

Zoning Board of Adjustment
Tuesday, September 7, 2021 6:30 p.m.
City Hall Council Chambers
3 Washington Street, 2nd Floor

AGENDA

- I. Introduction of Board Members
- II. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – August 2, 2021
- III. Unfinished Business: Revisions to Zoning Board of Adjustment Regulations, Section II, I-Supplemental Information
- IV. Hearings:

ZBA 21-14: Petitioner, Ells Electric, LLC, of Spofford, NH, owned by James L. and Beverly A. Ells of Spofford, NH, requests a Variance for property located at 90-92 Victoria St., Tax Map #589-022-000-000-000 that is in the Business Growth and Re-Use District. The Petitioner requests a Variance to permit a single-family resident where it is not a permitted use per Section 102-771 of the Zoning Ordinance.

ZBA 21-19: Petitioner, Ells Electric, LLC, of Spofford, NH, owned by James L. and Beverly A. Ells of Spofford, NH, requests a Variance for property located at 90-92 Victoria St., Tax Map #589-022-000-000-000 that is in the Business Growth and Re-Use District. The Petitioner requests a Variance to permit a 19 foot frontage where 50 feet is required per Section 102-821 of the Zoning Ordinance.

ZBA 21-15: Petitioner, Amerco Real Estate Company, of 2727 North Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ, requests a Variance for property located at 0 Krif Rd. and 472 Winchester St., Tax Map #115-019-000-000-000 and 115-020-000-000-000 that is in the Commerce Limited District. The Petitioner requests a Variance to permit the construction of a roof to provide cover to vehicles, encroaching the building setback per Section 102-791 of the Zoning Ordinance.

ZBA 21-16: Petitioner, Enterprise Rent-A-Car Company of Boston, LLC, of 10 Navigator Rd., Londonderry, NH, requests a Variance for property located at 453 Winchester St., Keene, owned by 449 and 453 Winchester Street, LLC, of 549 US Highway 1 Bypass, Portsmouth, NH, Tax Map #115-026-001-000-000 that is in the Industrial District. The Petitioner requests a Variance to permit a motor vehicle rental business where it is not a permitted use per Section 102-632 of the Zoning Ordinance.

ZBA 21-17: Petitioner, Brian and Amalia Harmon of 184 Colby Rd., Danville, NH, request a Variance for property located at 27-29 Center St., Tax Map #568-016-000-000-000 that is in the Office District. The Petitioner requests a variance for a residential use of this property with only 3,049.2 sq. ft. rather than the required 13,400 sq. ft. per Section 102-791 of the Zoning Code.

ZBA 21-18: Petitioner, Brian and Amalia Harmon of 184 Colby Rd., Danville, NH, request a Variance for property located at 27-29 Center St., Tax Map #568-016-000-000-000 that is in the Office District. The Petitioner requests a variance for residential housing with three and a third parking spaces rather than the required four per Section 102-793 of the Zoning Code.

- V. New Business:
- VI. Communications and Miscellaneous:
- VII. Non Public Session: (if required)
- VIII. Adjournment:

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1 City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

3
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5 ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
6 MEETING MINUTES
7

8 **Monday, August 2, 2021**

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Members Present:

Joshua Gorman, Chair
Joseph Hoppock, Vice Chair
Jane Taylor
Michael Welsh
Arthur Gaudio

Staff Present:

John Rogers, Zoning Administrator
Corinne Marcou, Zoning Clerk

Members Not Present:

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10
11 **I) Introduction of Board Members**

12
13 Chair Gorman called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Roll call was conducted.
14

15 **II) Minutes of the Previous Meeting - July 6, 2021**

16
17 Ms. Taylor stated that she has corrections to the meeting minutes:
18

- 19 - Arthur Gaudio should be listed as a member, not “alternate member.”
20 - Lines 89 and 90: the words “became a mandate” should be “became amended.”
21 - Line 360 should read, “Mr. Hoppock stated that he did not hear Mr. Phippard elaborate,”
22 not “Mr. Hoppock stated that he did not hear Mr. Hoppock elaborate.”
23

24 Mr. Hoppock made a motion to approve the minutes of July 6, 2021 as amended. Mr. Welsh
25 seconded the motion, which passed by a unanimous vote of 4-0, with Mr. Gaudio not voting as
26 he was not present at the July meeting.
27

28 **III) Hearings:**

29 **A) ZBA 21-13: Petitioner, Cooper’s Crossroad, of 700 West St., Keene, requests
30 a Variance for property located at 149 Hurricane Rd., Tax Map # 542-021-000-000-
31 000 that is in the Low Density-1 District. The Petitioner requests a Variance to
32 permit an outdoor recreational activity as a business; agricultural-related education
33 activity per Section 102-372 of the Zoning Ordinance.**

34 Chair Gorman asked to hear from staff. John Rogers, Zoning Administrator, stated that this
35 property is on Hurricane Rd., which is off Arch St. He continued that contained in this is a 37-
36 acre lot that currently has mostly barns for structures. In the past, it was the Elm Tree Research
37 Center. He is not sure how the property is currently being used. The Low Density-1(LD-1)
38 District is unique, with only two lots. Across the street from this property at 149 Hurricane Rd.
39 is another large lot. The LD-1 District was created in 2001 and was meant as a transition district
40 from the Low Density (LD) District, which surrounds 149 Hurricane Rd. The LD District is on
41 the north and south of this property, and to the west, is the Rural District. Mr. Rogers continued
42 that this is also on the edge of where the City utilities run, stopping just about at the end of this
43 property and is an intent of this district. There are some allowances for requiring City water, if
44 the Public Works Director determines there is enough pressure and volume. Mr. Rogers did state
45 that if there is not sufficient water, a property can have a private well system. City sewer is a
46 requirement in this district.

47
48 Mr. Rogers continued that what the Petitioner is requesting is not an allowed use as this district is
49 meant as more of a residential-type district, with permitted uses including single-family homes,
50 group homes, harvesting of forest products, historic site open to the public, home occupation,
51 and non-commercial raising of farm animals.

52
53 Mr. Welsh stated that the “harvesting of forest products” struck him as possible use of the Elm
54 Tree Research Project, which would have required a Special Exception. He asked if there was a
55 Zoning Board decision to grant the Special Exception and if there were any conditions. Mr.
56 Rogers replied not that he was able to find. He continued that he assumes that the Elm Tree
57 Research most likely pre-dates this district.

58
59 Ms. Taylor stated that Mr. Rogers said this is “the end of the line” for water and sewer on
60 Hurricane Rd. She asked for clarification as to whether there is water and sewer currently on the
61 property. Mr. Rogers replied that City water and sewer runs right along the front of the property,
62 but whether there is a service that runs onto this property is something he would have the
63 Applicant respond.

64
65 Chair Gorman asked if there were further questions for Mr. Rogers. Hearing none, he asked to
66 hear from the applicant. Susan Payton of 118 North Shore Rd., Spofford, NH, stated that she is a
67 member of the Board of Directors of Cooper’s Crossroad, who is the Applicant for this request
68 and the authorized agent for the Filtrine Manufacturing Company, Inc., who is the owner of Elm
69 Farm on Hurricane Rd. She continued that she became involved with Cooper’s Crossroad
70 because she believes in volunteerism and the mission of this worthy non-profit corporation. The
71 organization is 100% volunteer-run. Cooper’s Crossroad entered into a lease with Filtrine
72 Manufacturing effective June 1, 2021, in order to move its equine-related programs to a new
73 location from its present location at Dusty Dog Farm on West St. in Keene. They subsequently
74 learned they need a Zoning Variance in order to conduct the equine programs at Elm Farm. Elm
75 Farm is still so clearly a farm, which they did not realize that need. Cooper’s Crossroad is
76 requesting a Variance for their programs that will begin in late September. The Elm Farm’s

77 central location in Cheshire County provides convenient access to Cooper's Crossroad's
78 programs for students in and around Keene. This is important from the standpoint of the
79 students' daytime schedules. The Board will hear from the founder and president of Cooper's
80 Crossroad, Christina Major, who will talk about the organization, its programs, and its plans for
81 Elm Farm; and Jeff Payton, a volunteer, who will discuss the questions set forth in the
82 application.

83
84 Christina Major, of 700 West St., stated that she is the founder and president of Cooper's
85 Crossroad, a non-profit founded in 2017 to raise awareness of trauma and adverse childhood
86 experiences. Some of their programs are Farming for Resilience and Pathways to Wellness,
87 which they hope to continue at Elm Farm on Hurricane Rd. Elm Farm is an ideal facility for
88 their program, in terms of the access, location, and size. After searching the Keene area and
89 meeting with Peter Hansel, they were able to arrange a lease of a portion of the Elm Farm with
90 its owner, the Filtrine Manufacturing Company. She knows from her meetings and many
91 conversations with Mr. Hansel that he and Filtrine are pleased and excited to lease a portion of
92 Elm Farm to Cooper's Crossroad to continue to conserve its agricultural focus and feel. The
93 portion of the farm Cooper's Crossroad will lease is approximately 37 acres in size, which she
94 said may be wrong though it might be about half of that and it includes a portion of the barn.

95
96 Ms. Major continued that the horses would be kept in two pastures that Cooper's Crossroad will
97 create with fencing. One pasture and the riding ring, where they will do a lot of the work with
98 their participants, will be located in a current open space visible from Hurricane Rd. The second
99 pasture will be located in open space in the back of the leased property, which is not visible from
100 Hurricane Rd. They have no plans to remove trees or vegetation. They will use the barn to store
101 horse equipment/tack to groom the horses and teach the students. There will be a run-in shed
102 near the barn and front pasture, approximately 14'x20', for the horses to get out of the bad
103 weather and away from the bugs.

104
105 Ms. Major continued that Cooper's Crossroad's two programs teach the four core values of
106 courage, gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion, with the outdoors and horses. They have
107 worked since 2018 with Symonds School, Cutler Elementary School, Keene High School, Keene
108 Middle School, and Ashuelot Valley Academy, even throughout the pandemic. The programs
109 have been at Dusty Dog Farm on West St., which she operates and manages. However, due to
110 the expanding business activity at Dusty Dog Farm, Cooper's Crossroad decided to look for a
111 new location for its program. The search began with a desire to keep the program facility in the
112 Keene area so it would be accessible to many schools in the area, whose students could benefit
113 from the program. In addition, they were hoping to find a location close to Dusty Dog Farm,
114 because many of their volunteers are associated with it.

115
116 Ms. Major continued that Farming for Resilience is open to students in elementary through high
117 school who have experienced trauma or similar challenges. The benefit of this population
118 working with animals and participating in farming activities has been demonstrated by research
119 and literature. Cooper's Crossroad has received enormous encouragement and enthusiastic

120 support from participating schools. Their non-profit educational activity is small in scale with
121 approximately 12 students who attend two sessions per week at Dusty Dog Farm. They plan to
122 continue that program size at Elm Farm. They will keep two to four horses at the farm initially
123 and most likely no more than seven or eight, depending on funding and qualified volunteers.
124 Their lease allows them to keep up to ten horses at the property. The students and accompanying
125 school aides are usually transported to the program in school vans. Public schools sometimes
126 use a school bus. The program is not run during the winter when it is too cold. During these
127 months, the horses will remain at Elm Farm and be tended to by Dusty Dog Farm staff and
128 Cooper's Crossroad volunteers. Cooper's Crossroad was very excited when one of their students
129 from Ashuelot Valley Academy graduated as valedictorian of his class this year. They would
130 like to think that perhaps, in some small way, the Cooper's Crossroad program helped him to
131 achieve that distinction.

132
133 Mr. Hoppock asked what the winter period is. Ms. Major replied that they would probably wrap
134 up their fall sessions just after Thanksgiving and resume in April.

135
136 Ms. Taylor stated that Ms. Major referenced sheds, and the application says that they are open.
137 She asked if the horses would be staying in open sheds in the winter. Ms. Major replied yes,
138 they will have two to four horses in run-in sheds, which they will tuck themselves into in bad
139 weather. She continued that she has managed horses throughout her life, and finds that horses
140 are best suited to herd environments. To be most productive in the role that Cooper's Crossroad
141 hopes for them to have, they hope for the horses to be happy in their environment. The plan is to
142 keep them in a natural environment.

143
144 Ms. Taylor asked for a definition of a run in shed. Ms. Major replied that it is a three-sided,
145 large shelter, which horses can go in to get out of the wind, precipitation, or bugs. She continued
146 that horses naturally move in and out of the shelter to protect themselves from the elements.

147
148 Ms. Taylor stated that although this area no longer has winter the way it used to, she is trying to
149 comprehend the care and well-being of horses in an open shed in winter, with the ice and snow
150 and asked for clarification. Ms. Major replied that she is a career horsewoman and attuned to
151 caring for horses in all elements. She continued that when horses are in a herd together, they
152 care for themselves by going into a shelter. Thus, they are building a shelter where a small herd
153 of horses would go into, to get out of the elements, that is accessible to them at all times. It is
154 where Cooper's Crossroad would offer the horses their food and where they would have access
155 to their water and a salt lick, and then they would have open pasture, so they could have access
156 to the outdoors at all time. Horses are natural plains animals and herd animals.

157
158 Jeff Payton, of 118 North Shore Rd., Spofford, NH, stated that he is a volunteer with Cooper's
159 Crossroad. He continued that he would review the five conditions set forth for a Variance. The
160 activity planned for the Elm Farm is small in scale. The students, approximately 12 will arrive
161 during the mid-day. They have two sessions per week planned, which means two trips to the
162 barn by whatever mode of transportation the schools use. There will be two sheds built for the

163 horses. He knows from his own experience at Dusty Dog Farm that many horses spend the
164 winter outside. Their coats grow long and shaggy, which keeps them warm without any risk.
165 Cooper's Crossroads will add fencing to create a riding ring as described in the application with
166 the space still open. There is a lot of vegetation buffer, trees, and wooded area around the
167 property, which will not be disturbed by the proposed use.

168
169 Mr. Payton continued that regarding the questions for granting the Variance, they do not believe
170 the Variance would be contrary to the public interest and they believe it would be consistent with
171 the spirit of the Ordinance. The LD-1 District requires one acre of property. The property itself
172 is 37 acres, owned by Filtrine Manufacturing. The portion that Cooper's Crossroad is leasing is
173 approximately 14 acres. The activity will be limited in terms of the students coming and going
174 and the number of horses. The space provided is adequate to conduct the activity. The desire in
175 the LD-1 District is to maintain a low density, low intensity to the neighborhood, and Cooper's
176 Crossing does not feel the proposed use would be adversely affecting. There will be minimal
177 impact as they are not building any homes and will not have a lot of traffic in and out of the
178 facility. That should be consistent with the spirit of the Ordinance.

179
180 Mr. Payton continued that regarding the "substantial justice" criterion, Cooper's Crossroad feels
181 that both the public and the property owner will benefit. Preserving the openness and
182 agricultural feel of the property and the neighborhood, as opposed to other uses to which the
183 property may be put, is beneficial to the public and to the surrounding neighborhood. The
184 property owner expressed a desire to conserve the space and to keep it open and agricultural. If
185 the Zoning Board grants this Variance and permits this use, that will continue, which will be
186 positive for the public, the neighborhood, and the property owners, who are excited by the idea
187 that Cooper's Crossroad programs could happen at the Elm Farm.

188
189 Mr. Payton continued that regarding the question of whether Cooper's Crossroad will adversely
190 affect the values of surrounding properties, they do not believe they will. The impact itself will
191 be minimal in the area and they believe the properties will be improved. They have already
192 started some cleanup with some piles of brush in the open space, which they will clear away to
193 make room for pasture and for the riding ring. With the ongoing maintenance of the property,
194 they believe surrounding property values will be enhanced from the current situation.

195
196 Mr. Payton continued that the last question in the application deals with the issue of hardship.
197 There are special conditions that exist with respect to the Elm Farm. First of all, its size: it is a
198 37-acre farm and has historically always been so. The leased space is 14 acres, whereas the
199 properties surrounding it are generally one-acre residential lots. This piece of property is thus
200 different and distinct. The property's location is of benefit to the program, because it is centrally
201 located, easily accessed by the schools, and because there is so much frontage to the Elm Farm.
202 On the north side of Hurricane Rd., after about 1,200 ft., there is Elm Farm to the right and
203 beyond that is a small house owned by Filtrine Manufacturing, and beyond that house is another
204 large farm, also owned by the Hansel family. This property is quite different from the properties
205 around it, which will allow the planned activity to have a minimal impact to the neighborhood.

206 The tree/vegetation buffer will not be disturbed, which will continue to shield the surrounding
207 properties from the classes that will be held and the twice weekly, mid-day sessions.

208
209 Mr. Payton continued that lastly and perhaps most significantly, there is the barn. It is an old
210 dairy barn and substantial in size, not like a backyard shed and will be put to good use if the
211 Variance is granted. The plan is to store equipment needed to conduct the classes with the
212 students. In the future, if need be and if funding to the organization permits, they can put some
213 stalls into that space. As they indicated, that is not the current plan, but there is that opportunity.

214
215 Mr. Payton continued that the lease is for five years, with a renewable period of three years.
216 Cooper's Crossroad is looking to be there and run this program and make these improvements
217 for the near future. They think this is a reasonable use of the property because the Ordinance's
218 goals of low density and low intensity will be met. If the rule was applied strictly, because this
219 might technically be viewed as a business, though he would say it does not really rise to what
220 one thinks of as a commercial, bustling activity, it will not adversely affect the neighborhood or
221 the space. It will preserve the open space feel. Mr. Payton continued to not approve the variance
222 would do harm to Filtrine. Their desire is to conserve this open space and not develop it.
223 Cooper's Crossroad believes this is a good use of the property and will put what is now an
224 underutilized barn and underutilized space to a beneficial use for this program.

225
226 Mr. Gaudio stated that regarding the business question, the application states that Cooper's
227 Crossroad is requesting a Variance to permit "outdoor recreational activity as a business." He
228 asked is the nature of Cooper's Crossroad that "business". Mr. Payton replied that his
229 understanding is that while working with the Zoning staff, Cooper's Crossroad was trying to
230 describe what activity they sought to bring to the farm, and staff explained it would be an
231 appropriate description of the activity. They understand that it is not a residence and that the
232 impact is minimal. The schools do pay to attend the program, so there is that element of a
233 business.

234
235 Mr. Gaudio asked if it is correct that Cooper's Crossroad is a non-profit organization. Mr.
236 Payton replied yes. Mr. Gaudio stated that Filtrine Manufacturing is a business, but they are the
237 property owners, not the ones conducting the operation. He continued that he wonders why
238 "business" was added. His concern is that if they grant a Variance for "outdoor recreational
239 activity as a business," that is permanent. Someone could come to the Board in five or eight
240 years and want to put in a theme park, for example, which is an "outdoor recreational activity."
241 He is not sure why Cooper's Crossroad's activity is not simply "agricultural-related activity."
242 Mr. Payton replied that if the Board feels it would be appropriate to adjust the wording of the use
243 granted they could. He continued that Cooper's Crossroad's interest is to get this use approved.
244 Regarding expanding what the Variance would allow Cooper's Crossroad would have no
245 objection to appropriate wording to avoid that concern.

246
247 Chair Gorman asked Mr. Rogers to clarify his perspective on the use. Mr. Rogers stated that the
248 definition section of the Zoning Code states "a non-commercial, outdoor, recreational activity"

249 means “outdoor recreation as a primary use of land for which no admission is charged.”
250 Previous Zoning Administrators had determined similar businesses as this type of use, which is
251 how staff came to put this in as “commercial.” They were not necessarily calling it a business;
252 they were calling it a “commercial use,” because as stated, there is a fee paid for this service.
253 Mr. Payton stated that the schools pay to participate in the program.
254
255 Ms. Taylor asked if this type of activity would have to go before the Planning Board. Mr.
256 Rogers replied that his initial answer is yes. He continued that there is a Change of Use
257 occurring and that is a standard which triggers a Planning Board review, but the Community
258 Development Director has the ability to administratively approve it, if he chooses.
259
260 Mr. Hoppock stated that he observes that Cooper’s Crossroad’s primary purpose is educational.
261 He continued that this is not profit making, not “business” or “commercial.” The focus and
262 emphasis should be on education. He asked if Mr. Payton agrees. Mr. Payton replied yes.
263
264 Ms. Taylor stated that she understands the fee for service, regardless of what it is. She continued
265 that she is not clear about some of the operations and asked Mr. Payton to describe it more, such
266 as the hours of operation, the number of students they expect to serve and to explain the parking
267 available, specifically how the busses will navigate the property. Mr. Payton asked Christina
268 Major to respond.
269
270 Ms. Major stated that they have not run into any parking problems yet. She continued that they
271 will have a single volunteer who will care for the animals twice a day, which is one car going in
272 and out twice a day. The participants will generally come via small, staff-run vehicles. There is
273 plenty of parking and there is an easy turnaround for the busses. The busses are the shorter kind,
274 with 6 to 10 students. Any other vehicles that might come in with volunteers would be parked at
275 on the property. About five to eight volunteers would come in as a group, twice weekly. Ms.
276 Taylor asked if that means the volunteers gather as a group somewhere else and then drive to
277 Cooper’s Crossroad. Ms. Major replied yes, most volunteers are associated with Dusty Dog
278 Farm, which is minutes from Elm Farm. Volunteers would gather at Dusty Dog Farm to go to
279 Cooper’s Crossroad.
280
281 Ms. Taylor stated that that does not answer her question about where things are located, asking
282 for clarification as to where the cars be in relationship to the improvements planned on the
283 property. Ms. Major replied that they are not planning to make changes to the property. Ms.
284 Taylor asked about the sheds. Ms. Major replied that there is one shed building, hopefully, to be
285 built. She continued that the parking is all on the property, with a place behind the barn to back
286 up and turn around. Ms. Taylor replied that the application says two sheds. Ms. Major replied
287 that is correct; if they have up to ten horses, which they are allowed, they would hope to have
288 another shed built in the backfield.
289
290 Ms. Taylor stated that the biggest question of all, not knowing if this is going before the Planning
291 Board, is where the manure pile will be. Ms. Major replied that when housing horses outdoors,

292 the manure is dragged. She continued that they have a tire drag, which tires are cut in half, to
293 drag the manure to become composted into the soil. They compost it immediately, so there is no
294 need for a manure pile. Ms. Taylor asked if that would be in the pastures where the horses are
295 kept. Ms. Major replied yes, the manure is dragged and the pasture becomes fertilizer.

296
297 Mr. Rogers stated that the Applicant supplied with the locations of the two proposed run-in sheds
298 indicated in red. Ms. Taylor replied that she has seen the map, but questioned where the entrance
299 would be, where the cars would park, etc.

300
301 Mr. Rogers stated that if the Board were so inclined to grant this Variance, there is a section of
302 the Zoning Code where this use is allowed in Rural and Agricultural districts. Section 102-1166
303 has conditions for this type of use, which might address some of Ms. Taylor's concerns,
304 regardless of whether it went to the Planning Board.

305
306 Ms. Taylor asked if parents would ever be bringing children to the site, as opposed to just school
307 vehicles. Ms. Major replied yes. Ms. Taylor asked if they would ever be holding horse shows of
308 one type or another. Ms. Major replied that she does not think so.

309
310 Ms. Taylor asked what the hours of operation would be. Ms. Major replied 9:00 AM to 5:00
311 PM, Monday through Friday, given school hours. She continued that the horses need care seven
312 days a week, which there will be volunteers there. Ms. Taylor asked how the operation would
313 work in the summer when school is not in session. Ms. Major replied that there are two
314 programs: Pathways to Wellness and Farming for Resilience. She continued that people could
315 research the programs more on Cooper's Crossroad's website. Farming for Resilience targets the
316 school system, and Pathways to Wellness was started as a result of people wanting more, and
317 wanting one-on-one sessions. Cooper's Crossroad thus started one-on-one sessions, teaching the
318 four core values of courage, gratitude, forgiveness, and compassion, through the use of horses
319 and the outdoors. That is why they would have the one-on-one sessions and parents bringing
320 their children, or adults bringing themselves to the farm. Pathways to Wellness is for all ages. It
321 is in its infancy with two students so far. Ms. Taylor asked if all of these programs will be
322 operating in this location. Ms. Major replied that there are two programs, Farming for
323 Resiliency, and Pathways to Wellness, and they would be operating at this location.

324
325 Mr. Gaudio stated that the application says they expect to hold the educational activities for
326 students twice a week, two sessions per day, mid-day, or four sessions per week. He asked how
327 Ms. Major melds what she just stated with this schedule. Ms. Major replied that Pathways to
328 Wellness is a different program. She continued that those two students would come once a
329 week. Thus, at this point there would be six hours of operation per week. Mr. Gaudio further
330 questioned if there will be an increase of more students moving forward. Ms. Major replied that
331 yes, it is their hope to increase to potentially four students.

