because they will be blocked by the proposed buildings.

Summary:

1st Option: Develop existing parcels first and leave this field as is

2nd Option: If the project goes forward relocate the detention basin, access drive and parking from the East side of the project to the West side.

Aside:

Why is Nichols looking to add 52 more beds when they only need 750 beds for next semester and currently have 1005 beds on campus?

Respectfully submitted,

Mark & Anna-Lee Stefanik