332
333 Chair Gorman asked if there were any further questions from the Board. Hearing none, he
334 opened the public hearing and explained the procedures of participation.

335 Peter Hansel of 61 Bradford Rd., stated that he represents Filtrine Manufacturing Co., the owner
336 of the site. He continued that to offer some background, in 2003 when the former owners of the
337 Elm Farm changed the zoning from agricultural to LD-1, he and his family were concerned as
338 his brother lives right next door. He himself has always been a fan of the Elm Farm and hated to
339 see it turned into what could have been 20 or 30 houses. Fortunately, between the Elm Research
340 Institute, which his father runs, and Filtrine Manufacturing Co., they were able to purchase the
341 property. The primary objective was to keep it as a working farm, ideally, but at a minimum, as
342 open space. They have operated under that principle for the last 18 years. The Elm Research
343 Institute, which is devoted to preserving elm trees and providing a resistant form of elms around
344 the country, operated there until this past spring, when they consolidated their operations in
345 Walpole. That left a need for finding another use for this property. Fortunately, Ms. Major and
346 the Cooper's Crossroad group approached him and Filtrine as they felt this would be an ideal
347 operation for the approximately 14 or so acres that they would occupy. The remainder of the
348 property, both on the north and south sides, is still owned by Filtrine and will be operated in such
349 a way to maintain and improve the agricultural resource of that land. They would like to see it
350 ultimately become a working farm again, as it was under the old Elm Farm and they have been
351 working hard to do that. He thinks the Cooper's Crossroad's activities fit into the plan very well.
352 It provides low impact for the community, for the neighbors on Hastings Ave., Trowbridge Rd.,
353 and Hurricane Rd. and will generate minimal traffic. Only about 14 acres will be utilized, and
354 they are maintaining the buffers around the property to make it as least impactful as possible.
355 Mr. Hansel concluded that he expresses his support for the Variance and hopes the Board allows
356 it.

357
358 Joann Fenton of 16 Bradford Rd. stated that she would like to support the Variance. She
359 continued that she lives right across the street from Ms. Major and Dusty Dog Farm, and is there
360 frequently, walking with her grandchildren. She is impressed by the operation of the farm, as it
361 is neat, clean, and organized. She has noticed that since the inception of the farm, the traffic has
362 been negligible and is not an issue, in her opinion. Cooper's Crossroad has great programming
363 and Ms. Major runs a fantastic operation.

364
365 Jim Hogancamp of 90 Felt Rd. stated that he is right at the intersection of Hurricane Rd. and is
366 clearly in favor of Cooper's Crossroad's request. He continued that in the past year or two his
367 neighborhood has had 50 to 75 sheep on a nearby property, eight hogs across the street, and four
368 goats nearby, and on Felt Rd. there are five miniature horses. This certainly fits within the
369 character of the neighborhood. Aside from that, the one item he is a little concerned with is the
370 discussion about traffic. He has -concern with this operation adding to the traffic problems that
371 he feels the City is already neglecting. On Hurricane Rd., there are two 30 mph speed limit
372 signs, and one on Felt Rd. He has yet to see even the Keene Police Department going 30 mph up
373 or down Hurricane Rd. or Felt Rd. About one out of four cars neglect the stop sign at the
374 intersection between the two. With the speeds being as they are on Hurricane Rd., he would love
375 to see a three-way stop sign at Hastings Ave. and Hurricane Rd. There is nothing right now to
376 slow down any of the traffic. He has yet to see, during the past three years, any enforcement
377 action or any attempt at enforcement action in that area. Aside from this Variance request, which

378 he is completely in favor of, he would love to see the Board hand back to the City of Keene a
379 concern with the speed and lack of due process in that area.

380
381 Chair Gorman stated that he suggests Mr. Hogancamp call the Public Works Department with
382 his comments.

383
384 Mike Forrest of 7 Marguerite St. stated that his street is the first right off of Hastings Ave. He
385 continued that as an abutter he has some concerns. One, if the Board deems it advisable to
386 approve this application, if they do not put some checks and limits on what could happen, next
387 year or in five or ten years. He would like the “outdoor activity as a business” be limited to the
388 equine educational activities so that something like a rodeo cannot move in as that could be an
389 “outdoor activity.” In addition, he would like to see a condition that it be limited to Monday
390 through Friday. He does not think that is placing any burden on the applicant. They would
391 have to come back to the Board to open up any Saturdays or Sundays. He would also like to see
392 Cooper’s Crossroad submit a site plan. He thinks they need to have a plan approved by the
393 Planning Board that would show what the parking and turnaround are. He knows they are not
394 talking about the large school busses, but vans are bigger than a sedan and they need to make
395 sure there is room to turn around.

396
397 Mr. Forrest continued that he is not comfortable with how they would deal with the horse
398 manure. He reminds the Board that a brook runs through this property. It runs through
399 residential property and empties into the Ice House Pond, or it might be called Bent Pond, which
400 is dammed. He continued that there is potential for problems. He would like to see the number
401 of horses limited to ten. He would like to see a condition that Cooper’s Crossroad cannot use
402 the two access points onto Hastings Ave., which are not developed. The map shows that one is
403 50 feet and the other is 51 feet, from this property onto Hastings Ave., which is not set up for an
404 intersection. He would like to somehow see what can be done if there are any odor problems as
405 he feels it’s a concern in enjoying any outdoor activities on his property if there are excess odors.
406 Mr. Forest continued that the Board has the authority to put conditions on an approval, which
407 will protect the neighborhood and can be addressed either by the Applicant or by staff

408
409 Tom Provost of 15 Hastings Ave. stated that he is in favor of this and thinks it is a good thing,
410 but has a couple concerns. He continued that the biggest concern is the confusing verbiage of the
411 petition, such as the word “business”. Five or ten years from now, he does not want to be
412 looking at someone wanting to put an industrial park across from his house. If they can narrow
413 the petition to be specific for this function, he would give it his full support. The hours of
414 operation, especially through the warmer months, should not be a problem. His other concern is
415 that in years past when Elm Institute was there, when they fired up the outdoor boiler, it was a
416 challenge to the neighborhood in terms of particulate air pollution, which was found to be
417 choking. Mr. Provost continued, stating that he hopes that will not be reinstated in this
418 scenario. He speaks not only as an abutter, but also as a physician anesthesiologist, when he says
419 that that was not healthy. He hopes the Board will consider these issues.

420

421 Erin Edge stated that she is a direct abutter on Hurricane Rd. She continued that the previous
422 two speakers addressed many of her concerns, though she stated that they were first told that the
423 lease was for two years, and now she hears it is five years with a three-year renewal. She asked
424 if that is correct.

425

426 Chair Gorman replied that he would not be able to speak to the business arrangement though he
427 thinks five years was mentioned during the hearing. He stated that Cooper's Crossroad will have
428 a chance for rebuttal and all questions will be then.

429

430 Ms. Edge stated that her question that was previously addressed is that granting this Variance
431 opens the door for other commercial entities as well. She asked Chair Gorman to address that.

432

433 Chair Gorman replied that the Board could put conditions on any approved Variance. He
434 continued that is why the Board asks for input, so that they can formulate an adequate decision.
435 It is quite possible that if this were to be granted, which he cannot speak to because the Board
436 has not discussed it yet, they could put conditions on it to limit what kind of business activity
437 could be conducted in the future.

438

439 Ms. Edge stated that she looked into the programs currently occurring at Dusty Dog Farm and
440 some of the horse-related ones are horse shows and a 5k with registration at 7:30 AM. She asked
441 if any of these events are part of the Variance.

442

443 Chair Gorman replied that those seem like rather finite things. He asked if Ms. Edge is asking
444 about things that happen at Dusty Dog Farm or with the non-profit itself. Ms. Edge replied that
445 Dusty Dog Farm and the equine program are now separating. She continued that they are
446 moving the horse part next door to her. Her concern is that while they might be finite, Cooper's
447 Crossroad will have expanded programs, horse shows, and other kinds of related activities that
448 will start at 7:30 AM. She asked if this Variance would allow special events like that.

449

450 Chair Gorman replied that he cannot predict what type of conditions the Board may or may not
451 put on a decision they have not made, though once all public input has been heard and the
452 Applicant is able to rebut, the Board will discuss this and render a decision. Whether that
453 decision renders Cooper's Crossroad's ability to be open for certain times and certain events is
454 something he cannot predict at this point. If Ms. Edge has a suggestion to make.

455

456 Ms. Edge replied that she does not have a suggestion; she just likes to be informed about what to
457 expect. Her question is whether these special events will be allowed and what the parking will
458 be like. Mr. Hoppock replied that he has similar questions, and the Applicants are listening to
459 the public input and will have a chance to respond. Ms. Edge stated that she would also like a
460 plan showing where the parking will be and where the actual disposal of horse manure will be.

461

462 Denise Hunt of 27 Hastings Ave. stated that she has been there for two years and agrees with
463 most of her neighbors previous comments. She continued that there is very little enforcement of

464 the speed limit on Hurricane Rd., Hastings Ave., or Arch St. and it is almost unbearable. Her
465 main concern, however, is the number of horses to be kept on the property. She considers herself
466 a career horseperson, having had horses since she was a child, having ridden and worked for
467 different organizations. She would like to know where the water access will be and how it would
468 be delivered if there were not any on the property, and where hay will be stored and how it will
469 be delivered. Managing up to ten horses is a lot of management. She continued to ask how the
470 manure would be dragged during the winter months. That seems like it might spread disease,
471 bring flies, and spread the odor. She does not see how that is effective, although maybe it will be
472 as manure takes time to compost, which she knows from her years with horses. When it
473 composts it is profitable, or could be with ten horses, but she cannot envision ten horses in that
474 space.

475
476 Chair Gorman asked if members of the public had any further questions or comments. Hearing
477 none, he asked if the Applicant wanted to give any rebuttal to the issues that were raised.

478
479 Mr. Payton stated that he listened to and took notes regarding the voiced concerns. One person
480 spoke to checks and limits on what could happen to the property if a recreational business is
481 approved, and he believes that he and Ms. Major briefly touched on that before. Cooper's
482 Crossroad has leased the property for five years with a renewal option for three years. Cooper's
483 Crossroad is seeking to have the Variance approved for what it wishes to do and is not seeking to
484 have a park or a rodeo. It is limited to the programs that Ms. Major described. Not all the equine
485 activity that takes place at Dusty Dog Farm is moving to Elm Farm. That business and operation
486 will stay at Dusty Dog Farm. They are only talking about the small, non-profit activity, which
487 they described in the application. Dusty Dog Farm has 42 horses. They are talking about having
488 up to 10, as permitted by the lease, and as indicated in the application, with the vision of two to
489 four initially and potentially six or seven.

490
491 Chair Gorman asked if he understood that Cooper's Crossroad does not have objections to
492 certain conditions being put on the Variance as long as it allows them to do solely what their
493 intended purpose. Mr. Payton replied that is correct. He continued that if the conditions the
494 Board might include with the Variance can address people's questions but at the same time
495 permit Cooper's Crossroad activity to continue as described, then they would be happy.

496
497 Chair Gorman asked if Cooper's Crossroad would be doing horse shows. Ms. Major replied no.

498
499 Ms. Taylor asked if the Applicant has any objection to submitting a site plan regarding her
500 earlier questions. She continued that she could not figure out what was going where, such as
501 parking, deliveries, proximity to the brook, and so on and so forth. Many of those questions
502 could be answered if there were some sort of site plan. That may be a Planning Board issue but
503 that was the basis for her question earlier.

504
505 Mr. Payton replied that he could clarify some of those questions by pointing to locations on the
506 map that is on the screen, such as entry points, and clarify where off Hurricane Rd. they would

507 be coming, where the barn and planned parking areas are, and where the two run-in sheds would
508 appear. Chair Gorman agreed.

509
510 Ms. Major asked if she could give out copies of Cooper's Crossroad brochures. Chair Gorman
511 replied that the Board cannot accept any more materials as part of this hearing, but she could
512 distribute them to people in the room.

513
514 Mr. Payton stated that Attachment B in the application has a comparable map to what he is
515 currently referring to on the screen. He showed Hurricane Rd. and stated that the access point
516 for entering the program is immediately off Hurricane Rd. He showed the barn close to
517 Hurricane Rd., and the parking area that currently exists at the barn, stating that it is immediately
518 to the east on the side of the barn. There is hard pack parking space available in the back of the
519 barn as well, to the north side. Exhibit B shows the locations of the run-in sheds. The first one
520 to be built is in the front, to the northeast of the barn area. The riding ring and fenced pasture
521 area will be approximately in the space as indicated on Attachment B. The second run-in shed
522 and pasture area, if they do that, will be in the other space leased in the back area that is not
523 visible from Hurricane Rd. due to the vegetation buffer.

524
525 Mr. Hoppock asked about the access areas via Hastings Ave. Mr. Payton replied that Cooper's
526 Crossroad does not envision using that at all and it is not part of their lease. Mr. Hoppock
527 replied that they do not know if it will be part of the lease later. He asked if Cooper's Crossroad
528 could access Hastings Ave. through those alleyways. Mr. Payton replied no, it is a dense,
529 vegetated area. He continued that if there were conditions imposed that said Cooper's
530 Crossroad's use would not involve access to Hastings Ave. at those two points, that would be
531 perfectly acceptable and they would understand.

532
533 Ms. Taylor stated that in looking at this map and the one from the City's website, she sees that
534 where they are proposing the back pasture is probably the highest point of the leased area. She
535 continued that obviously, things flow down to that brook, which is the basis of her concern with
536 the manure. She asked for clarification on how the Applicant will manage the manure, dragging
537 it over the highest point which flows to the brook and during the winter months.

538
539 Mr. Payton replied that it is his understanding that the manure disposal, as well as the location of
540 the brook, was a concern of Cooper's Crossroad as well as Filtrine and Mr. Hansel. He
541 continued that topic was discussed in detail. The pasture areas that Cooper's Crossroad will be
542 creating will be at least 50 feet away from the brook in order to address those concerns. Best
543 practices have been a consideration as they have thought about the project.

544
545 Ms. Major stated that the pastures are more than enough to house and feed horses, with the
546 acreage and the number of horses they are hoping to have. She continued that she has been
547 managing horses for decades and has not only composted manure and used it to spread on
548 hayfields to make the hay more productive, but has also used manure to spread on the fields to
549 make the fields more productive. They will fence an area at least a minimum of 50 feet away

550 from the watershed. A lot of shrubbery and trees surround the brook, which they have no
551 interest in or need to touch. They will maintain the property in the way that she maintains
552 property and she thanks those who spoke up earlier. Dusty Dog Farm is a beautiful, well-
553 maintained, large horse facility right in the center of Keene. They have never had complaints
554 about the property or the manure smell from any neighbors, nor any complaints about the way
555 they maintain and care for the horses at the property, which would be under her management.
556 She understands all of the concerns mentioned and she thanks everyone for all the questions.

557
558 Chair Gorman stated that he lives in the neighborhood of Dusty Dog Farm, is familiar with it,
559 and bikes past it repeatedly. He has never noticed any odor. He asked how many acres Dusty
560 Dog Farm is, so they can understand the size and scope of Dusty Dog Farm in comparison to
561 what she proposes for Cooper's Crossroad. Ms. Major replied that Dusty Dog Farm is 108 acres.
562 Chair Gorman asked how much of that space is actively used for horses. Ms. Major replied
563 about 25 acres. Chair Gorman asked if it is correct that there are 42 horses at Dusty Dog Farm.
564 Ms. Major replied yes. Chair Gorman asked if she composts all the manure at Dusty Dog Farm.
565 Ms. Major replied yes. Chair Gorman asked what they do in the winter. Ms. Major replied they
566 compost it. Chair Gorman asked if it is correct that they will be using 13 acres at this new
567 location. Ms. Major replied yes, she believes so. Chair Gorman asked if it is correct that they
568 will have ten horses. Ms. Major replied that would be the maximum. Chair Gorman stated that a
569 similar horse-per-acre calculation would say that Dusty Dog Farm is probably more densely used
570 than this proposed use. Ms. Major replied yes, there is no question about that, in every way.

571
572 Mr. Gaudio asked if they have any problems limiting the programs to the weekday hours of 9:00
573 AM to 5:00 PM as suggested. He continued that he is not referring to maintenance or anything
574 of that nature that would have to be done all week. Ms. Major replied that she does not have
575 objections but it does limit what Cooper's Crossroad can do for its population.

576
577 Chair Gorman asked if Ms. Major would object to having Cooper's Crossroad able to do some
578 weekend activities if the hours were very regulated or limited. Ms. Major replied that there
579 would be no problem. She continued that she just wants to be able to teach courage, gratitude,
580 forgiveness, and compassion to this population.

581
582 Chair Gorman asked if there were any further questions or comments. Hearing none, he stated
583 that he would allow one more comment from the public.

584
585 Mr. Forrest stated his reason for bringing up conditions is that whatever the Board grants creates
586 a unique Zoning Ordinance for a piece of property and it goes with the property. It does not stop
587 when business A goes out of business; it is there forever. The fact that the business that is there
588 now does not want to do anything on weekends is not a reason to not address that issue by saying
589 "You cannot have activities on the weekends." He does not have any idea what would be on that
590 property three, five, or twenty years from now. The issues need to be looked at from a long-term
591 perspective, not just that of the current property owner.

592

593 Chair Gorman replied that his point is well taken, and it is correct that this Variance goes with
594 the property indefinitely. He continued that any conditions that are added to this Variance would
595 also follow the property. Mr. Forrest stated that his understanding is that the present or future
596 owner would have to come back to the Board to change conditions. Chair Gorman replied that is
597 correct.

598

599 Mr. Hogancamp stated that an existing business on that property does have weekend workshops.
600 He continued that he does not know how or why, and it has nothing to do with this Variance, but
601 questioned how to legislate this new situation when there is already some use on weekends.

602

603 Mr. Provost stated that this sounds like a good concept and positive for the community. He
604 continued that as an almost-abutting neighbor he has a vested interest in what happens to the
605 property. He commends Filtrine for taking this at face value and wanting to utilize this in the
606 fashion in which it has been utilized for the past 100 or so years. He would like to see this
607 happen, but if the concerns articulated, could somehow be in the Variance, he would feel better.

608

609 Chair Gorman closed the public hearing. He called a recess from approximately 8:05 to 8:10
610 PM, when the Board reconvened to discuss the criteria.

611

612 Mr. Hoppock stated that he would like to begin by discussing conditions, with the assumption for
613 the sake of discussion that the five criteria are satisfied. He continued that he listened to what
614 everyone said and has a short list of proposed conditions. They are: (1) a limitation to permit the
615 use to the extent that it does not exceed equine educational programs and a not-for-profit nature,
616 (2) that the access would be by way of Hurricane Rd. only, and (3) that the hours of operation for
617 the educational programs would be Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. That
618 would not include property maintenance or horse care, such as veterinary or stable cleaning, etc.
619 He asked the Board members for comments or questions.

620

621 Ms. Taylor stated that she thinks the conditions have to relate specifically to the use and not the
622 owners, so she can go along with the condition that it be for equine educational purposes, which
623 is the use, but the non-profit status is more related to the owners. She continued that she would
624 like to suggest an addition to Mr. Hoppock's proposed conditions: that it be operated in
625 accordance with the State's best management practices for operation of horse barns, agricultural
626 facilities, and so on and so forth, which she feels is a critical piece. She has a serious concern
627 that there is an eight-foot drop between the proposed rear pasture and the brook, plus the fact that
628 the rear pasture is very close to the residential properties on the back corner.

629

630 Chair Gorman asked if she knows if there is a governing body for that at the State level. Ms.
631 Taylor replied yes, the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food.

632

633 Chair Gorman opened the public hearing and asked Ms. Major if she has knowledge of State-
634 level oversight. Ms. Major replied no.

635

636 Ms. Taylor stated that from her prior life she has some familiarity and knows this does exist.
637 Chair Gorman replied that if there is an entity that oversees it, and if they are going to include it
638 as a condition, they should find this information.

639
640 Mr. Rogers stated that he found that there is a manual for Best Management Practices for
641 Agriculture in NH that is under the Department of Agriculture and does speak to manure and
642 other issues. He asked if this is what Ms. Taylor was referring.

643
644 Mr. Gaudio stated that he agrees with the conditions put forth. He continued that he is still
645 bothered by the purpose of the Variance to begin with, as an “outdoor recreational activity as a
646 business.” He proposes changing that to be specific and permit “an equine-related educational
647 activity.” Mr. Welsh stated that he concurred with Mr. Gaudio.

648
649 Ms. Taylor asked if the City’s Code Enforcement Department would address it if there were
650 some sort of odor problem. Mr. Rogers replied that a section within the City Ordinances speaks
651 to manure storage and location. He continued that ultimately it could rise to the level of a
652 concern at the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) if it becomes an air quality
653 issue, which falls under their authority. There is a City Ordinance that speaks to it as a
654 “nuisance.”

655
656 Chair Gorman asked Mr. Rogers if a horse farm would be allowed if there were no educational
657 component. Mr. Rogers replied no, not in this district. He continued that some districts allow
658 for non-commercial raising of farm animals, but LD-1 does not.

659
660 The Board went through the criteria.

661
662 *1. Granting the Variance would not be contrary to the public interest.*

663
664 Mr. Hoppock stated that he does not think the proposed use would be contrary to the public
665 interest, because it is consistent with the use of that property historically and, given the space
666 available, it would be appropriate there. He continued that he is persuaded to a significant
667 degree that although the uses are not the same at the Dusty Dog Farm, Chair Gorman’s comment
668 about the number of horses per acre is logical. There are no neighbor complaints regarding
669 Dusty Dog Farm and no one has raised the issue of odor, pollution from animal waste, or
670 anything else of that nature affecting that neighborhood. He is persuaded that Cooper’s
671 Crossroad will not be harmful to neighbors. He continued that the proposed use will be
672 consistent with the spirit of the Ordinance in terms of uses allowed, and the programs would
673 certainly be in the interest of public education and therefore not be contrary to the public interest.
674 He has no problem with the first criterion.

675
676 Ms. Taylor stated that she has mixed feelings, in that while the proposed use may be in the public
677 interest, the same density of residential property does not surround Dusty Dog Farm. Thus, she

678 is trying to balance the public interest of the proposed use against the close proximity on “two
679 and a half sides” to rather small residential lots.

680

681 Mr. Gaudio stated that if the Board adopts the conditions discussed earlier, he thinks that would
682 go a long way in resolving that kind of problem or issue and thus maintain the public interest.

683

684 Mr. Welsh stated that he is looking at the Ordinance, and if “public interest” is defined by the
685 permitted uses, there are a number of them such as horse products, historic site open to the
686 public, non-commercial raising of farm animals that sort of “nibble around the edges” of what
687 they are getting at here, without naming it precisely. He thinks they are close to the intent of the
688 Ordinance.

689

690 Chair Gorman stated that he agrees. He continued that if the intent of the Ordinance is to allow a
691 farm and they are allowing sort of a farm, albeit for educational purposes, it will still be a farm.

692

693 2. *If the Variance were granted, the spirit of the Ordinance would be observed.*

694

695 Mr. Hoppock stated that this proposed use would not change the essential character of the
696 neighborhood. He continued that he thinks the packet of materials submitted, the pictures and
697 explanation by the applicants, make it clear that this will have minimal impact on the essential
698 character of the neighborhood. He does not think it will change it at all. In fact, it will fit right
699 into that area and it seems to be an appropriate location for the proposed use. To support Mr.
700 Gaudio’s remarks, he thinks with the discussed conditions, assuming they are implemented, any
701 concerns he would have, would be resolved, regarding alteration of the neighborhood, which he
702 does not see in the first place.

703

704 3. *Granting the Variance would do substantial justice.*

705

706 Mr. Hoppock stated that this is about a balance, of no harm to the landowner versus the gain to
707 the public. He continued that similar to a few other recent cases the Board has heard, there is an
708 option for a “win/win.” The loss to the applicant would be significant; they would not be able to
709 realize the offering of these two programs, whereas the gain to the public would be hardly
710 measurable in light of that loss. He thinks granting the Variance would do substantial justice for
711 that reason. Again, keeping in mind that the conditions they discussed would be appropriate
712 limitations on any harm to the public. If there were any harm and again, he does not see any the
713 conditions would obviate that harm.

714

715 4. *If the Variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be
716 diminished.*

717

718 Mr. Hoppock stated that he has never seen evidence of reduction of property values. He
719 continued that they do not have any direct evidence that this application, if approved, would
720 create any diminution of property values but he thinks with common sense it can be seen that it

721 would not. He does not see any danger or risk that surrounding property values would be
722 harmed, especially if the conditions discussed were implemented.

723
724 Ms. Taylor stated that without conditions, there would be a potential for reduction in value. She
725 continued that she sees this as having a fairly high potential for degradation of the environmental
726 aspect. Conditions could ameliorate that. Again, they do not have any direct evidence, but not
727 following best practices and polluting the stream would impact the downstream property values.
728

729 5. *Unnecessary Hardship*

730
731 A. *Owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties*
732 *in the area, denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship because:*

733
734 i. *No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of*
735 *the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property*
736 *because:*

737 *and*

738 ii. *The proposed use is a reasonable one because:*
739

740 Mr. Gaudio stated that with the proposed conditions, he believes that the general purpose of
741 keeping a relatively open area for the use on this property, that the purpose of keeping it in a
742 condition as it is essentially now, is maintained. This has been a farm for many years and it will
743 continue to have the outward appearance as it does now, so there is no substantial relationship to
744 this provision.
745

746 Ms. Taylor stated that based on the application, the only reason given that could constitute a
747 special condition of the property might be the size and the fact that it was changed to LD-1 from
748 the Agricultural District. She continued that to her, that puts it in a slightly different category.
749 One NH Supreme Court case supports that point of view. However, in that particular case,
750 which even involved horses, the property in question that was sizably larger than other properties
751 was 100% surrounded by residential properties. The property to the northwest is all open space.
752 She thinks it is a close call that the size may be a special condition of the property, but she does
753 not think the other reasons given in the application meet that criteria.
754

755 Mr. Hoppock stated that he is persuaded that the size of the property and its configuration and
756 the proposed use within it are special conditions of the property. He continued that he does not
757 have any problem reaching that conclusion based on what he heard.
758

759 Mr. Welsh stated that he thinks they have heard, from the Applicant and some members of the
760 public with concerns, that it is a reasonable use, and he thinks the conditions they are considering
761 make it more reasonable and acceptable.
762

763 Ms. Taylor replied that it is reasonable, if they approve conditions.

764
765 B. *Explain how, if the criteria in subparagraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary*
766 *hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owing to special conditions of the*
767 *property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be*
768 *reasonably used in strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore*
769 *necessary to enable a reasonable use of it.*
770

771 Ms. Taylor stated that if they approve (A) they do not need (B). Others agreed.
772

773 Mr. Hoppock made a motion to approve ZBA 21-13, subject to the following conditions; 1) the
774 proposed use be limited to equine-related educational activity; 2) the hours of operation for the
775 limited educational programs shall be Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, excepting
776 property maintenance and equine-related care; 3) the proposed use be operated in accordance
777 with the best management practices for equine and agricultural uses according the NH
778 Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food’s “Best Management Practice for the Handling of
779 Agricultural Compost, Fertilizers, and Manure;” and 4) no access to the proposed use will be
780 made via Hastings Ave. and only access by way of Hurricane Rd. shall be permitted.
781

782 Ms. Taylor asked if there was a question of just approving the Variance or, instead of approving
783 a Variance “to permit an outdoor recreational activity,” approve the Variance to permit “equine-
784 related education as an outdoor recreational activity” or other wording. Mr. Hoppock replied
785 that he did not mention “outdoor,” he just said “equine-related, educational activity.” Ms. Taylor
786 asked if he said that as a condition or as part of the motion. Mr. Hoppock replied as a condition
787 of approval. Chair Gorman asked how best to word this motion.
788

789 Mr. Gaudio asked how this would appear as a Variance. He questioned if the words “outdoor,
790 recreational activity as a business” appear in it in the motion and if does, he would object. Mr.
791 Hoppock replied that he did not say “outdoor.” Mr. Gaudio replied that he meant, not as part of
792 the conditions, which he agrees with. He wonders if it would say somewhere, on a list of
793 Variances granted, “to permit an outdoor, recreational activity as a business.” Mr. Hoppock
794 replied that he did not use the word “business,” either. Mr. Gaudio asked if that would be out of
795 it. Mr. Hoppock replied yes. He reiterated his motion and conditions.
796

797 Ms. Taylor seconded the motion.
798

799 1. *Granting the Variance would not be contrary to the public interest.*
800

801 Met with a vote of 5-0.
802

803 2. *If the Variance were granted, the spirit of the Ordinance would be observed.*
804

805 Met with a vote of 5-0.
806

807 3. *Granting the Variance would do substantial justice*

808

809 Met with a vote of 5-0.

810

811 4. *If the Variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be*
812 *diminished.*

813

814 Met with a vote of 5-0.

815

816 5. *Unnecessary Hardship*

817

818 A. *Owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties*
819 *in the area, denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship because*

820 i. *No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of the*
821 *ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property.*

822 *and*

823 ii. *The proposed use is a reasonable one.*

824

825 Met with a vote of 5-0.

826

827 The motion to approve ZBA 21-13 with conditions passed with a unanimous vote of 5-0.

828

829 **IV) Unfinished Business – Revisions to Zoning Board of Adjustment Regulations,**

830 **Section II, I – Supplemental Information**

831

832 Mr. Rogers stated that Corinne Marcou, Zoning Clerk, prepared a draft for the Board to review
833 with the current language stated at the top of the page. After reviewing the meeting minutes and
834 the conversations the Board had at last month's meeting, Ms. Marcou incorporated some of the
835 thoughts the Board. One concern staff had was with the ten days addition where this falls on the
836 day that Ms. Marcou mails the packets to the Board. Mr. Rogers further noted to the Board that
837 they would receive the packet as scheduled with supplemental information sent electronically if
838 more information is to come in later than the tenth day, which is normally a week after the
839 deadline. Staff certainly does stress to applicants the need to submit all information to staff in
840 order to distribute to the Board to review within significant time.

841

842 Mr. Hoppock replied that they seem to deal with this successfully. Mr. Rogers replied that was
843 correct. He continued that his understanding is that the intent is to allow the Board to get the
844 information as soon as possible so for review, instead of on the day of the meeting.

845

846 Ms. Taylor stated that she agrees with Mr. Hoppock about the ten days. She continued that the
847 whole point of having ten days is to make people aware that they need to have the materials
848 submitted on time. Her concern with the re-draft is there has to be some consequences, and the
849 Board ought to be able to decide whether it wants to accept late submitted material. She

850 suggested to reverse the wording of *“Failure to do so may result in the additional information*
851 *not being considered at the public hearing”* to *“The Board may vote to accept or not accept the*
852 *additional material at the public hearing.”* Ms. Taylor continued that it should be clear that the
853 option is for the Board to decide whether it wants to move forward.

854

855 Mr. Gaudio stated that he created a draft, which he read into the minutes: *“If an applicant or an*
856 *applicant’s agent submits supplemental information pertaining to an application within 10 days*
857 *prior to the public hearing at which the application is to be heard, the Board shall consider,*
858 *during the meeting, and decide by majority vote whether to accept the supplemental information*
859 *for consideration at the meeting or to continue the application to the next scheduled meeting to*
860 *allow the City staff, Board, abutters, and other parties time to review the application’s*
861 *information.”*

862

863 Ms. Taylor stated that this was a lot for her to absorb without reading it herself. She continued
864 that if someone does not submit the supplemental information in a timely fashion, then it should
865 be up to the Board whether to accept it. Chair Gorman stated that the Board could vote to not
866 accept it, and just have the hearing. Ms. Taylor agreed then continued that is reason for her
867 suggestion to reiterate the need for all information to be submitted collectively. Chair Gorman
868 suggested wording that the Board reserves the right to reject or accept any supplemental
869 information submitted at the meeting. Mr. Gaudio suggested, *“By majority vote, the Board may*
870 *1) reject, 2) accept, or 3) postpone.”* Chair Gorman replied that the third option would be
871 “continue.”

872

873 Ms. Taylor asked if she could suggest that Mr. Gaudio submit his language to Mr. Rogers,
874 because it is hard to consider it in the abstract. She continued that maybe Chair Gorman and Mr.
875 Rogers could review the suggestion for further review.

876

877 Mr. Rogers replied that he is fine with Ms. Taylor’s suggestion. He continued that he still thinks
878 the current language is sufficient and he does not see a problem. Maybe there is a way to
879 institute that ten-day part into the current language, because he thinks the current language
880 allows what the Board is discussing right now. It allows the Board to make a determination of
881 whether the materials presented after the deadline is material or not. Chair Gorman replied that
882 they are all options that the Board has exercised in the past. Ms. Taylor agreed, but part of the
883 problem is how can the Board distinguish instantly whether late submitted material is relevant.
884 Mr. Rogers replied that what they are proposing would still allow that to occur. He continued
885 that regarding the current language, they already have an application deadline and anything
886 submitted after that deadline is supplemental information. He continued that staff does try to
887 send it to the Board electronically to give them as much time as possible to review it. Mr.
888 Rogers stated that the one difference with the proposed language is that this would allow the
889 Board to reject the supplemental information, regardless of the time prior to the meeting.

890

891 Mr. Hoppock replied that it also does one more thing; it puts the applicant on notice. Mr. Rogers
892 replied that is a good point; it reinforces that deadline. He continued that even though they

893 currently do have a deadline, they have tried to be flexible and allow applicants to submit
894 supplemental information.

895
896 Chair Gorman stated that he wonders if that is what the problem is. He continued that maybe
897 they do not actually need new language, but need to do a better job of calling their own shots on
898 what exists. Personally, he does not have a problem with the last-minute information, typically.
899 If there is a barrage of supplemental information at the last minute with no time to review and
900 process, then it would be time to potentially continue the meeting.

901
902 Ms. Taylor replied that for the Board members who work, it is not always possible. She
903 continued that it is not just for the Board, either. She thinks it is helpful for the applicants to
904 know that a deadline is real.

905
906 Mr. Welsh asked what the deadline is right now. Ms. Marcou replied that typically it is the 20th
907 of the month, which is about 15 days before the meeting. She continued that when she sets the
908 schedule in December for the next year, she starts from the January date of the meeting and
909 works her way back. As Mr. Rogers stated, the week that the packet is mailed is typically the
910 Friday after the deadline. From there, there is a week for the Board members to review
911 everything, and then there is the meeting. It is a short deadline.

912
913 Mr. Welsh stated that it sounds like the deadline is about 14 days prior to the meeting. He
914 continued that if they were to switch the language to 11 days instead of 10, it would eliminate the
915 possibility that something came in on the 10th day/the Friday, after the packets had been mailed.
916 This would eliminate Ms. Marcou emailing the Board members with emails for items that are
917 actually within deadline. As opposed to something coming in one day later and her chasing them
918 with emails for something that is not consistent with the deadline. What he thinks would be nice
919 is to design the deadline such that anytime the Board members are being sent an email, it means
920 that the information is late, and it will be subject to the consideration in Part B. He would
921 suggest 11 or 12 days as the deadline.

922
923 Chair Gorman asked if that would be possible and questioned if that is before the deadline for
924 submittal. Mr. Rogers replied that as Ms. Marcou said, traditionally the deadline is the third
925 Friday of the month, then seven days later on the following Friday the packets are mailed to the
926 Board. The time from the packets are mailed to the meeting is different, depending on, for
927 example, if the first Monday of the month is a holiday, which would push the meeting to
928 Tuesday. He suggests that if they want to enforce the deadline more strictly than they currently
929 have, the Board would have to take a different process at the beginning of a meeting. Any
930 information, regardless of whether Ms. Marcou received it and sent it to the Board members
931 electronically a couple days or a week before the meeting, would be subject to a vote on whether
932 to accept that supplemental information or not.

933
934 Ms. Taylor stated that the reason she originally suggested an out-of-phase timing, after the
935 deadline for the application but before the packets went out, was simply because she knows that

936 they get applications in and staff says, for example, “Oops, you’re missing a map” and “You
937 need to get such-and-such in as well,” so it allows the applicant to submit what he or she forgot
938 the first time around. She suggests that they take these issues on a case-by-case basis. It would
939 be unfair, and a problem, if at the beginning of the meetings the Board said, “Oh, we’re going to
940 accept or reject all of the supplemental information.” They have to do it per application.

941
942 Mr. Rogers replied that that is what he is saying. Each piece could be voted on. If any
943 supplemental information were late, the Board would need to have some sort of vote on whether
944 to accept it, or not, and to decide whether they will continue the meeting. It adds quite a bit of
945 changes, possibly, to the process the Board would have to go through at the start of an
946 application.

947
948 Mr. Gaudio stated that they are talking about what the submission date is. He asked for
949 confirmation that this is the third Friday of the month. Mr. Rogers replied that it falls into that
950 timeframe, about the 20th of the month. Mr. Gaudio asked about February, when the timing
951 creates a problem since ten days after Feb. 20 might fall after the date of the March meeting.
952 Ms. Taylor replied that there is a February problem every year, regardless. Mr. Hoppock replied
953 that even if they create that problem for themselves, they allow themselves the chance to fix it,
954 and either continue the hearing or accept the information. He continued that if the supplemental
955 information were not voluminous, like four pages, he would vote to accept it.

956
957 Mr. Gaudio suggested making the submission date the 15th of the month. Then, the ten days will
958 not be a problem. Chair Gorman replied that he does not know if that is possible. He asked if it
959 is correct that it is mandated by the State. Mr. Rogers replied that after receiving an application
960 there is a certain amount of time they need to have a public hearing in, and there is a certain
961 amount of days for abutter notification, and such. He continued that they are kind of up against
962 that now, and Mr. Gaudio’s suggestion might help them there but hurt them on the other end,
963 regarding getting the packets ready, because the meeting minutes would have to be read and
964 taken care of. Chair Gorman replied that that would only give approximately 12 days. Mr.
965 Gaudio replied that the 15th would be the submission date, not the date staff needs to mail the
966 packet to the Board. They could mail the packets on the 20th or 21st. Mr. Rogers replied that he
967 cautions them against changing the current application deadlines, because those have been
968 instituted for decades.

969
970 Mr. Gaudio asked if other deadlines for other communities are similarly structured. Mr. Rogers
971 replied that the Board has probably one of the shortest turnaround periods, and a lot of that is
972 based off the notification per the RSA. The Board has a quick turnaround compared to the
973 Planning Board, because they have to do quite a bit more, in terms of staff reports and such.

974
975 Ms. Taylor stated that she has worked with many zoning boards. She continued that she thinks
976 the 10 days “fair warning,” as she would call it for want of a better description, is something that
977 many communities do use, and many applicants are familiar with it from their work in other
978 municipalities. Thus, it is not anything new or unusual. Again, she thinks it is important to have

979 something specific for an applicant to be aware of, with the ten days, as opposed to the “really,
980 truly, exceptionally general” language that currently exists.

981
982 Mr. Hoppock replied that it gives them options, and puts the applicant on notice regarding what
983 the Board’s options are. They will either take it, or push it back a month so they can review what
984 the applicant gave them. That is the message he wants the Board to send the applicants. He
985 thinks they have been doing fine whenever information comes in late, which does not happen
986 often, but happens enough so that they want a way to deal with it. When late information comes
987 in, staff gets it out, and has to send five extra emails. He hopes Board members’ spam folders do
988 not catch those emails so they get lost, but other than that, he thinks it is working out okay. Ten
989 days is a fair, round number.

990
991 Mr. Gaudio replied that the ten days is from the 20th of the month to the 30th and whatever
992 couple extra days there are before the first Monday. What would be wrong with taking a third
993 week? Nothing would be accepted after the application deadline, whatever that is, and then the
994 Board could accept it, reject it, or postpone it. They would not have to put “ten days” in there;
995 they could just use the application deadline.

996
997 Ms. Taylor asked, what does that do for staff when they get an application in on the day of the
998 deadline and say to the applicant, “We need this additional map” or something else because the
999 application is incomplete? Mr. Rogers replied that he thinks it is different if, upon review of an
1000 application, staff feels that it is missing something and staff asks for something else. The bigger
1001 concern is when the applicant him/herself throws something in at the last minute, like the traffic
1002 study. That hearing was delayed due to technical difficulties at the scheduled meeting, which
1003 meant the applicant had a little more time and came up with an additional report that they
1004 presented to the Board at the last minute. If staff is asking for information, they will ask for it
1005 quickly and get it into the packet that goes out to the Board. However, as Ms. Taylor said,
1006 sometimes it is a case by case situation, so having that flexibility is important, too.

1007
1008 Chair Gorman stated that he wants to avoid creating something that means they have to vote on
1009 this at every meeting, but it sounds like this would be the case. Ms. Taylor replied that with
1010 other zoning boards, she is familiar with, this issue does not arise that often, but when it does, the
1011 board members vote on it. Mr. Hoppock replied that he does not think they necessarily need to
1012 vote on it at the beginning of the meeting. He continued that if the applicant has a traffic study,
1013 for example, that is 59 pages long, and they give it to the Board two days before the meeting, he
1014 is not going to read that and will let that be known. The applicant could also argue the point
1015 during the presentation and say, “Well, that traffic study includes X, Y, and Z,” and the Board
1016 will hear it that way. The Board could not stop that from happening. The applicant could give
1017 the conclusions from the report during the oral presentation, and they could give it the weight it
1018 deserves. If the applicant wants the Board to consider a report then they would agree to a
1019 continuance.

1020

1021 Mr. Hoppock stated that to move this along for tonight's purposes, he would like Mr. Gaudio to
1022 circulate his draft, which he thinks does track more precisely what B says. The Board should
1023 look at that, and then bring this to a head at the next meeting.
1024

1025 Mr. Hoppock made a motion for the Zoning Board of Adjustment to decide this at the next
1026 meeting. Chair Gorman seconded the motion.
1027

1028 Mr. Rogers stated that on September 1 the new Land Development Code starts. He continued
1029 that there are some changes. One of the significant changes is regarding the Change of a Non-
1030 conforming Use to another Non-conforming Use. After reviewing the RSAs, staff felt that
1031 application process was not appropriate. He knows the Board has struggled with this in the past,
1032 and rightfully so. If that type of change of use were to come before the Board, it would come to
1033 the Board as a Variance, not as a Change of Non-conforming Use.
1034

1035 Ms. Taylor stated that when staff updated the Board on the Code changes, they promised copies
1036 of and training on the new Code. She asked if that would happen. Mr. Rogers replied yes, the
1037 books will be assembled and distributed with training. Currently, when someone comes in with
1038 questions, Staff reviews both the current and newly approved codes. If an application was to be
1039 submitted prior to September 1st they will go by the previous codes. Staff has noted a few errors
1040 and conflicting language in the new book, which Tara Kessler will bring forward to the Joint
1041 Planning Board/Planning, Licenses, and Development Committee in September. Once staff has
1042 a better handle those changes, they will incorporate the changes into the books and get copies to
1043 the Board.
1044

1045 Ms. Taylor stated that she hopes Staff will also help the Board work through those books. Mr.
1046 Rogers replied yes.
1047

1048 Ms. Taylor asked if they have applications for the September 6 meeting, would those be
1049 submitted before September 1 and thus still be using the previous Code. Mr. Rogers replied
1050 probably, yes. Ms. Taylor replied that they then do not need to worry about the new Code until
1051 October. Mr. Rogers replied yes. He continued that if the September agenda is light they could
1052 probably start some training during that meeting. It will take everyone some time to learn the
1053 new Code, with its different formatting, though it is easier to use
1054

1055 There being no further business, Chair Gorman adjourned the meeting at 9:04 PM.
1056

1057 Respectfully submitted by,
1058 Britta Reida, Minute Taker
1059

1060 Reviewed and edited by,
1061 Corinne Marcou, Zoning Clerk

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90-92 VICTORIA ST. ZBA 21-14



Petitioner requests a Variance to permit a single family resident where it is not a permitted use per Section 102-771 of the Zoning Ordinance.



City of Keene
New Hampshire

NOTICE OF HEARING

ZBA 21-14

A meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment will be held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 6:30 PM in City Hall Council Chambers, 2nd floor, 3 Washington St, Keene, New Hampshire to consider the following petition. Petitioner, Ells Electric, LLC, of Spofford, NH, owned by James L. and Beverly A. Ells of Spofford, NH, requests a Variance for property located at 90-92 Victoria St., Tax Map #589-022-000-000-000 that is in the Business Growth and Re-Use District. The Petitioner requests a Variance to permit a single-family resident where it is not a permitted use per Section 102-771 of the Zoning Ordinance

This application is available for public review in the Community Development Department at City Hall, 3 Washington Street, Keene, NH 03431 between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm. or online at <https://ci.keene.nh.us/zoning-board-adjustment>

Corinne Marcou, Zoning Clerk

Notice issuance date August 27, 2021



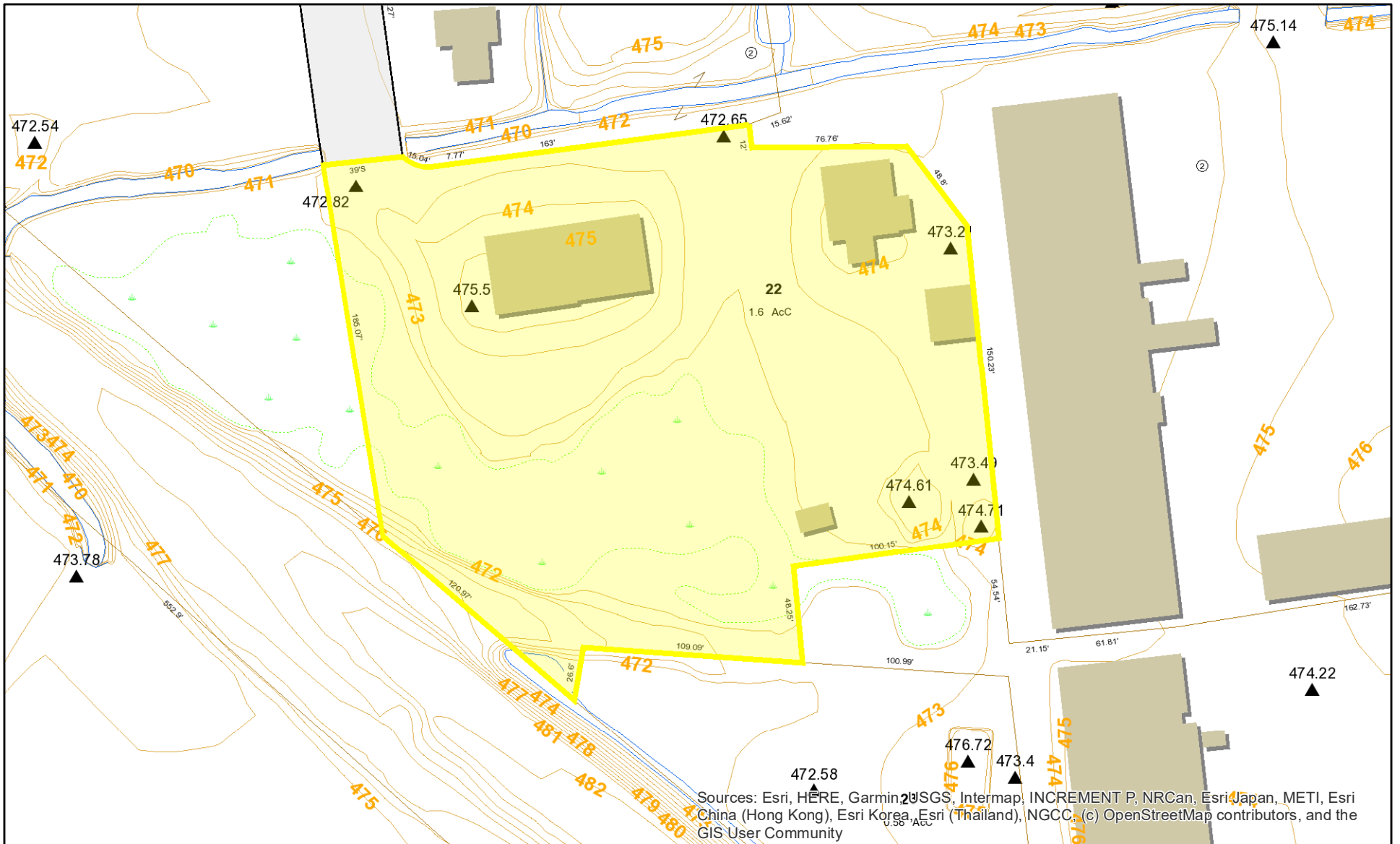
Keene, NH



August 26, 2021

1 inch = 68 Feet

www.cai-tech.com



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Data shown on this map is provided for planning and informational purposes only. The municipality and CAI Technologies are not responsible for any use for other purposes or misuse or misrepresentation of this map.

APPLICATION FOR APPEAL

Zoning Board of Adjustment
3 Washington Street, Fourth Floor
Keene, New Hampshire 03431
Phone: (603) 352-5440

For Office Use Only:

Case No. ZBA 21-14
Date Filed 8/20/2021
Received By CJM
Page 1 of 16
Reviewed By _____

The undersigned hereby applies to the City of Keene Zoning Board of Adjustment for an Appeal in accordance with provisions of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated 674:33.

TYPE OF APPEAL - MARK AS MANY AS NECESSARY

- APPEAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION
- APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR ENLARGEMENT OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION
- APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE
- APPLICATION FOR AN EQUITABLE WAIVER OF DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

Name(s) of Applicant(s) Ells Electric, LLC Phone: 603-209-5573
Address P. O. Box 3, Spofford, NH 03462
Name(s) of Owner(s) James L. and Beverly A. Ells
Address P. O. Box 3, Spofford, NH 03462
Location of Property 90-92 Victoria Street

SECTION II - LOT CHARACTERISTICS

Tax Map Parcel Number 589-022-000-000 Zoning District Business Growth and Re-Use
Lot Dimensions: Front 39'± Rear 209'± Side 185' Side 150'±
Lot Area: Acres 1.5± Square Feet 65,000±
% of Lot Covered by Structures (buildings, garages, pools, decks, etc.): Existing 10 Proposed 10
% of Impervious Coverage (structures plus driveways and/or parking areas, etc.): Existing 17 Proposed 17
Present Use Mixed use with a commercial building and a residential dwelling and a vacant lot.
Proposed Use The proposed lots will be each be commercial and residential.

SECTION III - AFFIDAVIT

I hereby certify that I am the owner or the authorized agent of the owner of the property upon which this appeal is sought and that all information provided by me is true under penalty of law.

Charlie Ritchie Date 8/19/2021
(Signature of Owner or Authorized Agent)

Please Print Name Chuck Ritchie

PROPERTY ADDRESS 90-92 Victoria Street

APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE

- A Variance is requested from Section (s) 102-771.1 of the Zoning Ordinance to permit:
See attached narrative.

DESCRIBE BRIEFLY YOUR RESPONSE TO EACH VARIANCE CRITERIA:

1. Granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest because:
See attached narrative.

2. If the variance were granted, the spirit of the ordinance would be observed because:
See attached narrative.

3. Granting the variance would do substantial justice because:

See attached narrative.

4. If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be diminished because

See attached narrative.

5. Unnecessary Hardship

A. Owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship because:

i. No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property because:

See attached narrative.

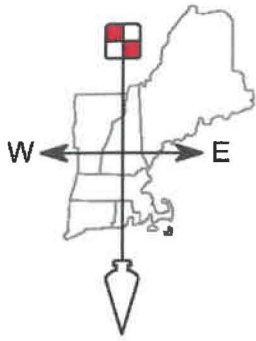
and

ii. The proposed use is a reasonable one because:

See attached narrative.

B. Explain how, if the criteria in subparagraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be reasonably used in strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore necessary to enable a reasonable use of it.

See attached narrative.



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LAND CONSULTANTS, PLLC

206 Elm Street, Milford, NH 03055 - Phone: 603-672-5456 - Fax: 603-413-5456
www.FieldstoneLandConsultants.com

VARIANCE CRITERIA

(VARIANCE FROM SECTION 102-771.1)

Tax Map Parcel 589-022 & 589-023

90-92 Street - Keene, NH

August 16, 2021

Prepared For:

Ells Electric, LLC

The proposed lot line adjustment will be between parcel 589-022 and 589-023. Parcel 589-022 is 1.5 acres with 39' of frontage on Victoria Street per the tax map. It is currently a mixed use lot with a commercial building for an electrical company as well as a single family residential dwelling. Lot 589-023 is 0.5 acres with no frontage on a public road. The lot line adjustment proposes to take area from lot 589-022 as well as the dwelling and half the frontage on Victoria Street, and add it to lot 589-023. This would result in lot 589-022 being a single use, commercial lot and 589-023 being a single family residential lot. Residential use is not a permitted use in the BGR district and requires a variance.

Section 102-771.1 of the Zoning Ordinance lists the permitted uses within the business growth and re-use. The listed permitted uses does not single family residential. Since it is not a permitted use per Section 102-771 of the Keene Zoning Ordinance we are requesting zoning relief in the form of a variance.

The numbered items below correlate to the questions asked in the City Application for a Variance.

1. Granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest because:
Granting this variance would not change the uses of the two existing buildings but would allow for the uses to exist on separate properties. The granting of this variance would also eliminate an existing non-conforming lot with no road frontage and allow for the productive use of both properties. This proposal will not require any site work or major site improvements as all infrastructure is already existing. Existing vegetation will remain providing the same visual appearance of the neighborhood. Granting this variance would not be contrary to the public interest as this project will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or threaten the health, safety or general welfare of the public.
2. If the Variance were granted, the spirit of the ordinance would be observed because:
The intent of this section is "to create an additional downtown zoning district to enhance the economic vitality of the area by re-developing with new technology companies as well

Ells Electric, LLC
90-92 Victoria Street – Keene, NH
Variance Application

Page 2 of 4

as clean manufacturing, processing, assembling and wholesaling businesses within a walkable, human-scaled place.” The proposal for the site will continue to provide the neighborhood with a business with economic vitality. The proposed lot with residential use will be out of the main area of the additional downtown area adjacent to Marlboro Street. The lots will meet all of the dimensional standards and will be in harmony with the neighborhood. This proposal will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or threaten the health, safety or general welfare of the public. For all of these reasons we believe that granting the variance would observe the spirit of the ordinance.

3. Granting the variance would do substantial justice because:

Granting this variance would allow the land owner to reasonably utilize lot 589-023 that currently has no frontage on a public road and lies vacant and would allow the separation of the commercial and residential uses. Granting this variance would do substantial justice by utilizing undevelopable land with a residential use. The location of the existing lot with no frontage and proposed residential lot is currently not viable for additional commercial or industrial use. They are also out of the main downtown area near the highest traffic volumes. This makes the location best suited for a residential dwelling, particularly for owners of businesses nearby. In other words, a denial of this variance request would be an injustice to my client as there would be no apparent gain to the general public by denying this application.

4. If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be diminished because:

The proposed lot line revision does not include any additional structures to be built or impact to the streetscape. There will be no clearing of trees so the feel of the district will remain unchanged. For all of these reasons we do not believe that the proposed lot line adjustment and separation of the uses would have any negative impacts on the value of surrounding properties.

5. Unnecessary Hardship

A. Owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship because:

1. No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purpose of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property because:

This application proposes to address special conditions of the two properties that distinguish it from other properties in the area. One property currently exists with a commercial and residential use which hinders the growth of the commercial business as financing and insuring properties with mixed uses is apparently more difficult. The other property is a land locked isolated property which will be made conforming as part of this proposal. The general public purpose of the ordinance intends to “create

conditions suitable to co-exist adjacent to residential neighborhoods” 102-771(1) as well as “provide location-sensitive transitions between neighborhoods and uses along Marlboro Street” 102-771(12). The proposed lot line adjustment is on the outskirts of the business growth and re-use district and will provide a transition towards the residential neighborhoods nearby. Lot 589-023 is unique in that it has no frontage on a public road. The lot line adjustment will provide frontage to the lot and it will become a residential lot. This proposal does not introduce any new uses to the neighborhood but simply proposes to rework the lot lines to allow for a separation of the uses. Separating the uses will allow for the commercial property to be improved and will simplify the financing and insurance requirements. Improvements to these properties will improve the neighborhood and tax base for the city. For these reasons we do not believe that a fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purpose of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property.

2. The proposed use is a reasonable one because:

We believe that the proposed use is a reasonable one for all of the reasons previously stated. The following is an outline of why we believe the proposed use is reasonable:

- Granting this variance would allow for the productive use of the existing properties.
- The existing buildings and improvements already exist so there will be no changes to the neighborhood.
- Separating the uses onto two properties would be in harmony with the neighborhood and surrounding areas as the neighborhood consists of a mixture of uses.
- The residential use would not be contrary to the public interest as this project will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or threaten the health, safety or general welfare of the public.
- This proposal would in our opinion observe the spirit and intent of the ordinance.
- This project would have no measurable negative impacts on the surroundings or their property values.
- The separation of the uses would allow an existing business to obtain financing to make improvements to the commercial building.

For all of the reasons we believe that the proposed use is reasonable.

B. Explain how, if the criteria in paragraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be reasonably used in strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore necessary to enable a reasonable use of it:

Lot 589-023 is approximately 0.5 acres and has no frontage on a public road and lot 589-022 is 1.5 acres with a mixed use of commercial and residential. Lot 589-023 couldn't be reasonably accessed from Victoria Street since there is wetlands per the Keene GIS and it

Ells Electric, LLC
90-92 Victoria Street – Keene, NH
Variance Application

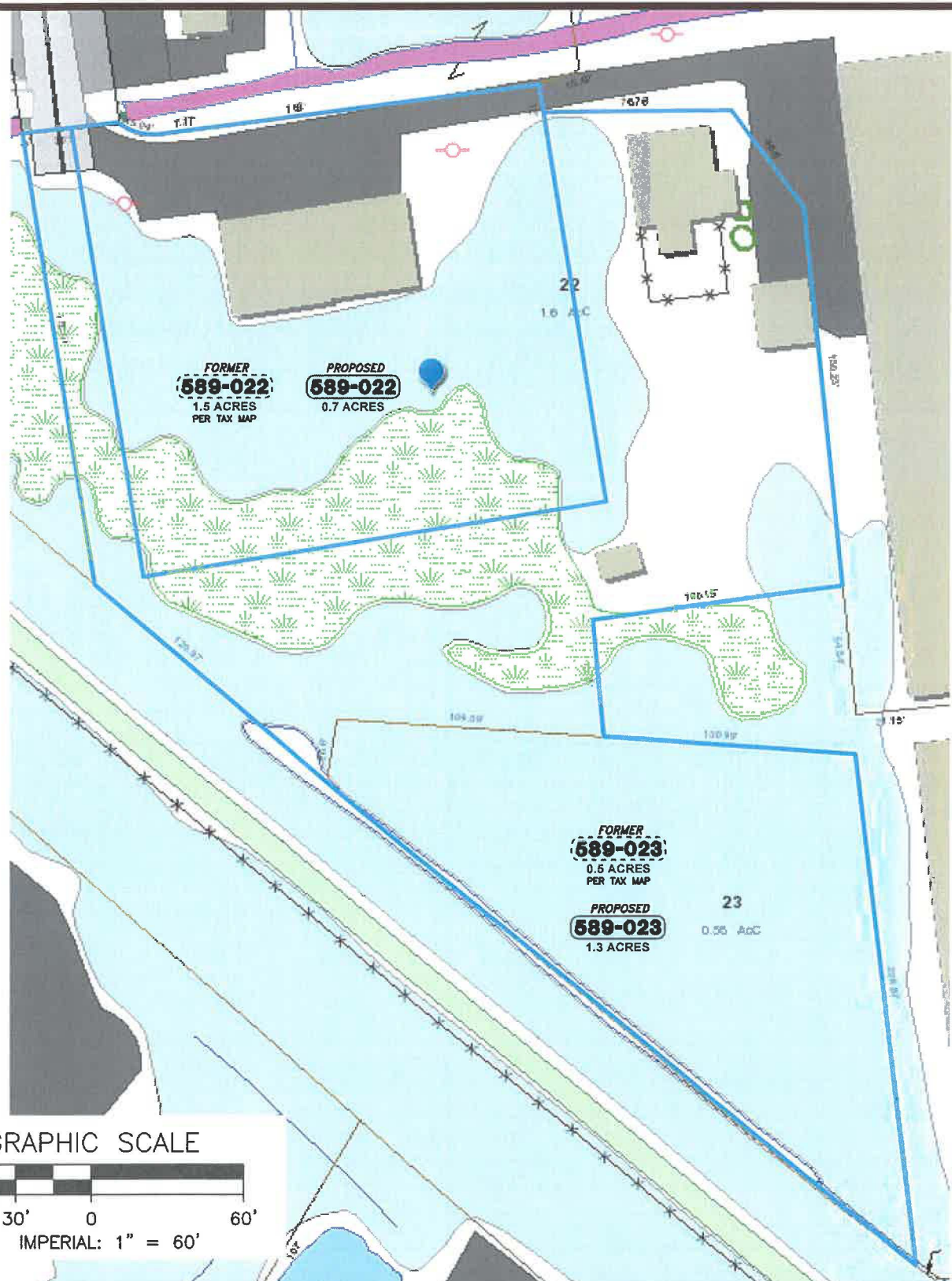
Page 4 of 4

has no frontage. In order to make reasonable use of the property, a lot line adjustment is proposed to include the residential dwelling from lot 589-022 as part of this lot. In addition to frontage on Victoria Street, lot 589-023 will be accessible along the front of lot 589-022. These are all special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area. Due to these conditions we believe this property is reasonably suited for the proposed use. We are thereby requesting a variance from Section 102-771.1 to enable a residential use on the subject property.

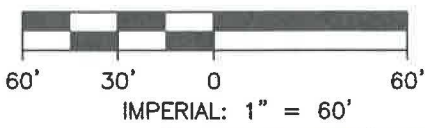
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Fieldstone Land Consultants, PLLC



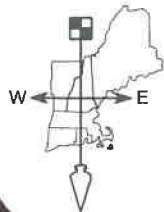
Chuck L. Ritchie, E.I.T.
Project Engineer



GRAPHIC SCALE



Surveying ♦ Engineering ♦ Land Planning ♦ Permitting ♦ Septic Designs



FIELDSTONE
LAND CONSULTANTS, PLLC

206 Elm Street, Milford NH 03055
Phone: (603)-672-5456 Fax: (603)-413-5456
FieldstoneLandConsultants.com

ZONING EXHIBIT PLAN

TAX MAP PARCEL 589-022 & 589-023

90-92 VICTORIA STREET
KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

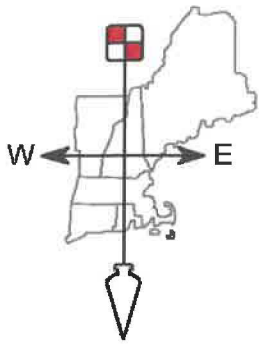
SCALE: 1" = 60'

AUGUST 18, 2021

FILE: 3038EH00.dwg

PROJ. NO. 3038.00

SHEET NO. 1 OF 1



FIELDSTONE

Surveying ♦ Engineering
Land Planning ♦ Septic Designs

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www.FieldstoneLandConsultants.com

Date: 8/18/2021
FLC#3038.00 / CLR

List of Abutters
Tax Map 589 Lot Number 22 & 23
Keene, New Hampshire

Map 586 Lot 35
Capitol Supply Associates
6 Storrs Street
Concord, NH 03301

Map 586 Lot 38
Ellis Robertson Corp.
P.O. Box 188
Chesterfield, NH 03443-0188

Map 586 Lot 39
Wayne E. Brown Jr. Rev. Trust
28 Village Road
Surry, NH 03431

Map 586 Lot 40
Ellis Robertson Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 188
Chesterfield, NH 03443-0188

Map 588 Lot 47 & 48
26 Victoria Ct., LLC
63 Emerald Street, PMB 434
Keene, NH 03431

Map 589 Lot 17
Kingsbury Acquisition, LLC
300 Gay Street
Manchester, NH 03103

Map 595 Lot 1
310 Marlboro Street, LLC
310 Marlboro Street
Keene, NH 03431

Map 595 Lot 2
Home Healthcare Hospice & Community SVC
P.O. Box 564
Keene, NH 03431

Map 596 Lot 8
City of Keene
3 Washington Street
Keene, NH 03431

Map 596 Lot 8
Segtel Inc.
41 State Street
Albany, NY 12207

Owner:
Map 589 Lot 22 & 23
James L. & Beverly A. Ells
P.O. Box 3
Spofford, NH 03462

Engineer:
Fieldstone Land Consultants, PLLC
206 Elm Street
Milford, NH 03055

90-92 VICTORIA ST. ZBA 21-19



Petitioner requests a Variance to permit a 19 foot frontage where 50 feet is required per Section 102-821 of the Zoning Ordinance.



City of Keene
New Hampshire

NOTICE OF HEARING

ZBA 21-19

A meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment will be held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 6:30 PM in City Hall Council Chambers, 2nd floor, 3 Washington St, Keene, New Hampshire to consider the following petition. Petitioner, Ells Electric, LLC, of Spofford, NH, owned by James L. and Beverly A. Ells of Spofford, NH, requests a Variance for property located at 90-92 Victoria St., Tax Map #589-022-000-000-000 that is in the Business Growth and Re-Use District. The Petitioner requests a Variance to permit a 19 foot frontage where 50 feet is required per Section 102-821 of the Zoning Ordinance.

This application is available for public review in the Community Development Department at City Hall, 3 Washington Street, Keene, NH 03431 between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm. or online at <https://ci.keene.nh.us/zoning-board-adjustment>

Corinne Marcou, Zoning Clerk

Notice issuance date August 27, 2021

APPLICATION FOR APPEAL

Zoning Board of Adjustment
3 Washington Street, Fourth Floor
Keene, New Hampshire 03431
Phone: (603) 352-5440

For Office Use Only:	
Case No.	_____
Date Filed	_____
Received By	_____
Page _____ of _____	
Reviewed By	_____

The undersigned hereby applies to the City of Keene Zoning Board of Adjustment for an Appeal in accordance with provisions of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated 674:33.

TYPE OF APPEAL - MARK AS MANY AS NECESSARY

- APPEAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION
- APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR ENLARGEMENT OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION
- APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE
- APPLICATION FOR AN EQUITABLE WAIVER OF DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

Name(s) of Applicant(s) Ells Electric, LLC Phone: 603-209-5573
Address P. O. Box 3, Spofford, NH 03462
Name(s) of Owner(s) James L. and Beverly A. Ells
Address P. O. Box 3, Spofford, NH 03462
Location of Property 90-92 Victoria Street

SECTION II - LOT CHARACTERISTICS

Tax Map Parcel Number 589-022-000-000 Zoning District Business Growth and Re-Use
Lot Dimensions: Front 39'± Rear 209'± Side 185' Side 150'±
Lot Area: Acres 1.5± Square Feet 65,000±
% of Lot Covered by Structures (buildings, garages, pools, decks, etc.): Existing 10 Proposed 10
% of Impervious Coverage (structures plus driveways and/or parking areas, etc.): Existing 17 Proposed 17
Present Use Mixed use with a commercial building and a residential dwelling and a vacant lot.
Proposed Use The proposed lots will be each be commercial and residential.

SECTION III - AFFIDAVIT

I hereby certify that I am the owner or the authorized agent of the owner of the property upon which this appeal is sought and that all information provided by me is true under penalty of law.

Charlie Ritchie Date 8/24/2021
(Signature of Owner or Authorized Agent)

Please Print Name Chuck Ritchie

PROPERTY ADDRESS 90-92 Victoria Street

APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE

- A Variance is requested from Section (s) 102-821 of the Zoning Ordinance to permit:
See attached narrative.

DESCRIBE BRIEFLY YOUR RESPONSE TO EACH VARIANCE CRITERIA:

1. Granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest because:
See attached narrative.

2. If the variance were granted, the spirit of the ordinance would be observed because:
See attached narrative.

3. Granting the variance would do substantial justice because:

See attached narrative.

4. If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be diminished because

See attached narrative.

5. Unnecessary Hardship

A. Owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship because:

i. No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property because:

See attached narrative.

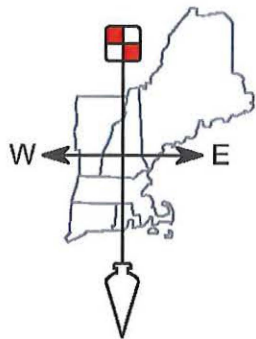
and

ii. The proposed use is a reasonable one because:

See attached narrative.

B. Explain how, if the criteria in subparagraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be reasonably used in strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore necessary to enable a reasonable use of it.

See attached narrative.



FIELDSTONE

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206 Elm Street, Milford, NH 03055 - Phone: 603-672-5456 - Fax: 603-413-5456
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VARIANCE CRITERIA

(VARIANCE FROM SECTION 102-821)

Tax Map Parcel 589-022 & 589-023

90-92 Street - Keene, NH

August 16, 2021

Prepared For:

Ells Electric, LLC

The proposed lot line adjustment will be between parcel 589-022 and 589-023. Parcel 589-022 is 1.5 acres with 39' of frontage on Victoria Street per the tax map. It is currently a mixed use lot with a commercial building for an electrical company as well as a single family residential dwelling. Lot 589-023 is 0.5 acres with no frontage on a public road. The lot line adjustment proposes to take area from lot 589-022 as well as the dwelling and half the frontage on Victoria Street, and add it to lot 589-023. This would result in lot 589-022 being a single use, commercial lot and 589-023 being a single family residential lot. Residential uses are required to have 50' of frontage and requires a variance.

Section 102-821 of the Zoning Ordinance depicts the exception for minimum lot size and width. The section states that in no case shall the frontage measured at the front street property line be less than 50 feet for a residential structure. Since the proposed lot will have approximately 19 feet of frontage, we are requesting relief from Section 102-821 of the Keene Zoning Ordinance in the form of a variance.

The numbered items below correlate to the questions asked in the City Application for a Variance.

1. Granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest because:
Granting this variance would not change the uses of the two existing buildings but would allow for the uses to exist on separate properties. The granting of this variance would also eliminate an existing non-conforming lot with no road frontage, make it more conforming, and allow for the productive use of both properties. This proposal will not require any site work or major site improvements as all infrastructure is already existing. Existing vegetation will remain providing the same visual appearance of the neighborhood. Granting this variance would not be contrary to the public interest as this project will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or threaten the health, safety or general welfare of the public.
2. If the Variance were granted, the spirit of the ordinance would be observed because:
The intent of this section is "to create an additional downtown zoning district to enhance

Ells Electric, LLC
90-92 Victoria Street – Keene, NH
Variance Application

the economic vitality of the area by re-developing with new technology companies as well as clean manufacturing, processing, assembling and wholesaling businesses within a walkable, human-scaled place.” The proposal for the site will continue to provide the neighborhood with a business with economic vitality. The proposed lot with residential use will be out of the main area of the additional downtown area adjacent to Marlboro Street. The lots will meet all of the dimensional standards except for frontage and will be in harmony with the neighborhood. This proposal will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or threaten the health, safety or general welfare of the public. For all of these reasons we believe that granting the variance would observe the spirit of the ordinance.

3. Granting the variance would do substantial justice because:

Granting this variance would allow the land owner to reasonably utilize lot 589-023 that currently has no frontage on a public road and lies vacant and would allow the separation of the commercial and residential uses. Granting this variance would do substantial justice by utilizing undevelopable land with a residential use. The location of the existing lot with no frontage and proposed residential lot is currently not viable for additional commercial or industrial use. They are also out of the main downtown area near the highest traffic volumes. This makes the location best suited for a residential dwelling, particularly for owners of businesses nearby. In other words, a denial of this variance request would be an injustice to my client as there would be no apparent gain to the general public by denying this application.

4. If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be diminished because:

The proposed lot line revision does not include any additional structures to be built or impact to the streetscape. There will be no clearing of trees so the feel of the district will remain unchanged. For all of these reasons we do not believe that the proposed lot line adjustment and separation of the uses would have any negative impacts on the value of surrounding properties.

5. Unnecessary Hardship

A. Owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship because:

1. No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purpose of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property because:

This application proposes to address special conditions of the two properties that distinguish it from other properties in the area. One property currently exists with a commercial and residential use which hinders the growth of the commercial business as financing and insuring properties with mixed uses is apparently more difficult. The

other property is a land locked isolated property which will be made more conforming as part of this proposal. The general public purpose of the ordinance intends to “create conditions suitable to co-exist adjacent to residential neighborhoods” 102-771(1) as well as “provide location-sensitive transitions between neighborhoods and uses along Marlboro Street” 102-771(12). The proposed lot line adjustment is on the outskirts of the business growth and re-use district and will provide a transition towards the residential neighborhoods nearby. Lot 589-023 is unique in that it has no frontage on a public road. The lot line adjustment will provide frontage to the lot and it will become a residential lot. This proposal does not introduce any new uses to the neighborhood but simply proposes to rework the lot lines to allow for a separation of the uses. Separating the uses will allow for the commercial property to be improved and will simplify the financing and insurance requirements. Improvements to these properties will improve the neighborhood and tax base for the city. For these reasons we do not believe that a fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purpose of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property.

2. The proposed use is a reasonable one because:

We believe that the proposed use is a reasonable one for all of the reasons previously stated. The following is an outline of why we believe the proposed use is reasonable:

- Granting this variance would allow for the productive use of the existing properties.
- The existing buildings and improvements already exist so there will be no changes to the neighborhood.
- Separating the uses onto two properties would be in harmony with the neighborhood and surrounding areas as the neighborhood consists of a mixture of uses.
- The residential use would not be contrary to the public interest as this project will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or threaten the health, safety or general welfare of the public.
- This proposal would in our opinion observe the spirit and intent of the ordinance.
- This project would have no measurable negative impacts on the surroundings or their property values.
- The separation of the uses would allow and existing business to obtain financing to make improvements to the commercial building.

For all of the reasons we believe that the proposed use is reasonable.

- B. Explain how, if the criteria in paragraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be reasonably used in strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore necessary to enable a reasonable use of it:

Lot 589-023 is approximately 0.5 acres and has no frontage on a public road and lot 589-022

Ells Electric, LLC
90-92 Victoria Street – Keene, NH
Variance Application

Page 4 of 4

is 1.5 acres with 39 feet of frontage on Victoria Street and is a mixed use of commercial and residential. Lot 589-023 couldn't be reasonably accessed from Victoria Street since there is wetlands per the Keene GIS and it has no frontage. In order to make reasonable use of the property, a lot line adjustment is proposed to include the residential dwelling from lot 589-022 as part of this lot. In addition to frontage on Victoria Street, lot 589-023 will be accessible along the front of lot 589-022. These are all special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area. Due to these conditions we believe this property is reasonably suited for the proposed use. We are thereby requesting a variance from Section 102-821 to enable a residential use with less than 50' of frontage.

This information was prepared by:
Fieldstone Land Consultants, PLLC



Chuck L. Ritchie, E.I.T.
Project Engineer

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0 KRIF RD. & 472 WINCHESTER ST
ZBA 21-15



Petitioner requests a Variance to permit the construction of a roof to provide cover to vehicles, encroaching the building setback per Section 102-791 of the Zoning Ordinance.



City of Keene
New Hampshire

NOTICE OF HEARING

ZBA 21-15

A meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment will be held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 6:30 PM in City Hall Council Chambers, 2nd floor, 3 Washington St, Keene, New Hampshire to consider the following petition. Petitioner, Amerco Real Estate Company, of 2727 North Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ, requests a Variance for property located at 0 Krif Rd. and 472 Winchester St., Tax Map #115-019-000-000-000 and 115-020-000-000-000 that is in the Commerce Limited District. The Petitioner requests a Variance to permit the construction of a roof to provide cover to vehicles, encroaching the building setback per Section 102-791 of the Zoning Ordinance.

This application is available for public review in the Community Development Department at City Hall, 3 Washington Street, Keene, NH 03431 between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm. or online at <https://ci.keene.nh.us/zoning-board-adjustment>

Corinne Marcou, Zoning Clerk

Notice issuance date August 27, 2021



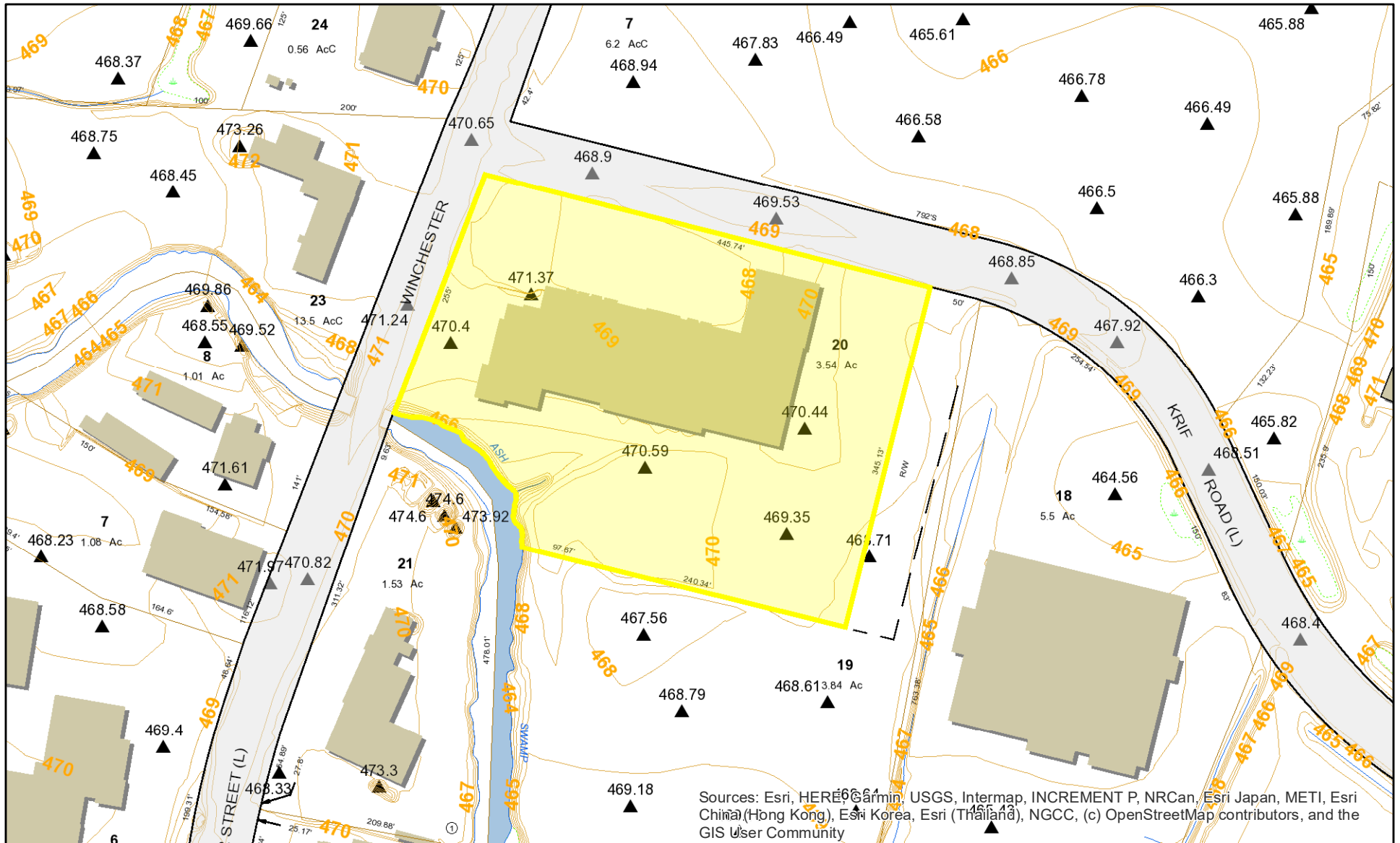
Keene, NH



August 26, 2021

1 inch = 137 Feet

www.cai-tech.com



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

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APPLICATION FOR APPEAL

Zoning Board of Adjustment
3 Washington Street, Fourth Floor
Keene, New Hampshire 03431
Phone: (603) 352-5440

For Office Use Only:	
Case No.	<u>ZBA 21-15</u>
Date Filed	<u>8/20/2021</u>
Received By	<u>CJM</u>
Page	<u>1</u> of <u>12</u>
Reviewed By	_____

The undersigned hereby applies to the City of Keene Zoning Board of Adjustment for an Appeal in accordance with provisions of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated 674:33.

TYPE OF APPEAL - MARK AS MANY AS NECESSARY

- APPEAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION
- APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR ENLARGEMENT OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION
- APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE
- APPLICATION FOR AN EQUITABLE WAIVER OF DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

Name(s) of Applicant(s) Amerco Real Estate Company Phone: 602-263-6502
Address 2727 North Central Ave, Phoenix AZ 85004
Name(s) of Owner(s) Amerco Real Estate Company
Address 2727 North Central Avenue, Phoenix AZ 85004
Location of Property 115-019 & 115-020; 0 Krif Road & 472 Winchester St

SECTION II - LOT CHARACTERISTICS

Tax Map Parcel Number 115-019 & 115-020 Zoning District CL - Commerce Limited
Lot Dimensions: Front 263.5 Rear 774.5' Side 495.7'Krif Side 174' Ash Swamp
Lot Area: Acres 7.38 Combined Square Feet 321,472.8 Combined
% of Lot Covered by Structures (buildings, garages, pools, decks, etc.): Existing 10.6% Proposed 23.6%
% of Impervious Coverage (structures plus driveways and/or parking areas, etc.): Existing 26.6% Proposed 65.6%
Present Use formerly Clark Distributors, now U-Haul site
Proposed Use U-Haul with combined Storage Facility

SECTION III - AFFIDAVIT

I hereby certify that I am the owner or the authorized agent of the owner of the property upon which this appeal is sought and that all information provided by me is true under penalty of law.

Jeffery H. Vaine Date 8/20/2021
(Signature of Owner or Authorized Agent)

Please Print Name Jeffery H. Vaine

PROPERTY ADDRESS 0 Krif Rd & 472 Winchester St

APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE

- A Variance is requested from Section (s) 102-791 of the Zoning Ordinance to permit:
Construction of a roof to provide cover to vehicles, encroaching the Building Setback.

DESCRIBE BRIEFLY YOUR RESPONSE TO EACH VARIANCE CRITERIA:

1. Granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest because:
If the variance is granted, it would not be contrary to the public interest as it is a feature on the building that would provide cover for customers picking up vehicles from the business. The roof will not hinder public access by blocking traveled ways or sidewalks. The roof will be constructed within the subject property and only encroach the building setback line by 16'. The roof will fit in with the surrounding commercial and industrial businesses, and not viewed as a hindrance to the public. The general health, safety and welfare will not be impacted by structure.
2. If the variance were granted, the spirit of the ordinance would be observed because:
This roof structure will be a permanent (20' x 40') supported roof, attached to an existing building, and considered a covered parking space. If the variance is granted, the spirit and intent of the ordinance would be observed, as the roof is not a building and it will enhance the safety and convenient access to the site. The design of the structure will match surrounding commercial buildings and improve the aesthetics of the existing building in observation of the spirit of the ordinance.
3. Granting the variance would do substantial justice because:
Granting the variance would do justice as it will allow the business owner to provide customers a covered area to pick up or drop off vehicles. In the northeast, this is a nice customer benefit to remain out of the inclement weather and will attract more customers to the business. The general public will not lose anything as a result of the variance being granted. In fact the public will gain in having an economically viable business in this existing building and the roof will provide increased safety for those utilizing the site.
4. If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be diminished because
The construction of the roof will be fitting in design of the existing building and aesthetically pleasing. The covered parking space will not diminish the value of surrounding properties, and will add a point of interest to the existing building. The proposed use in this section of the building will bring a thriving business to the surrounding commercial/industrial area, and potentially increase values of the surrounding properties. The site will be used by an economically viable business, as it was in the past, and ensure a future tax base that will benefit the city and surrounding properties.

K:\ZBA\Web_Forms\Variance_Application_2010.doc 8/22/2017

5. Unnecessary Hardship

A. Owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship because:

i. No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property because:
The proposal to construct a roof on the existing building wall will be a attractive feature to customers of U-Haul. This feature will help to increase and maintain customers to the business, and if denied, could hinder business potential. The proposed use is compatible with the surrounding businesses, such as the car dealerships and the roof is consistent with intended commercial use by the zoning regulations. The applicant has a special condition in redevelopment of the site, which will use the existing buildings, paved travel aisles, and parking lots. This feature will enhance the safety of those using it and will be perceived as an enhancement to the building by the public.
and

ii. The proposed use is a reasonable one because:

The proposed use is a reasonable one as there are special conditions of the property that limit the ability to comply with all zoning setbacks. In order to utilize the existing buildings, paved travel ways, and install a marquee roof, the setback cannot be met. The ordinance states that canopies and awnings are excluded from the building setbacks, however this marquee will be part of the building structure. Although this is a roof for vehicles, it provides the same use as a canopy or awning. The roof will lie within the subject property and will not impact City or abutters' properties. Based on the Commercial Limited zoning and location of the property, we believe this to be a reasonable proposal and is consistent with the zoning intent. It is in the interest of the public that commercial sites are able to be redeveloped and secure a future tax base.

B. Explain how, if the criteria in subparagraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be reasonably used in strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore necessary to enable a reasonable use of it.

If the variance is not established, there is not enough space between the existing building wall and setback line to construct a roof for covered parking. Utilizing existing buildings does not provide the flexibility to relocate the feature to meet the setbacks; this is a special condition of the property. The intent of the roof was to provide customers a dry place to pick up vehicles from the business, and would be a attraction to the business. It will also help the showroom stand out from the other sections of the building, visually directing customers on where to enter the business. If the roof overhang is not installed, there is potential to not attract or retain as many customers. This would be a unnecessary hardship on the operations of the business. The feature will provide many benefits to the business owner and their customers, while not having any negative or detrimental impact on the public or surrounding properties.



200 foot Abutters List Report

Keene, NH
August 17, 2021

Subject Properties:

Parcel Number:	115-019-000	Mailing Address:	AMERCO REAL ESTATE COMPANY
CAMA Number:	115-019-000-000-000		2727 NORTH CENTRAL AVE.
Property Address:	0 KRIF RD.		PHOENIX, AZ 85004

Parcel Number:	115-020-000	Mailing Address:	AMERCO REAL ESTATE COMPANY
CAMA Number:	115-020-000-000-000		2727 NORTH CENTRAL AVE.
Property Address:	472 WINCHESTER ST.		PHOENIX, AZ 85004

Abutters:

Parcel Number:	115-007-000	Mailing Address:	LEGERE EMILE J. REV. TRUST
CAMA Number:	115-007-000-000-000		PO BOX 565
Property Address:	460 WINCHESTER ST.		KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number:	115-018-000	Mailing Address:	DOUGLAS COMPANY INC
CAMA Number:	115-018-000-000-000		PO BOX D
Property Address:	69 KRIF RD.		KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number:	115-019-000	Mailing Address:	AMERCO REAL ESTATE COMPANY
CAMA Number:	115-019-000-000-000		2727 NORTH CENTRAL AVE.
Property Address:	0 KRIF RD.		PHOENIX, AZ 85004

Parcel Number:	115-020-000	Mailing Address:	AMERCO REAL ESTATE COMPANY
CAMA Number:	115-020-000-000-000		2727 NORTH CENTRAL AVE.
Property Address:	472 WINCHESTER ST.		PHOENIX, AZ 85004

Parcel Number:	115-021-000	Mailing Address:	HAMSHAW LUMBER INC.
CAMA Number:	115-021-000-000-000		3 BRADCO ST.
Property Address:	502 WINCHESTER ST.		KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number:	115-022-000	Mailing Address:	508 WINCHESTER STREET REALTY TRUST
CAMA Number:	115-022-000-000-000		ROBERT D. SULLIVAN TRUSTEE 41
Property Address:	508 WINCHESTER ST.		ACCORD PARK DR.
			NORWELL, MA 02061

Parcel Number:	115-023-000	Mailing Address:	KIRITSY LLC
CAMA Number:	115-023-000-000-000		73 TUCKER RIDGE CT.
Property Address:	471 WINCHESTER ST.		HILTON HEAD ISLAND, SC 29926-2770

Parcel Number:	115-024-000	Mailing Address:	VFW POST 799
CAMA Number:	115-024-000-000-000		459 WINCHESTER ST.
Property Address:	459 WINCHESTER ST.		KEENE, NH 03431



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8/17/2021

Page 1 of 2



200 foot Abutters List Report

Keene, NH
August 17, 2021

Parcel Number: 115-025-000
CAMA Number: 115-025-000-000-000
Property Address: 455 WINCHESTER ST.

Mailing Address: BARNES DONALD E.
455 CHAPMAN RD.
KEENE, NH 03431-4379

Parcel Number: 116-007-000
CAMA Number: 116-007-000-000-000
Property Address: 501 WINCHESTER ST.

Mailing Address: HAMSHAW LUMBER INC
PO BOX 725
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 116-008-000
CAMA Number: 116-008-000-000-000
Property Address: 497 WINCHESTER ST.

Mailing Address: HAMSHAW LUMBER INC
PO BOX 725
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 118-008-000
CAMA Number: 118-008-000-000-000
Property Address: 512 WINCHESTER ST.

Mailing Address: DITULLIO DENNIS D. DITULLIO LAURA J.
10 COBB ST.
KEENE, NH 03431



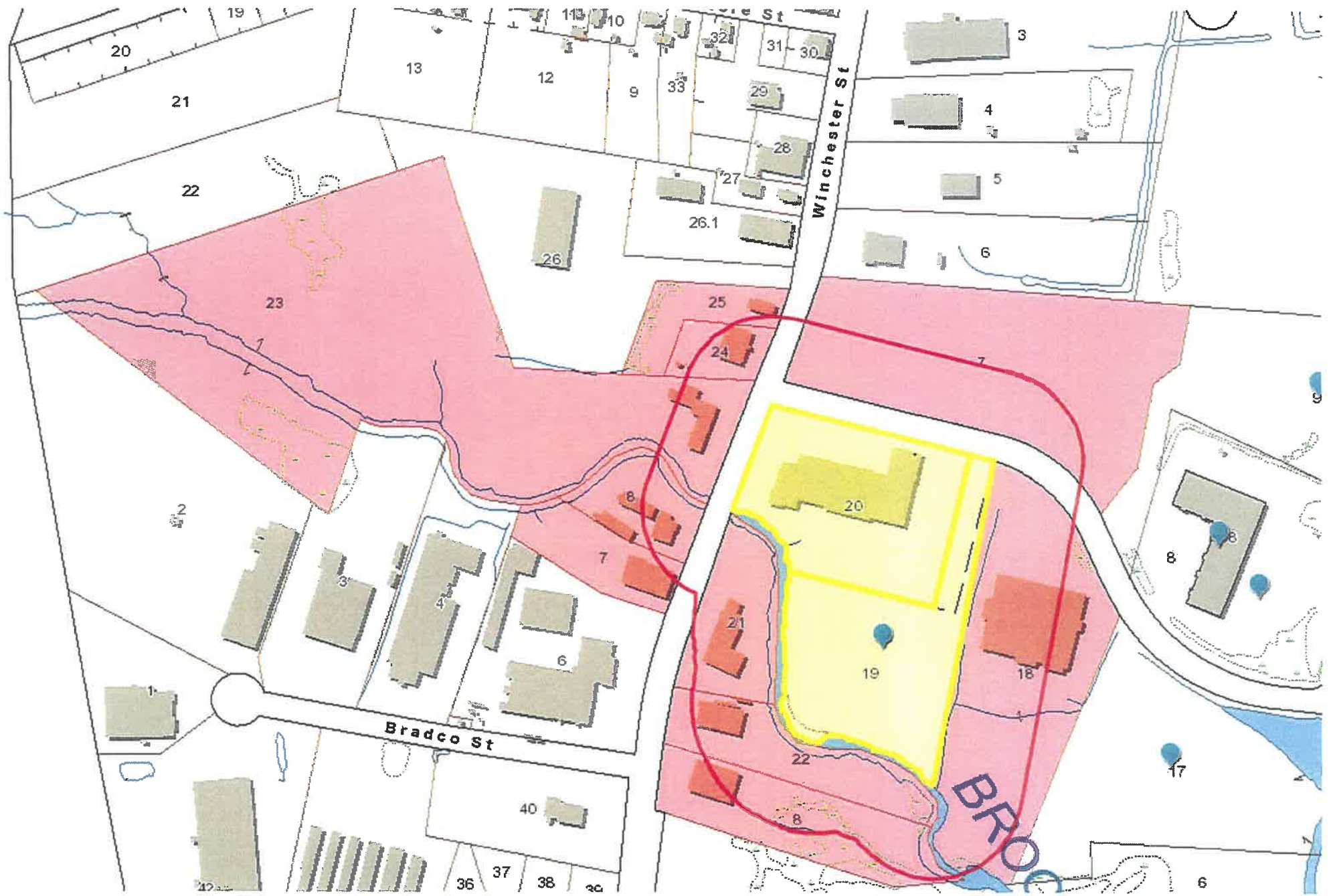
www.cai-tech.com

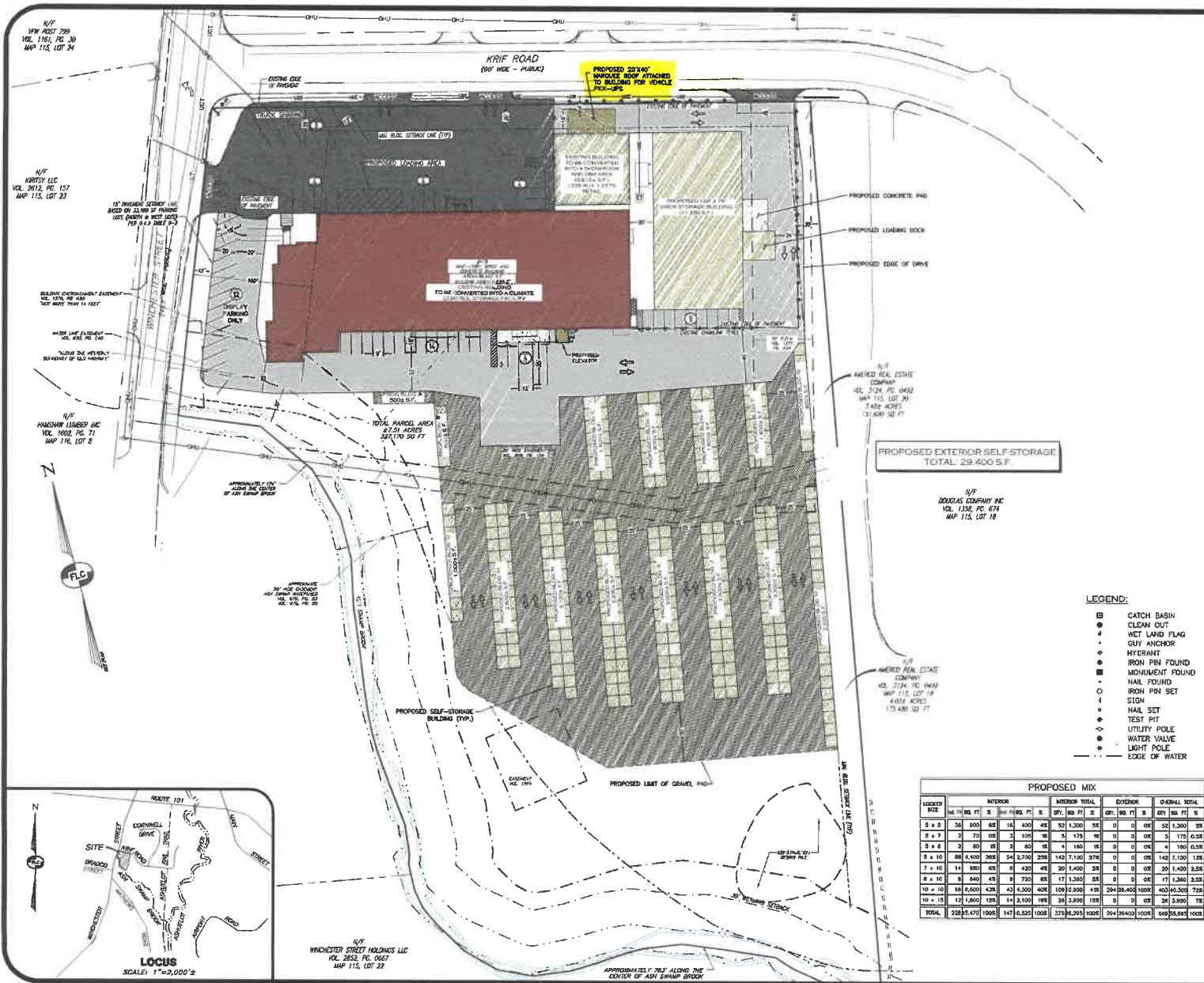
8/17/2021

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Page 2 of 2

Abutters List Report - Keene, NH





- NOTES:**
1. THE OWNER OF RECORD FOR TAX MAP 115 LOT 19 AND LOT 20 IS AMERCO REAL ESTATE COMPANY. ESDS REFERENCE IS VOL. 3124 PAGE 0402 RECORDED IN THE C.L.R.S. FOR BOTH LOTS.
 2. THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN IS TO SHOW A PROPOSED U-HAUL MOVING AND STORAGE FACILITY WITH ASSOCIATED SITE IMPROVEMENTS.
 3. THE TOTAL AREA OF TAX MAP PARCELS 115-19 IS 4.036 ACRES OR 175,440 SQ.FT. WITH 443.91 FT. OF FRONTAGE ALONG KRIF ROAD & 263.55 FT. OF FRONTAGE ALONG WINCHESTER STREET AND THE TOTAL AREA OF TAX MAP PARCELS 115-20 IS 3.489 ACRES OR 151,690 SQ.FT. WITH 300.00 FT. OF FRONTAGE ALONG KRIF ROAD PER THE REFERENCE PLAN CITED HEREIN.
 4. THE SUBJECT PARCELS ARE KNOWN AS CITY OF KEENE TAX MAP 115, LOTS 19 & 20 AND ARE APPROXIMATELY 3.64 & 3.54 ACRES IN SIZE RESPECTIVELY.
 5. ZONING FOR BOTH PARCELS IS COMMERCIAL LIMITED
 - FRONTAGE = 100 FT.
 - FRONT SETBACK = 100 FT.
 - REAR SETBACK = 20 FT.
 - SIDE SETBACK = 20 FT.
 - EXISTING BUILDINGS = 34,303 SF; PROPOSED BUILDINGS = 75,713 SF
 - MAXIMUM IMPERVABLE COVERAGE (INCLUDING STRUCTURES) = 70% (EXISTING IMP = 45,523 SF (26.5%); PROPOSED IMP = 110,841 SF (63.5%))
 - MINIMUM GREENSPACE = 30% (EXISTING GREEN=73.6; PROPOSED GREEN = 34.4)
 - HEIGHT LIMIT = 35 FT. (2-STORIES). [PROPOSED BLDG=35', TWO-STORY]
 6. THE SURFACE FEATURES SHOWN WERE DEVELOPED ENTIRELY FROM THE REFERENCE PLANS CITED HEREIN.
 7. THE LOTS LIE WITHIN THE BOUNDARY OF THE 100 YEAR FLOOD HAZARD PER FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP FOR THE CITY OF KEENE, CHESBIRE COUNTY, EDGEMOUNT 330003, PARCEL NUMBER 330003000000, DATED MAY 23, 2005. BASED ON THIS MAP, THE ESTIMATED ELEVATION OF THE 100 YEAR FLOOD AT THIS LOCATION IS 471.2 FT.

PARKING - BASED ON NEW CODE SEPTEMBER 1, 2021

RETA = 1 SP / 240 SF OF GFA
 2,375 SF / 250 SF = 9.5 SPACES
 SELF-STORAGE = 1 SP/2,000SF
 INTERIOR = 20,265/2000 = 10.1 SPACES
 EXTERIOR = 29,400/2000 = 14.7 SPACES
 WAREHOUSE = 1 SP / 2,000 SF OF GFA
 11,250 SF / 2,000 SF = 5.6 SPACES REQUIRED
 1,335 SF/2,000 SF = 0.67 SPACES
 TOTAL REQUIRED: 36 SPACES
 TOTAL PROVIDED: 37 SPACES**

* EXTERIOR SELF-STORAGE IS ALLOWED TO PARK IN FRONT OF THEIR UNITS
 ** THE 12 DISPLAY SPACES ARE INCLUDED IN THE TOTAL PARKING COUNT.

- REFERENCE PLANS:**
1. EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PRELIMINARY SURVEY PERFORMED FOR - GRAVING DISTRIBUTORS - 472 WINCHESTER STREET - KEENE, N.H. 03411 - OF LAND LOCATED IN THE CITY OF KEENE-COUNTY OF CHESBIRE-STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE. SCALE: 1"=30' AND DATED APRIL 7, 1989 BY C.T. MALE ASSOCIATES, P.C.
 2. 'EXISTING PLAN', SCALE: 1"=50' AND DATED OCTOBER 20, 2017 BY BRKSTONE LAND USE CONSULTANTS.

GRAPHIC SCALES

40' 20' 0 40' 60' 120'

IMPERIAL 1"=40'

LEGEND:

- CATCH BASIN
- CLEAN OUT
- ▲ WET LAND FLAG
- CITY ANCHOR
- ◆ HYDRANT
- IRON PIN FOUND
- MONUMENT FOUND
- NAIL FOUND
- IRON PIN SET
- SIGN
- NAIL SET
- TEST PIT
- UTILITY POLE
- WATER VALVE
- LIGHT POLE
- EDGE OF WATER

U-HAUL OF SOUTH KEENE - CONCEPT PLAN
TAX MAP 115 LOTS 19 & 20
472 WINCHESTER STREET
KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

PREPARED FOR:
AMERCO REAL ESTATE COMPANY
 490 MONTGOMERY STREET, CHICOPEE, MA 01030

SCALE: 1" = 40' AUGUST 23, 2021

Surveying + Engineering + Land Planning + Permitting + Septic Designs



214 Elm Street, Milford, NH 03055
 Phone: (603) 675-5456 Fax: (603) 413-5456
 www.FieldstoneLandConsultants.com

FILE: 22501006.dwg PROJ. NO.: 2250.00 SHEET: 01-1 PAGE NO.: 1 OF 1

PROPOSED MIX

LOCKER SIZE	INTERIOR				EXTERIOR				OVERALL TOTAL						
	NO.	AREA (SQ. FT.)	SP.	AREA (SQ. FT.)	NO.	AREA (SQ. FT.)	SP.	AREA (SQ. FT.)	NO.	AREA (SQ. FT.)	SP.	AREA (SQ. FT.)			
5 x 8	36	800	68	16	400	48	52	1,300	38	0	0	52	1,300	28	
5 x 7	2	70	68	3	80	36	5	175	16	0	0	3	175	0.25	
5 x 8	2	80	68	2	80	36	4	160	12	0	0	4	160	0.25	
5 x 10	36	4,800	368	54	5,700	256	142	7,100	276	0	0	142	7,100	1.25	
7 x 10	14	980	68	0	420	48	30	1,400	38	0	0	30	1,400	0.25	
8 x 10	8	640	48	9	720	68	17	1,260	68	0	0	17	1,260	0.25	
10 x 10	84	6,000	428	43	4,200	408	109	2,800	438	204	20,400	1008	403	10,300	7.25
10 x 15	12	1,800	128	14	2,100	198	38	3,900	128	0	0	38	3,900	0.75	
TOTAL	228	2,470	1008	147	6,225	1008	204	26,400	1008	204	20,400	1008	669	26,400	1008

N/F
VFW POST 799
VOL. 1161, PG. 30
MAP 115, LOT 24

N/F
KRITSY LLC
VOL. 2612, PG. 157
MAP 115, LOT 23

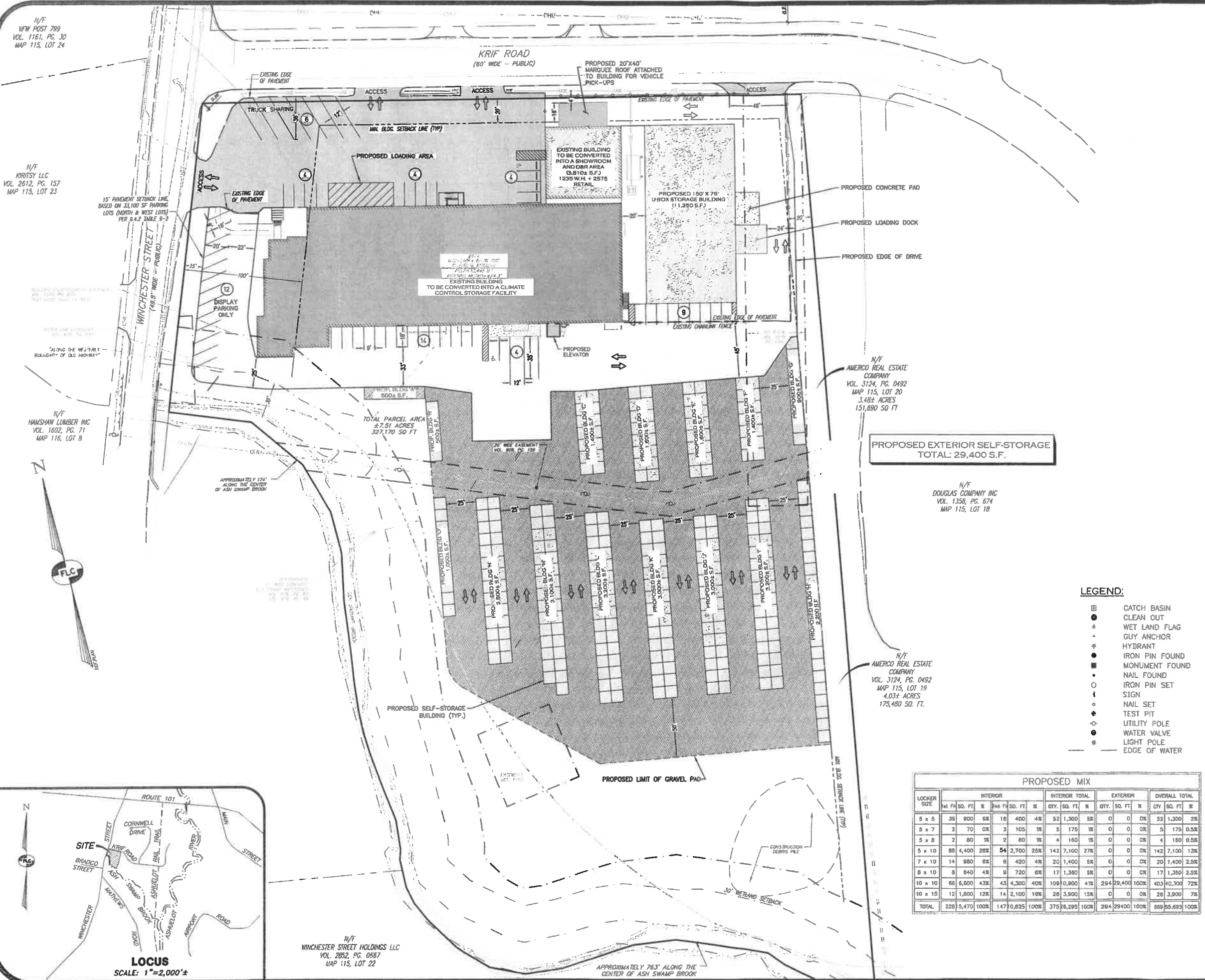
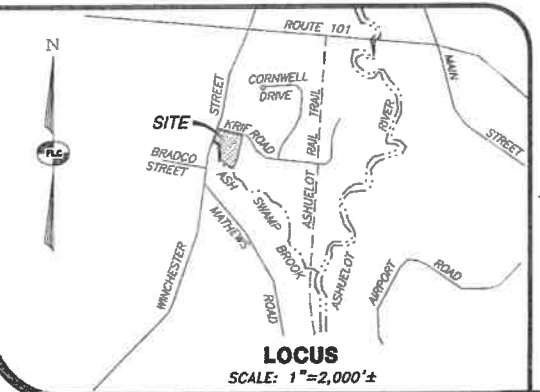
N/F
HAINSHAW LUMBER INC
VOL. 1602, PG. 71
MAP 116, LOT 8

N/F
AMERCO REAL ESTATE
COMPANY
VOL. 3124, PG. 0492
MAP 115, LOT 20
3.48± ACRES
151,690 SQ FT

N/F
DOUGLAS COMPANY INC
VOL. 1358, PG. 674
MAP 115, LOT 18

N/F
AMERCO REAL ESTATE
COMPANY
VOL. 3124, PG. 0492
MAP 115, LOT 19
4.03± ACRES
175,480 SQ. FT.

N/F
WINCHESTER STREET HOLDINGS LLC
VOL. 2852, PG. 0567
MAP 115, LOT 22



**PROPOSED EXTERIOR SELF-STORAGE
TOTAL: 29,400 S.F.**

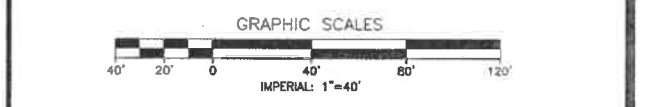
- LEGEND:**
- ⊞ CATCH BASIN
 - ⊙ CLEAN OUT
 - ⊕ WET LAND FLAG
 - ⊖ GUY ANCHOR
 - ⊙ HYDRANT
 - ⊙ IRON PIN FOUND
 - ⊙ MONUMENT FOUND
 - ⊙ NAIL FOUND
 - ⊙ IRON PIN SET
 - ⊙ SIGN
 - ⊙ NAIL SET
 - ⊙ TEST PIT
 - ⊙ UTILITY POLE
 - ⊙ WATER VALVE
 - ⊙ LIGHT POLE
 - ⊙ EDGE OF WATER

LOCKER SIZE	INTERIOR				INTERIOR TOTAL				EXTERIOR				OVERALL TOTAL			
	WT	FS	SO	FT	WT	FS	SO	FT	WT	FS	SO	FT	WT	FS	SO	FT
5 x 5	38	900	6%	16	400	4%	52	1,300	5%	0	0	0%	52	1,300	2%	
5 x 7	2	70	0%	3	105	1%	5	175	1%	0	0	0%	5	175	0.5%	
5 x 8	2	80	1%	2	80	1%	4	160	1%	0	0	0%	4	160	0.5%	
5 x 10	88	4,400	28%	54	2,700	25%	142	7,100	27%	0	0	0%	142	7,100	13%	
7 x 10	14	980	6%	6	420	4%	20	1,400	5%	0	0	0%	20	1,400	2.5%	
8 x 10	8	840	4%	9	720	6%	17	1,360	5%	0	0	0%	17	1,360	2.5%	
10 x 10	66	6,600	43%	43	4,300	40%	109	10,900	41%	294	29,400	100%	403	40,300	72%	
10 x 15	12	1,800	12%	14	2,100	19%	26	3,900	15%	0	0	0%	26	3,900	7%	
TOTAL	228	5,470	100%	147	0,825	100%	375	28,295	100%	294	29,400	100%	669	55,695	100%	

- NOTES:**
- THE OWNER OF RECORD FOR TAX MAP 115 LOT 19 AND LOT 20 IS AMERCO REAL ESTATE COMPANY. DEED REFERENCE IS VOL. 3124 PAGE 0492 RECORDED IN THE C.R.D. FOR BOTH LOTS.
 - THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN IS TO SHOW A PROPOSED U-HAUL MOVING AND STORAGE FACILITY WITH ASSOCIATED SITE IMPROVEMENTS.
 - THE TOTAL AREA OF TAX MAP PARCEL 115-19 IS 4.03± ACRES OR 175,480 SQ.FT. WITH 445.91 FT. OF FRONTAGE ALONG KRIF ROAD & 263.50 FT. OF FRONTAGE ALONG WINCHESTER STREET AND THE TOTAL AREA OF TAX MAP PARCEL 115-20 IS 3.48± ACRES OR 151,690 SQ.FT. WITH 500.00 FT. OF FRONTAGE ALONG KRIF ROAD PER THE REFERENCE PLAN CITED HEREON.
 - THE SUBJECT PARCELS ARE KNOWN AS CITY OF KEENE TAX MAP 115, LOTS 19 & 20 AND ARE APPROXIMATELY 3.84 & 3.54 ACRES IN SIZE RESPECTIVELY.
 - ZONING FOR BOTH PARCELS IS COMMERCE LIMITED
 - FRONTAGE = 100 FT.
 - FRONT SETBACK = 100 FT.
 - REAR SETBACK = 20 FT.
 - SIDE SETBACK = 20 FT.
 - EXISTING BUILDINGS = 34,303 SF, PROPOSED BUILDINGS = 75,753 SF
 - MAXIMUM IMPERMEABLE COVERAGE (INCLUDING STRUCTURES) = 70%
 - EXISTING IMP = 85,623 SF (26.6%), PROPOSED IMP = 210,947 SF (85.6%)
 - MINIMUM GREENSPACE = 30%. (EXISTING GREEN=73.4, PROPOSED GREEN =34.4)
 - HEIGHT LIMIT = 35 FT. (2-STORIES). (PROPOSED BLDG=35', TWO-STORY)
 - THE SURFACE FEATURES SHOWN WERE DEVELOPED ENTIRELY FROM THE REFERENCE PLANS CITED HEREON.
 - THE LOTS LIE WITHIN THE BOUNDARY OF THE 100 YEAR FLOOD HAZARD PER FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP FOR THE CITY OF KEENE, CHESHIRE COUNTY, COMMUNITY 330023, PANEL NUMBER 33005C0266E DATED MAY 23, 2006. BASED ON THIS PANEL THE ESTIMATED ELEVATION OF THE 100 YEAR FLOOD AT THIS LOCATION IS 471.2 FT.

- PARKING: BASED ON NEW CODE SEPTEMBER 1, 2021**
- RETAIL = 1 SF / 250 SF GFA
 - 2,575 SF / 250 SF = 10.3 SPACES
 - SELF-STORAGE = 1 SF/3,000SF
 - INTERIOR = 25,283/3000 = 8.8 SPACES
 - EXTERIOR = 29,400/3000 = 9.8 SPACES*
 - WAREHOUSE = 1 SF / 2,000 SF GFA
 - 11,250 SF / 2,000 SF = 5.6 SPACES REQUIRED
 - 1,235 SF/2,000 SF = 1 SPACE
 - TOTAL REQUIRED: 36 SPACES*
 - TOTAL PROVIDED: 57 SPACES**
- * EXTERIOR SELF-STORAGE IS ALLOWED TO PARK IN FRONT OF THEIR UNITS.
** THE 12 DISPLAY SPACES ARE INCLUDED IN THE TOTAL PARKING COUNT.

- REFERENCE PLANS:**
- "EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PERIMETER SURVEY PERFORMED FOR - CLARKE DISTRIBUTORS - 472 WINCHESTER STREET - KEENE, N.H. 03431 - OF LAND LOCATED IN - CITY OF KEENE-COUNTY OF CHESHIRE-STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE", SCALE:1"=30' AND DATED APRIL 7, 1989 BY C.T. MALE ASSOCIATES, P.C.
 - "EXISTING PLAN", SCALE:1"=50' AND DATED OCTOBER 20, 2017 BY BRICKSTONE LAND USE CONSULTANTS.



REV.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	C/O	DR	CK
H	8/23/21	REVISED PER IN-HOUSE & CITY COMMENTS FOR ZBA		JEN	CEB
G	8/20/21	REVISED PER CITY COMMENTS, CANOPY ATTACHED		JEN	CEB
F	7/20/21	REVISED PER CLIENT'S COMMENTS		DSL	CEB
E	7/2/21	REVISED PER CLIENT'S COMMENTS		CLR	CEB
D	5/26/21	REVISED PER CLIENT'S CONCEPT & CAD DRAWING FILE		DSL	CEB
C	11/7/19	REVISED PER CLIENT'S MARK-UP SKETCHES		DSL	CEB
A	9/4/19	CONCEPTUAL GRADING FOR COMPENSATORY STORAGE COMPS		CLR	CEB
REV.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	C/O	DR	CK

U-HAUL OF SOUTH KEENE - CONCEPT PLAN
TAX MAP 115 LOTS 19 & 20
472 WINCHESTER STREET
KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

PREPARED FOR:
AMERCO REAL ESTATE COMPANY
 499 MONTGOMERY STREET, CHICOPEE, MA 01020

SCALE: 1" = 40' AUGUST 23, 2021

Surveying ♦ Engineering ♦ Land Planning ♦ Permitting ♦ Septic Designs

FIELDSTONE
LAND CONSULTANTS, PLLC

206 Elm Street, Milford, NH 03055
 Phone: (603) 672-5456 Fax: (603) 413-5456
 www.FieldstoneLandConsultants.com

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453 WINCHESTER ST.
ZBA 21-16



Petitioner requests a Variance to permit a motor vehicle rental business where it is not a permitted use per Section 102-632 of the Zoning Ordinance.



City of Keene
New Hampshire

NOTICE OF HEARING

ZBA 21-16

A meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment will be held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 6:30 PM in City Hall Council Chambers, 2nd floor, 3 Washington St, Keene, New Hampshire to consider the following petition. Petitioner, Enterprise Rent-A-Car Company of Boston, LLC, of 10 Navigator Rd., Londonderry, NH, requests a Variance for property located at 453 Winchester St., Keene, owned by 449 and 453 Winchester Street, LLC, of 549 US Highway 1 Bypass, Portsmouth, NH, Tax Map #115-026-001-000-000 that is in the Industrial District. The Petitioner requests a Variance to permit a motor vehicle rental business where it is not a permitted use per Section 102-632 of the Zoning Ordinance.

This application is available for public review in the Community Development Department at City Hall, 3 Washington Street, Keene, NH 03431 between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm. or online at <https://ci.keene.nh.us/zoning-board-adjustment>

Corinne Marcou, Zoning Clerk
Notice issuance date August 27, 2021

APPLICATION FOR APPEAL

Zoning Board of Adjustment
3 Washington Street, Fourth Floor
Keene, New Hampshire 03431
Phone: (603) 352-5440

For Office Use Only:	
Case No.	<u>ZBA21-110</u>
Date Filed	<u>8/20/2021</u>
Received By	<u>CSM</u>
Page	<u>1</u> of <u>17</u>
Reviewed By	_____

The undersigned hereby applies to the City of Keene Zoning Board of Adjustment for an Appeal in accordance with provisions of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated 674:33.

TYPE OF APPEAL - MARK AS MANY AS NECESSARY

- APPEAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION
- APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR ENLARGEMENT OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION
- APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE
- APPLICATION FOR AN EQUITABLE WAIVER OF DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

Name(s) of Applicant(s) Enterprise Rent-A-Car Company of Boston, LLC Phone: 617-593-9537
Address 10 Navigator Road, Londonderry, NH 03053
Name(s) of Owner(s) 449 AND 453 WINCHESTER STREET, LLC
Address 549 US Highway 1 Bypass, Portsmouth, NH 03801
Location of Property 453 Winchester Street

SECTION II - LOT CHARACTERISTICS

Tax Map Parcel Number 115-026-001-000 Zoning District Industrial
Lot Dimensions: Front 112.11' Rear 214.64' Side 381.88' Side 382.44'
Lot Area: Acres 1.41± Square Feet 61,419±
% of Lot Covered by Structures (buildings, garages, pools, decks, etc.): Existing 15.6% Proposed 15.6%
% of Impervious Coverage (structures plus driveways and/or parking areas, etc.): Existing 70% Proposed 70%
Present Use The most recent use was automobile service and repair.
Proposed Use Motor vehicle rental service.

SECTION III - AFFIDAVIT

I hereby certify that I am the owner or the authorized agent of the owner of the property upon which this appeal is sought and that all information provided by me is true under penalty of law.

Charlie Ritchie Date 8/19/2021
(Signature of Owner or Authorized Agent)

Please Print Name Chuck Ritchie

PROPERTY ADDRESS 453 Winchester Street

APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE

- A Variance is requested from Section (s) 102-632 of the Zoning Ordinance to permit:
See attached narrative.

DESCRIBE BRIEFLY YOUR RESPONSE TO EACH VARIANCE CRITERIA:

1. Granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest because:
See attached narrative.

2. If the variance were granted, the spirit of the ordinance would be observed because:
See attached narrative.

3. Granting the variance would do substantial justice because:

See attached narrative.

4. If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be diminished because

See attached narrative.

5. Unnecessary Hardship

A. Owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship because:

i. No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property because:

See attached narrative.

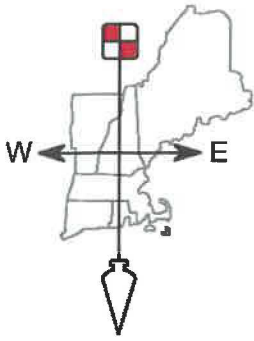
and

ii. The proposed use is a reasonable one because:

See attached narrative.

B. Explain how, if the criteria in subparagraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be reasonably used in strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore necessary to enable a reasonable use of it.

See attached narrative.



FIELDSTONE

Surveying ♦ Engineering
Land Planning ♦ Septic Designs

LAND CONSULTANTS, PLLC

206 Elm Street, Milford, NH 03055 - Phone: 603-672-5456 - Fax: 603-413-5456
www.FieldstoneLandConsultants.com

VARIANCE CRITERIA

(VARIANCE FROM SECTION 102-632)

Tax Map Parcel 115-26-1

453 Winchester Street - Keene, NH

August 16, 2021

Prepared For:

Enterprise Rent-A-Car Company of Boston, LLC

The subject property consists of approximately 1.41 acres of land and has 112' of frontage along Winchester Street. The subject site is developed with a two commercial buildings, 4,000 SF and 5,600 SF and associated site improvements per the reference plan. The property was most recently used as an automobile service and repair shop. Converting this property to a motor vehicle rental use would not require any major changes but requires a variance as car rentals are not listed as a permitted use in the industrial district.

The proposed use for the property is a car rental business with accompanying office for administrative purposes. The conversion will not require any new structures to be built as the current layout for automobile repair is conducive to the maintenance and storage of rental vehicles.

Section 102-632 of the Zoning Ordinance lists the permitted uses within the industrial district. The listed permitted uses does not include motor vehicle rentals. Since it is not a permitted use per Section 102-632 of the Keene Zoning Ordinance we are requesting zoning relief in the form of a variance.

The numbered items below correlate to the questions asked in the City Application for a Variance.

1. Granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest because:
Granting this variance would allow for the productive use of the existing property. It requires similar site improvements as the existing automotive repair shop. This will not be contrary to the public interest as it will provide a service to the public who may be having repairs done to their vehicle at a nearby repair shop. Granting this variance would not be contrary to the public interest as this project will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or threaten the health, safety or general welfare of the public.
2. If the Variance were granted, the spirit of the ordinance would be observed because:
The intent for the industrial district is "to provide for manufacturing, processing, assembling, wholesaling; transportation-oriented activities and related services such as trucking, warehousing, refueling depots. Retail sales and offices are intended to only be

Enterprise Rent-A-Car Company of Boston, LLC
453 Winchester Street – Keene, NH
Variance Application

Page 2 of 3

accessory to the main uses in the district.” The proposal for this site is consistent with the surrounding areas as another car and truck rental was approved two site’s south of the subject parcel. This project will meet all of the dimensional standards and will be in harmony with the neighborhood. A motor vehicle rental business is a key component to transportation orientated businesses, providing transportation for those with vehicles being repaired by nearby mechanic shops. This proposal will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or threaten the health, safety or general welfare of the public. For all of these reasons we believe that granting the variance would observe the spirit of the ordinance.

3. Granting the variance would do substantial justice because:

Granting this variance would allow the land owner to reasonably utilize the property with a use that is compatible with the surrounding uses. Granting this variance would do substantial justice as there would be a clear benefit and gain to the project and my client with no loss to the general public. In other words, a denial of this variance request would be an injustice to my client as there would be no apparent gain to the general public by denying this application.

4. If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be diminished because:

The subject parcel has been fallen into disrepair as it has been vacant for an extended period of time. As the property is already suited for vehicle storage and no major improvements are required, effort can be focused into repairing the buildings on site and returning them to proper condition. A rental business also produces less noise pollution than an auto repair shop. For all of these reasons we do not believe that the conversion of this property to motor vehicle rental service use would have any negative impacts on the value of surrounding properties.

5. Unnecessary Hardship

A. Owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship because:

1. No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purpose of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property because:

The subject property is a 1.41-acre site with existing improvements. The size of the property along with the size and location of the existing improvements are ideal for our client’s proposed business. The structure in the rear of the site has bay doors that can easily be used for preparation of vehicles for future renters and the front building is conducive to the administrative needs. The subject site will allow our client to get their business up and running much quicker than if major construction needed to be done. The proposed enterprise rental company also does lots of work with companies in the area and a closer

Enterprise Rent-A-Car Company of Boston, LLC
453 Winchester Street – Keene, NH
Variance Application

Page 3 of 3

rental location reduces traffic congestion through the city of Keene. For the reasons outlined above, we do not believe that a fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purpose of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property.

2. The proposed use is a reasonable one because:

We believe that the proposed use is a reasonable one for all of the reasons previously stated. The following is an outline of why we believe the proposed use is reasonable:

- Granting this variance would allow for the productive use of the existing property.
- The existing buildings and improvements are conducive to a vehicle rental property without major improvements needing to be done.
- The proposed use as a motor vehicle rental space would be in harmony with the neighborhood.
- The motor vehicle rental use would not be contrary to the public interest as this project will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or threaten the health, safety or general welfare of the public.
- This proposal would in our opinion observe the spirit and intent of the ordinance.
- This project would have no measurable negative impacts on the surroundings or their property values.

For all of the reasons we believe that the proposed use is reasonable.

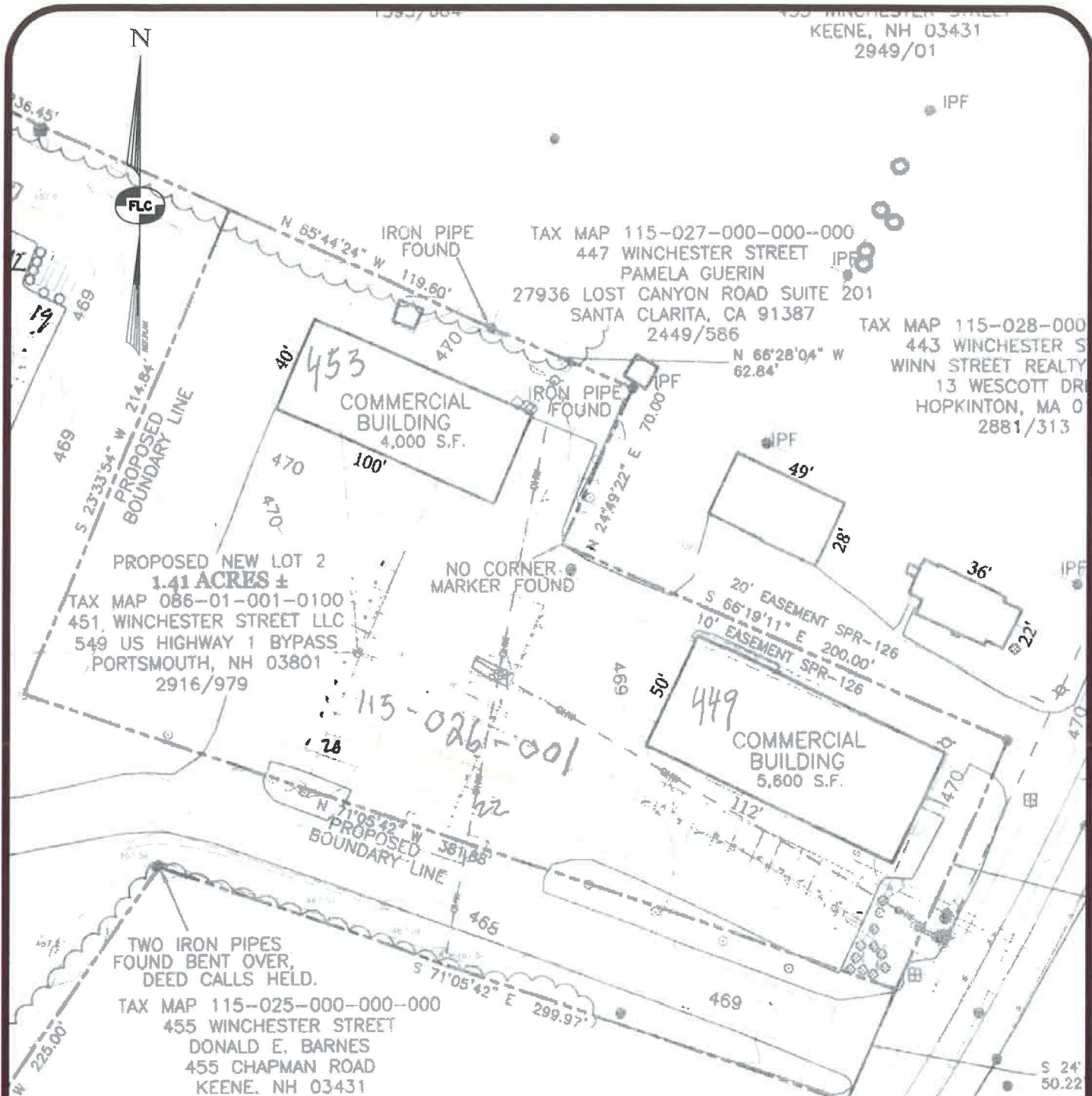
B. Explain how, if the criteria in paragraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be reasonably used in strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore necessary to enable a reasonable use of it:

The subject property is 1.41 acres per the reference plan and is developed with two structures and plenty of paved areas for parking and rental vehicle storage. This is a unique lot as it has two (2) main structures. One structure with bay doors that can fit accommodate vehicles and the other is an office/administrative area. It is uncommon to find a parcel with these conditions that so adequately suit the needs for a rental development. These are all special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area. Due to these conditions we believe this property is reasonably suited for the proposed use. We are thereby requesting a variance from Section 102-632 to enable a motor vehicle rental use on the subject property.

This information was prepared by:
Fieldstone Land Consultants, PLLC



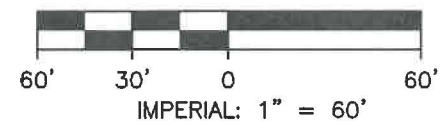
Chuck L. Ritchie, E.I.T.
Project Engineer



PROPOSED NEW LOT 2
1.41 ACRES ±
 TAX MAP 086-01-001-0100
 451, WINCHESTER STREET LLC
 549 US HIGHWAY 1 BYPASS
 PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801
 2916/979

TWO IRON PIPES
 FOUND BENT OVER,
 DEED CALLS HELD.
 TAX MAP 115-025-000-000-000
 455 WINCHESTER STREET
 DONALD E. BARNES
 455 CHAPMAN ROAD
 KEENE, NH 03431

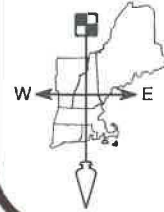
GRAPHIC SCALE



REFERENCE PLAN: IRON PIPE

1. "PROPOSED SUBDIVISION PLAN - PREPARED FOR - 451 WINCHESTER STREET LLC - 451 WINCHESTER STREET - CITY OF KEENE - COUNTY OF CHESHIRE - STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE". SCALE: 1"=50'. DATED FEBRUARY 8, 2019. PREPARED BY DAVID A. MANN SURVEY.

Surveying ♦ Engineering ♦ Land Planning ♦ Permitting ♦ Septic Designs



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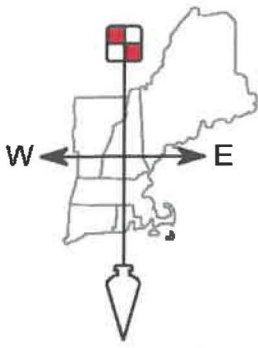
206 Elm Street, Milford NH 03055
 Phone: (603)-672-5456 Fax: (603)-413-5456
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ZONING EXHIBIT PLAN

TAX MAP PARCEL 115-26-1
453 WINCHESTER STREET
KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

SCALE: 1" = 60' AUGUST 18, 2021

FILE: 3037EH00.dwg	PROJ. NO. 3037.00	SHEET NO. 1 OF 1
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Date: 8/17/21
FLC#3037.00 / CLR

List of Abutters
Tax Map 115 Lot Number 26-1
Keene, New Hampshire

Map 115 Lot 4 & 5
434-440 Winchester, LLC
P.O. Box 684
Keene, NH 03431

Map 115 Lot 6
Dead River Company
82 Running Hill Road, Suite 400
South Portland, ME, 04106-3218

Map 115 Lot 7
Emile J. Legere Rev. Trust
P.O. Box 565
Keene, NH 03431

Map 115 Lot 24
VFW Post 799
459 Winchester Street
Keene, NH 03431

Map 115 Lot 25
Donald E. Barnes
455 Chapman Road
Keene, NH 03431-4379

Map 115 Lot 26
451 Winchester Street, LLC
549 US HWY. 1 Bypass
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Map 115 Lot 27
Pamela Guerin
27936 Lost Canyon Rd. Suite 201
Santa Clarita, CA 91387

Map 115 Lot 28
Winn St. Realty Trust
443 Winchester Street
Keene, NH 03431

Map 115 Lot 29
MOC76 Realty Co. LLC
435 Winchester
Keene, NH 03431-4379

Map 115 Lot 33
Gregory A. & Laura H. Niemela
12 Wetmore Street
Keene, NH 03431

Map 116 Lot 9
Markus S. & Evelyn W. Konig
18 Wetmore Street
Keene, NH 03431

Map 116 Lot 12
Fred D. & Judith A. Lower
77 Hallwood Drive
Surry, NH 03431

Owner
Map 115 Lot 26-1
449 & 453 Winchester Street
549 U.S. HWY. 1 Bypass
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Engineer:
Fieldstone Land Consultants, PLLC
206 Elm Street
Milford, NH 03055

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27-29 CENTER ST. ZBA 21-17



Petitioner requests a Variance to permit a residential use with only 3,049.2 sq. ft. where 13,400 sq. ft. is required per Section 102-791 of the Zoning Ordinance.



City of Keene
New Hampshire

NOTICE OF HEARING

ZBA 21-17

A meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment will be held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 6:30 PM in City Hall Council Chambers, 2nd floor, 3 Washington St, Keene, New Hampshire to consider the following petition. Petitioner, Brian and Amalia Harmon of 184 Colby Rd., Danville, NH, request a Variance for property located at 27-29 Center St., Tax Map #568-016-000-000-000 that is in the Office District. The Petitioner requests a variance for a residential use of this property with only 3,049.2 sq. ft. rather than the required 13,400 sq. ft. per Section 102-791 of the Zoning Code.

This application is available for public review in the Community Development Department at City Hall, 3 Washington Street, Keene, NH 03431 between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm. or online at <https://ci.keene.nh.us/zoning-board-adjustment>

Corinne Marcou

Corinne Marcou, Zoning Clerk

Notice issuance date August 27, 2021



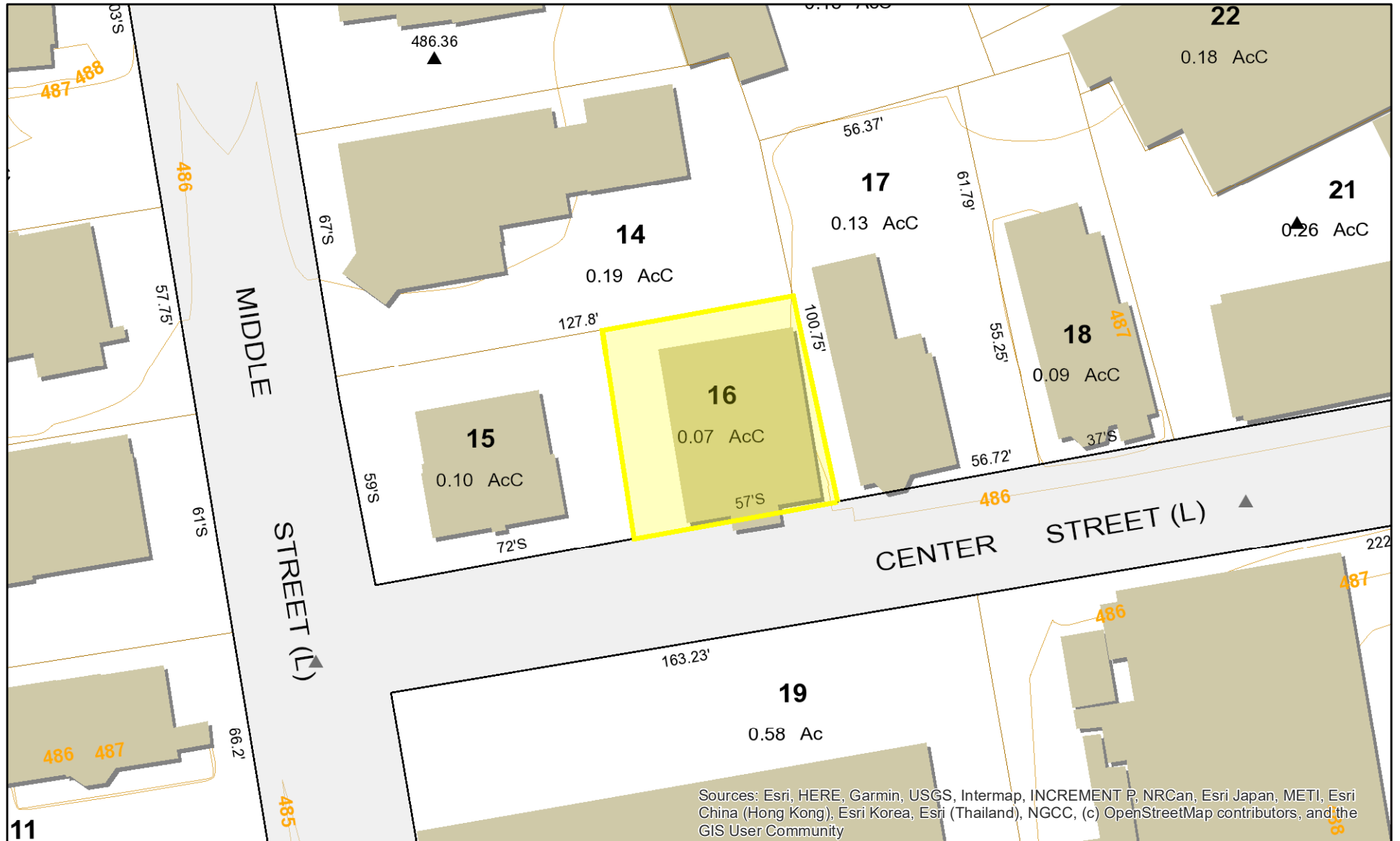
Keene, NH



August 26, 2021

1 inch = 38 Feet

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APPLICATION FOR APPEAL

Zoning Board of Adjustment
3 Washington Street, Fourth Floor
Keene, New Hampshire 03431
Phone: (603) 352-5440

For Office Use Only:	
Case No.	<u>ZBA 21-17</u>
Date Filed	<u>8/23/2021</u>
Received By	<u>CM</u>
Page	<u>1</u> of <u>9</u>
Reviewed By	_____

The undersigned hereby applies to the City of Keene Zoning Board of Adjustment for an Appeal in accordance with provisions of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated 674:33.

TYPE OF APPEAL - MARK AS MANY AS NECESSARY

- APPEAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION
- APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR ENLARGEMENT OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION
- APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE
- APPLICATION FOR AN EQUITABLE WAIVER OF DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

Name(s) of Applicant(s) BRIAN + AMALIA HARMON Phone: 603 216 7348 / 617 201 6008
Address 184 COLBY RD. DANVILLE, NH
Name(s) of Owner(s) BRIAN + AMALIA HARMON
Address SAME
Location of Property 27-29 CENTER ST.

SECTION II - LOT CHARACTERISTICS

Tax Map Parcel Number 568-016-000 Zoning District OFFICE
Lot Dimensions: Front 57 Rear 54.1 Side 59 Side 58.1
Lot Area: Acres .07 Square Feet 3,049.2
% of Lot Covered by Structures (buildings, garages, pools, decks, etc.): Existing 70 Proposed N/A
% of Impervious Coverage (structures plus driveways and/or parking areas, etc.): Existing 90 Proposed N/A
Present Use OFFICES
Proposed Use RESIDENTIAL

SECTION III - AFFIDAVIT

I hereby certify that I am the owner or the authorized agent of the owner of the property upon which this appeal is sought and that all information provided by me is true under penalty of law.

[Signature] Date 8-20-2021
(Signature of Owner or Authorized Agent)

Please Print Name BRIAN HARMON and Amalia L. Harmon

From: [Amy Harmon](#)
To: [Corinne Marcou](#)
Subject: Re: 27-29 Center St
Date: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 1:51:40 PM

Correction * rather than the additional 13400 Sq feet required.

On Wed, Aug 25, 2021, 1:49 PM Amy Harmon <amalia1529@gmail.com> wrote:

Our request is to allow a residential use of this property with only 3049.2 square feet rather than 13400 sqft. Its use as office space is no longer needed by this community but housing is.

Thank you.

PROPERTY ADDRESS 27-29 Center St, Keene, NH

APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE

- A Variance is requested from Section (s) 102-791 of the Zoning Ordinance to permit:
Change of use from office space to residential space.

DESCRIBE BRIEFLY YOUR RESPONSE TO EACH VARIANCE CRITERIA:

- Granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest because:

Keene is currently experiencing a housing shortage crisis. This is not a public building. The variance ^{request} is to change ~~the~~ to residential - needed by this community. The essential character of the neighborhood would not be altered. There is a residential building immediately ^{to the right and behind this building.}

- If the variance were granted, the spirit of the ordinance would be observed because:

The spirit of the ordinance would be observed because the proposed construction/change of use of this property is necessary ~~for~~ for reasonable use of the property.

Keene State Geography conducted an Analysis of Keene's housing needs please read their "critical analysis of the millennial and student housing Markets in Keene" titled "There's No Place Like Home" Planner Tara Kessler assisted and also former housing inspector Frank Richter.

- Granting the variance would do substantial justice because:

Granting the variance would do substantial justice because according to the above study/analysis (and many current articles on the matter) this property would then assist to revitalize the area by providing more housing for young professionals. June 3rd 2021 article Casey Mc Dermott NH Public radio reported "... apartment vacancy rates are low," "local businesses struggling to fund places for their employees to live, including the hospital, which is struggling to recruit more specialists to meet community needs."

- If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be diminished

because

It is a gorgeous building which can be maintained, restored to its natural beauty. Cities that successfully attract and maintain young professionals thrive and that value is self evident. (page 7 there's no place like home) This property as a residential property will only increase the surrounding properties and improve the security and longevity of Keene's economy.

5. Unnecessary Hardship

A. Owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship because:

i. No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property because:

The building does not impact the general public, It is an office space (not currently needed in this space - many professionals able to work from home via internet) and in the midst of other residential homes,

and

ii. The proposed use is a reasonable one because:

The proposed use is reasonable because "NH housing shortage won't be going away soon" Local News June 3, 2021 Casey Mc Dermott NH Public Radio reported "New Hampshire housing landscape is pretty brutal" - same article "...apartment vacancy rates are low and the pandemic has exacerbated many aspects of a pre-existing housing crisis"
 article 11/1/2020 quote from ^{sentinel} source

B. Explain how, if the criteria in subparagraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be reasonably used in strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore necessary to enable a reasonable use of it.

If the criteria in subpara A are not established (if change of use is not granted an unnecessary hardship because the property is currently used for office space - due to Covid and the current world situation there is no use for it as office space, there fore no one will rent the space and we cannot maintain an empty building, We have requested the change of use to conform to the need of the city and the community which is more housing to attract young professionals to live and help the economy of Keene to thrive.

From: [Amy Harmon](#)
To: [Corinne Marcou](#)
Subject: 27-29 Center St
Date: Monday, August 23, 2021 12:16:20 PM
Attachments: [Millennials Student Housing part 1.pdf](#)

Hi, I was more technical with our application and wanted to add a personal side of it.... please add this to our variance application.

In the fall of 2018 our son was accepted to Keene State College. We didn't know anything about the college or the town. Quickly we fell in love with the area, the ride is so beautiful, truly breathtaking, the adorable downtown the shops and restaurants. Since then we purchased this building, which is solid in character and charm. At the time there were a few renters in the building but covid and internet use made them able to conduct their businesses from home.

They one by one moved out.

If anyone takes a walk downtown you will see this is happening with many office spaces, today we counted seven. We need to adapt to what the city needs which is housing, a place to live and work and play. A place to reinvest into our communities. Much of this information is detailed on the analysis of housing in Keene titled "There's no place like home" written by Mark Landolina, Kevin Salina, Kathryn Van Veen (attached). Many other articles are available online as well, like June 3, 2021 Casey McDermott of NH public radio reporting: "New Hampshire 's housing landscape is pretty brutal"

We attended our first food festival in Keene center this summer. What a blast! The hometown feel, the amazing food, the hot pepper eating contest was such a hoot. We sat at the center street house for a while and I truly felt the magic of this little town, I said to Brian "I really like it here, I can see us living here."

While we may not be ready to move on from our jobs immediately (unless you know of a great outpatient accredited Cardiology office looking for a hardworking Registered Cardiac Sonographer with 30+ years experience with amazing references?) it is definitely in our future plans.

Thank you, Amalia Harmon





https://www.sentinelsource.com/news/local/census-cheshire-county-at-a-loss/article_8a7045fc-8d96-5ba6-8857-99022cdeb978.html

TOP STORY

Census: Cheshire County at a loss

By Paul Cuno-Booth Contributing Writer

Aug 21, 2021

Cheshire County population, 1900-2020

1900	31,321
1910	30,659
1920	30,975
1930	33,685
1940	34,953
1950	38,811
1960	43,342
1970	52,364
1980	62,116
1990	70,121
2000	73,811
2010	77,117
2020	76,458

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The U.S. population grew 7.4 percent between 2010 and 2020. New Hampshire's increased by 4.6 percent.

Cheshire County's shrunk.

According to census results released this month, the county was one of three in New Hampshire — along with Sullivan and Coos — to lose population in the past decade. Cheshire County’s population fell by 659 people to 76,458, a decline of 0.9 percent.



“Historically, Cheshire County and Keene and the surrounding area have had pretty flat population growth, so it’s not really that surprising that that trend is continuing,” said Keene Mayor George S. Hansel.

Still, he said it’s a concern. “In order to be an economically vibrant and relevant area, you need to have people here to fill the jobs, you need to have people here to exchange ideas and come up with innovative things. We are in dramatic competition with a lot of places for people.”

Statewide, most of New Hampshire’s population gain — 89 percent — came from people moving from out of state, according to Kenneth Johnson, a demographer at the University of New Hampshire. Over the decade, the state had just 6,500 more births than deaths, and deaths exceeded births in each of the past four years.

Johnson noted that the more urbanized counties of Hillsborough, Rockingham and Strafford grew as a result of both “natural increase” — in which births exceed deaths — and migration.

By contrast, Cheshire and Sullivan counties experienced both natural decrease and more people leaving than moving in. Sullivan County’s population declined 1.6 percent, to 43,063.

Coos County did gain residents through migration, but not enough to make up for its large natural decrease — overall, its population declined more than 5 percent, to 31,268 residents.

The past decade was the first time Cheshire County's population fell since a slight dip between 1900 and 1910. The county essentially doubled between 1950 and 2010, from about 39,000 residents to more than 77,000.

The U.S. as a whole has a falling birth rate, and more and more counties nationally are starting to see natural decrease, Johnson said. New Hampshire also has an aging population, which means both a higher risk of mortality and fewer women of child-bearing age.

Johnson said migration and natural increase are often related, as people in their late teens and 20s are most likely to move around.

"If an area loses its young adult population, and it does so consistently over a long period of time — I'm talking about decades — it eventually is going to be left with a population that's, number one, older, number two, doesn't have as many people in their 20s and 30s, when most of the children are produced," he said. "And so those things together can eventually lead to natural decline."

Phil Suter, president and CEO of the Greater Keene and Peterborough Chamber, said population decline can have a "domino effect," from lower enrollment in schools to companies not having enough workers, or not locating here in the first place.

The Monadnock Region has a lot to attract newcomers in terms of economic opportunity and quality of life, said Suter, who retires at the end of the month. "What the region hasn't done a particularly good job of over the years is telling people about that."

The chamber is working on a multi-year effort to brand and market the region to visitors, students, workers and young families.

"We're not gonna get everybody who wakes up one day and says, 'I've had enough of New York,' " Suter said. "They're not all gonna move here. But as they're looking at various options, we want to make sure we're one of the options."

Todd Horner, senior planner at the Southwest Region Planning Commission, noted that Cheshire County did have one source of growth in the past decade — immigrants from outside the U.S.

International migration led to a net gain of 565 people in Cheshire County from 2010 to 2019, according to the Census Bureau's annual population estimates. That just wasn't enough to offset the net loss of about 1,200 from domestic migration.

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While the aging population is an issue, Horner said Cheshire County is, at least, not seeing the dramatic population declines that some places are.

“The positive spin would be, Cheshire County is a rural area that has demonstrated a greater level of resilience to that overarching trend than other rural areas,” he said.

The recently released census data, which measure the population as of April 1, 2020, also don’t account for 16 months of changes during the pandemic, when remote work spread and some Americans fled cities for more rural settings. U.S. Postal Service change-of-address data show migration to Cheshire County increased in 2020 compared to 2019, Horner said, though it’s unclear if that trend will hold over the long term.

Creating a “greater diversity of housing options” is key to growth, Horner said. “If we want more people to move to the region, we need to find a place for them to live.”

Hansel agrees.

“I have a lot of confidence in Keene and the surrounding area as being an attractive place to live for a lot of people,” he said. “We have great schools, we have excellent job opportunities and amazing recreational opportunities. But we need to create paths forward for people, and that involves building new housing.”

Hansel is a member of the N.H. Council on Housing Stability, which has set a goal of 13,500 new housing units statewide by 2024. According to the council’s strategic plan, the state suffers from a shortage of both affordable housing and housing more generally, causing rents to rise much faster than renter incomes.



Mayor George Hansel opens zoning maps of downtown Keene, in his office at City Hall on Friday. Hansel says the region must build more housing if it wants to grow.

Recently released census data show Cheshire County's population fell between 2010 and 2020.

Hannah Schroeder / Sentinel Staff

White Mountains, which saw substantial natural decrease but more than enough in-migration to make up for it.

“There are probably 300 counties in the United States like Carroll which are recreational or amenity counties which draw lots of retirees, and also people with second homes and so forth who will eventually come and settle there,” Johnson said.

Rural counties also do well when they're close to a large metro area, he said.

Finally, it helps to have at least a “micropolitan” community — a town of 10,000 to 50,000. Especially for counties that are farther from big cities, a large town can provide some of the same amenities, like a hospital or shopping center.

Johnson said he thinks of rural counties in three categories. Some are likely to do well because of their natural amenities or proximity to a big city. Others, like remote farm counties, are likely to struggle.

“Then there's sort of a middle group of counties where they have some advantages, and if the local organizations and the local businesses can work together as a regional force, it may be that that makes a difference,” he said.

Hansel said he wants to bring local institutions and other municipalities together in the coming months to work toward meeting the Monadnock Region's housing needs.

“We do need to grow,” he said. “We have hundreds of jobs available and unfilled in the greater Keene area.”

Johnson said a few different characteristics can help a rural area keep its population up.

Places that are attractive retirement or recreation destinations tend to draw more migration. One example is Carroll County, stretching from Lake Winnepesaukee to the

Cheshire County does have some things going for it, he said, including a central hub in Keene, a higher-education sector and not being too remote.

“It’s one of those counties where it could go either way,” he said. “I don’t think it’s gonna lose half of its population [as] some of the Great Plains counties have. But you know, strong local organizations working together can make a difference in places.”

Anika CLARK

There's No Place Like Home

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE MILLENNIAL AND
STUDENT HOUSING MARKETS IN KEENE



Department of
Geography

Faculty Mentor:
Dr. Christopher Cusack

Authors

Mark Landolina

Kevin Salina

Kathryn Van Veen

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our group would like to express our deepest appreciation for those who have committed tireless efforts in assisting us in this endeavor. We are especially indebted to our Professor, Dr. Christopher Cusack, whose dedication to our project has inspired us and helped us grow as geographers and students. In addition, it gives us great pleasure to acknowledge the support of the following individuals:

- Nikki Sauber, President of the *Keene Young Professionals Network*
- Tara Kessler, Planner for the *City of Keene*
- Robin Picard, Coordinator of Student and Community Relations for *Keene State College*
- Frank Richter, Housing Inspector for the *City of Keene*, Landlord
- Will Schoefmann, GIS Technician for the *City of Keene*
- Tony Marcotte, Senior Project Manager for *MDP Development, LLC*
- Attendees of our Millennials focus group:
 - Kasha Bell
 - Mari Brunner
 - Drew Bryenton
 - Mike Giacomo
 - George Hansel
 - Andrew Madison
 - Meghan Spaulding
 - Jahdiel Torres-Cabá
 - Nikki Sauber
- Faculty who enabled distribution of student survey in their classes:
 - Dr. Steve Bill, Department of Geology
 - Dr. Dudley Blossom, Department of Management
 - Dr. Michael Hanrahan, Department of Computer Science
 - Dr. William Hofmann, Department of Management
- The Department of Geography
- Our fellow classmates

ABSTRACT

The City of Keene, New Hampshire is currently facing a demographic shift. A stagnation in the Millennial (ages 18-35) population, and a recent decline in Keene State College student enrollment, is impacting the local economy. Housing vacancies in the student housing market, coupled with a housing market that does not necessarily meet the needs of young professionals is having a potentially detrimental impact on neighborhoods and overall socioeconomics of Keene. The city's future depends in part, on the size, composition, and distribution of young professionals and the strength of the student housing market. The purpose of our project is to provide geographic analysis of housing trends and neighborhood revitalization in Keene, with a focus on both off-campus student housing and millennial housing. This project will use geographic analysis to investigate recent changes in housing trends and analyze possible neighborhood revitalization solutions.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Mark Landolina grew up in Tolland, Connecticut, and is now a Senior at Keene State College with a double major in Geography and Environmental Studies. Mark is currently a Policy and Technology Intern at Keene Housing, and a former Ecological Survey Intern at the Harris Center in Hancock, New Hampshire. After graduation, he hopes to pursue a career as an urban or environmental planner, or as a renewable energy scientist specializing in Geographic Information Systems.

Kathryn Van Veen is from Brookline, New Hampshire, and is a Senior who is graduating with degrees in Secondary Education and Geography. Geography is her passion and she is pursuing graduate study in international political economy, immigration, and genocide and conflict. Kathryn has always been interested in geography and social studies as she is planning on researching in Asia-Pacific.



Kevin Salina is a Keene State Senior double majoring in Geography and Business Management. Kevin grew up in Tolland, Connecticut, and first gained interest in geography by taking classes in sustainable development and city/urban planning. He has worked as a GIS Intern at Windham Regional Planning Commission and currently is a Policy & Technology Intern at Keene Housing. He hopes to undertake a career involving data analysis or GIS.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	ii
Abstract	iii
About the Authors	iv
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Literature Review	8
Revitalizing Neighborhoods	9
Improving Quality of Life.....	11
Gentrification and Revitalization	14
Millennials and Home Ownership.....	17
College and Community Development	21
College and Student Housing Markets.....	23
Chapter 3: Background of Keene	26
Geography.....	27
Demography.....	29
Keene State College	31
Housing and Economic Characteristics	34
Policy and Publicity	40
Chapter 4: Current State of Keene’s Housing Market	42
Student and Private Housing Markets	43
Aging Housing Stock.....	45
New Apartment Options	47
Economy.....	48
Rental Prices.....	49
Housing Prices	51
Tenure of Housing.....	53
Geography of Housing.....	54
Chapter 5: Expert Interviews	57
Expert Interviews	58
Robin Picard	58
Tara Kessler	59
Frank Richter.....	61

Focus Group	62
Housing	63
Employment.....	65
Recreation.....	67
Chapter 6: Millennials Survey	69
Millennials Survey Methodology	70
Survey Respondent Demographics	72
Examination of Survey Results.....	73
Discussion.....	82
Chapter 7: College Survey	88
Methodology.....	89
What Type of Housing Do Students Live in.....	90
Overall Satisfaction Levels of Housing and Neighborhoods	91
Perception of Student Neighborhoods	94
Student Housing Preferences.....	96
Student Housing Priorities	97
Post Keene State College	100
Chapter 8: Conclusion	102
Student and Millennial Research	103
Overarching Conclusions.....	105
Appendix A	110
Appendix B.....	111
Appendix C.....	142

LIST OF FIGURES

1.1 Four Common Milestones of Adulthood	3
1.2 New England Millennial Inflow & Outflow.....	5
1.3 Keene Population 2011-2015.....	6
2.1 Characteristics of Distressed Neighborhoods	9
2.2 Off-campus Student House on Elliot Street	10
2.3 Four Elements of a Healthy Neighborhood	11
2.4 Median Student Debt vs Median Wages	18

2.5 MSCDC Revitalization of Inner City Unit	22
3.1 Map of Keene, New Hampshire	27
3.2 Main Street and Downtown Keene	28
3.3 Horatio Museum in Downtown Keene	28
3.4 Cobblestone Bar in Keene.....	29
3.5 Population Distribution in Keene.....	31
3.6 Entrance to Keene State College.....	31
3.7 Appian Way at Keene State College.....	31
3.8 Undergraduate Enrollment in New Hampshire Public Universities.....	32
3.9 Fiske Residence Hall.....	33
3.10 Keene Student Rentals still looking for tenants.....	34
3.11 Downtown Keene in 1900s	36
3.12 Downtown Keene in 1950s	36
3.13 Top Employers in Keene.....	37
3.14 Traffic Circle on Main Street	38
3.15 Full Tax in Dollars in New Hampshire	39
4.1 The Mills Apartments.....	44
4.2 Arcadia Apartments	44
4.3 Tenure by Year Structure Built.....	46
4.4 Median Year Household Built per Census Block Group	46
4.5 Construction of New Apartments at Washington Park	47
4.6 Year over Year Change in Covered Private Employment.....	49
4.7 Median Rental Prices 2007-2017	50
4.8 Median Rental per Unit Size	51
4.9 Median Owner-Occupied Unit Value 2010-2015.....	52
4.10 Median Owner-Occupied Unit Value in New England.....	52
4.11 Tenure of Keene Housing Units	53
4.12 Median Age and Tenure by Census Block Group.....	55
4.13 Keene Housing Values 2008.....	56
5.1 Housing Availability, Affordability, and Price for Millennials.....	60
5.2 Focus Group Setup.....	62
5.3 Focus During Discussion.....	63
6.1 Millennials Housing Survey	70

6.2 Millennial Survey Demographics	73
6.3 Millennial Satisfaction Levels for Various Qualities of Keene.....	74
6.4 Ideal Housing Situation Response.....	81
6.5 Millennials Ideal Housing Currently and in 10 Years	81
6.6 Do You Plan on Moving Out in the Next Five Years?	82
6.7 Important Qualities versus Need Improvement Qualities.....	84
6.8 Top Rated Financial Barriers of Millennials	84
6.9 Locals in (or Near) Keene Millennials Would Ideally Live	85
6.10 Reasons Young Professionals Choose to Live in Keene	87
7.1 Percent of Students Living Off-Campus	89
7.2 Numbers of Percentages of Survey Results	90
7.3 Where DO You Currently Live?	90
7.4 How Much is Your Monthly Rent?	90
7.5 If you Live Off-Campus What Street Do You Live On	91
7.6 Likert Scale Housing and Neighbor Satisfaction Questions	91
7.7 Satisfactions Levels Among Students Living On-Campus, or in Off-Campus Houses/Apartments.....	92
7.8 Quality of Life in Neighborhood.....	95
7.9 Quality of Life in Neighborhood Based on Satisfaction	95
7.10 Top Choice of Housing	96
7.11 Single-family Home Wordle	97
7.12 Student Housing Priority Questions.....	97
7.13 Choose the Top 3 Reasons Why You Chose Your On/Off Campus Residence	98
7.14 Do You Plan on Staying in Keene?	101
7.15 What Type of Housing After Graduation?	101
8.1 Student Neighborhood Preferences	104
8.2 Millennial Neighborhood Preferences	104

LIST OF TABLES

6.1 Millennial Satisfaction Test	76
6.2 Millennial Satisfaction Test (Older versus Younger)	77
6.3 Millennial Satisfaction Test (Income Levels)	79
6.4 Millennial Ideal Living Situation Test	80
7.1 Student Satisfaction Test	93

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



Society is experiencing a shift from the typical “American Dream” of white-picket fence in suburbia to the new dream of mixed-used communities and urbanization. This shift is being fueled by the Millennials, the generation born between 1982 and 1998, who are helping to reshape the physical makeup of cities and their populations. While cities that have embraced this new generation are capitalizing on the opportunity, other cities are left facing the challenge of aging populations and diminishing resources. Staying ahead of the curve requires meeting the wants and needs of the millennial demographic. Keene, New Hampshire is one such city that can benefit from an influx of Millennials, and the city of focus for this paper.

Keene is the economic and cultural hearth of Cheshire County. Nonetheless, it is facing a number of critical scenarios that are dramatically impacting its neighborhoods throughout the city. This includes stagnant population growth, an aging workforce due to low Millennial migration and an aging housing stock predominantly adjacent to Keene State College and downtown Keene. The complexity of these matters, in the midst of diminishing public resources available, calls upon the community and local government to take a comprehensive approach to neighborhood revitalization and community building. By taking a new approach to the Keene housing market, the city may see the long-term, positive changes needed in order to remain vibrant. This approach should integrate the dynamics between neighborhood housing quality, employment opportunities, local policy and amenities for residents.

Over the past decade, many American cities have been transformed by young professionals of the Millennial generation, with downtowns turning into bustling neighborhoods full of new apartments, shops, and restaurants. Millennials can benefit cities and towns in a myriad of ways, including “economic revitalization, an improved tax base, a pronounced *youthification*,

and a general increase in vitality” (Myers 2016 p2). There are, however, ample reasons for why Millennials choose to live where they do thanks to the dynamics of their generation. This can make it difficult for any city to figure out just exactly how to attract and retain such a fluid cohort. At 87 million strong the Millennial generation is the largest cohort in the American population, surpassing the Baby Boomers in 2016 (Joint Center for Housing Studies 2017). They are a diverse, expressive and optimistic group who have grown up in a time of rapid change, giving them a set of priorities and exceptions that differs from those of previous generations.

Figure 1.1 examines the four common milestones of adulthood – getting married, having children, working and living independently – the changes are drastic among generations. In 1975 the percentage of 25 to 34 year olds who had accomplished all four milestones was 45 percent. In contrast, only 24 percent of 2016’s young adults have done the same (Census Bureau 2017).

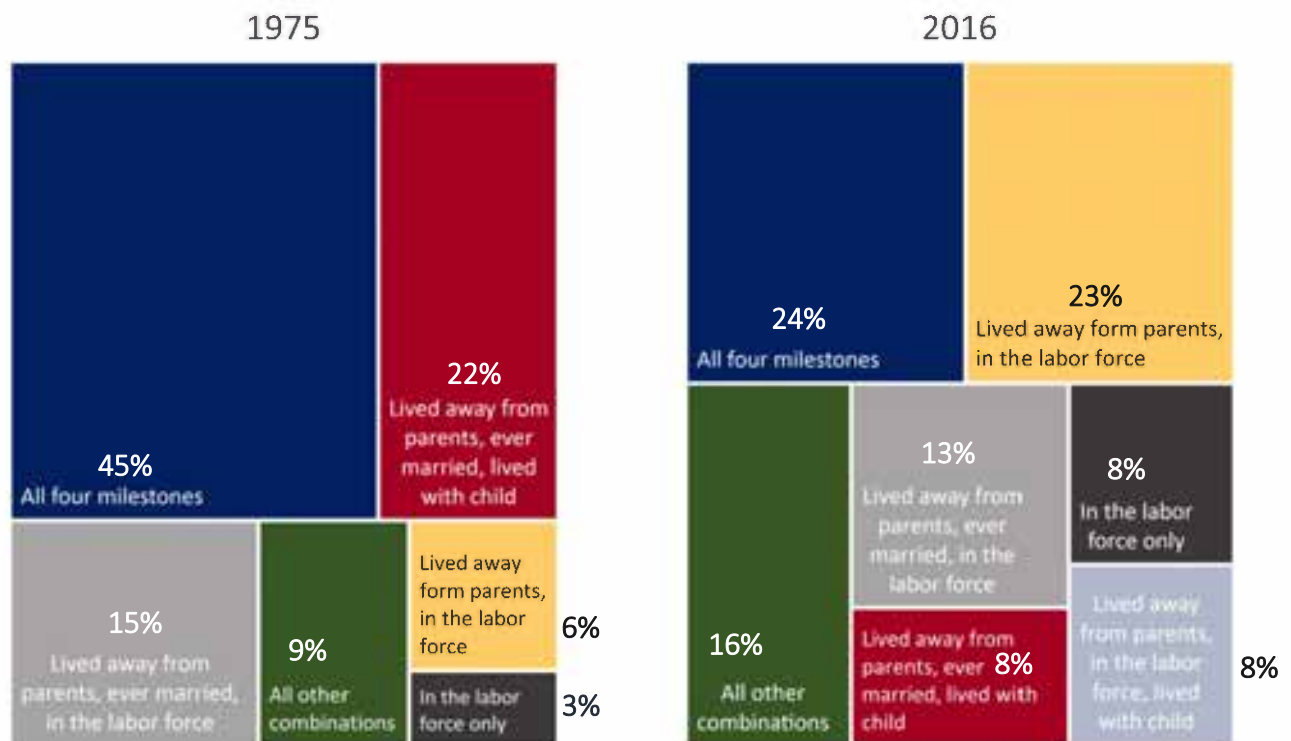


Figure 1.1. Four common milestones of adulthood – Percentages of 25 to 34 year olds in 1975 and 2016. *Data Source:* Census Bureau 2017.

These changes in lifestyle preferences begin to paint a picture of the Millennial generation and help provide an understanding of the living and housing preferences of Millennials. While Millennials are the largest American generation to date, they are buying houses at lower rates than those in previous generations and are living at home with their parents at a higher rates. Many are also dealing with lower relative incomes and higher relative student loan debt while coming of age and entering the workforce during difficult economic times. Thus many Millennials have become savvy shoppers, wary when it comes to purchasing housing.

Millennials are also often portrayed as aspiring urbanists, and many prefer to live in the type of mixed-use communities found in urban centers. Notably, the cities widely seen as millennial magnets are not the only places they choose to live. Urban areas such as San Bernardino, California, Newport-News, Virginia, and Buffalo, New York all experienced higher growth rates in Millennials since 2000 than the stereotypical millennial cities such as Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York City (Johnson 2017). This reveals that smaller areas can be just as effective at drawing in young adults as large mainstream metropolitan areas. In fact, while Millennials are more likely to choose urban areas than other age groups, they are increasingly enjoying suburban and exurban communities as well (Cox 2014). Keene therefore has ample potential when it comes to attracting Millennials. The city offers an urban feel with a vibrant downtown, while still having the amenities and comfort suburbia can bring to couples looking to start a family.

However, the inflow of Millennials to New England from years 2011-2015 was not overly exuberant. In fact, New Hampshire was the only New England state to have a net increase in the number of Millennials between years 2011-2015 (**Figure 1.2**) (Internal Revenue Service 2017). Even so, New Hampshire only gained 876 Millennials over the 5-year span, which translates to a

total increase of 0.1 percent. This amount of growth is rather insignificant, and on top of it Keene saw very little of that growth.

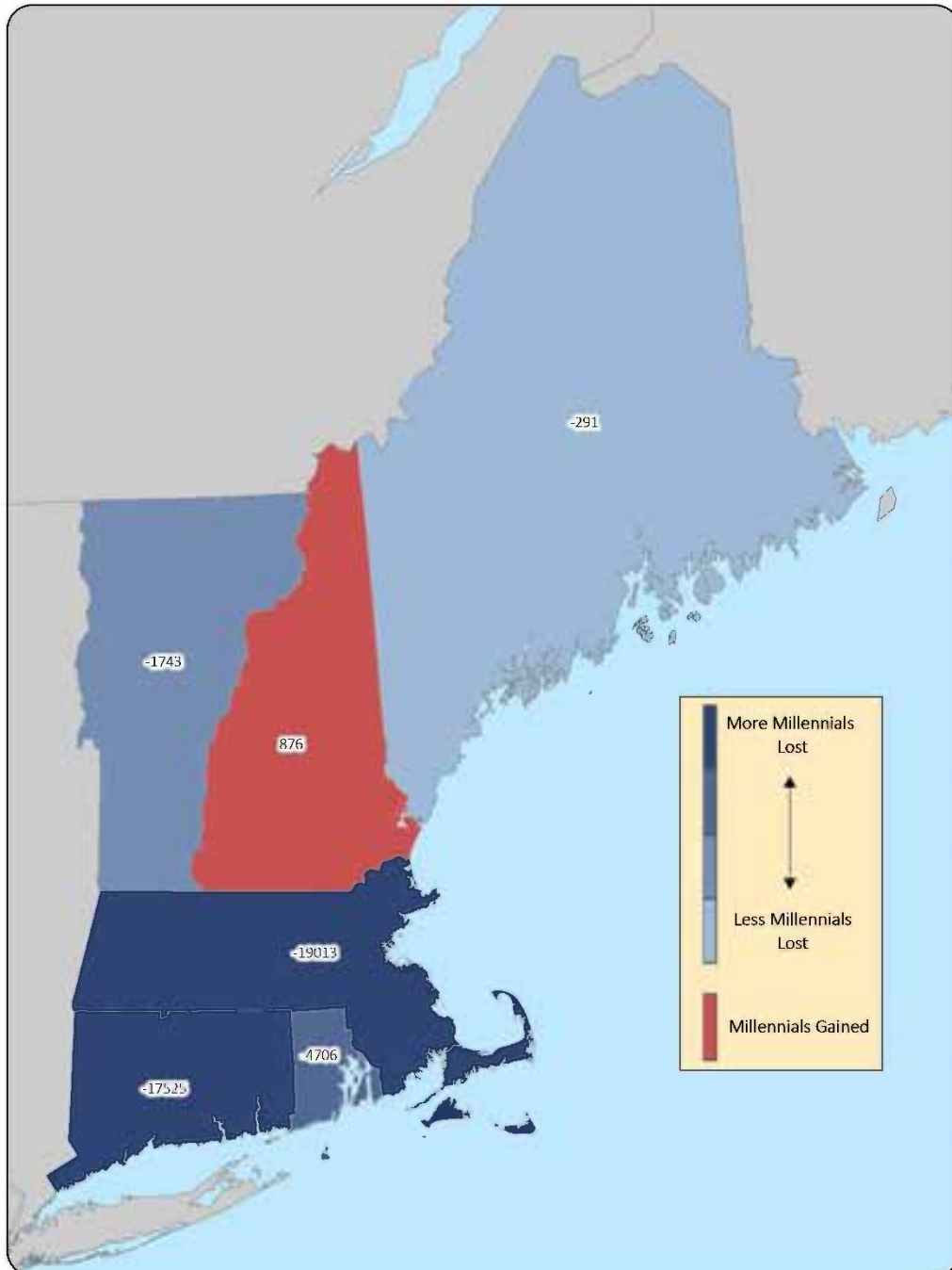


Figure 1.2. *New England Millennial inflow and outflow 2011-2015 (Raw number).* **Data Source:** *Internal Revenue Service 2017.*

Over the same 5-year period, Keene experienced an estimated total net decrease of 73 people (**Figure 1.3**). This number again is a rather negligible amount, but illustrates the stagnation Keene faced over the past half-decade. If the City of Keene hopes to attract more people, especially those in the Millennial generation, something will have to change in order to accommodate their needs and wants.



Figure 1.3. Keene population 2011-2015. *Data Source:* Census Bureau 2017.

Understanding the current condition of the housing market and factors attracting or repelling the Millennial demographic in Keene necessitates original research. This includes meeting with experts related to the subject; researching scholarly literature based on similar studies; studying demographic, economic and housing related data; and collecting data related to opinions, experiences and ideas from both Millennials and college students in Keene. Accordingly, there are a few hypotheses that aid in grasp of the current housing market.

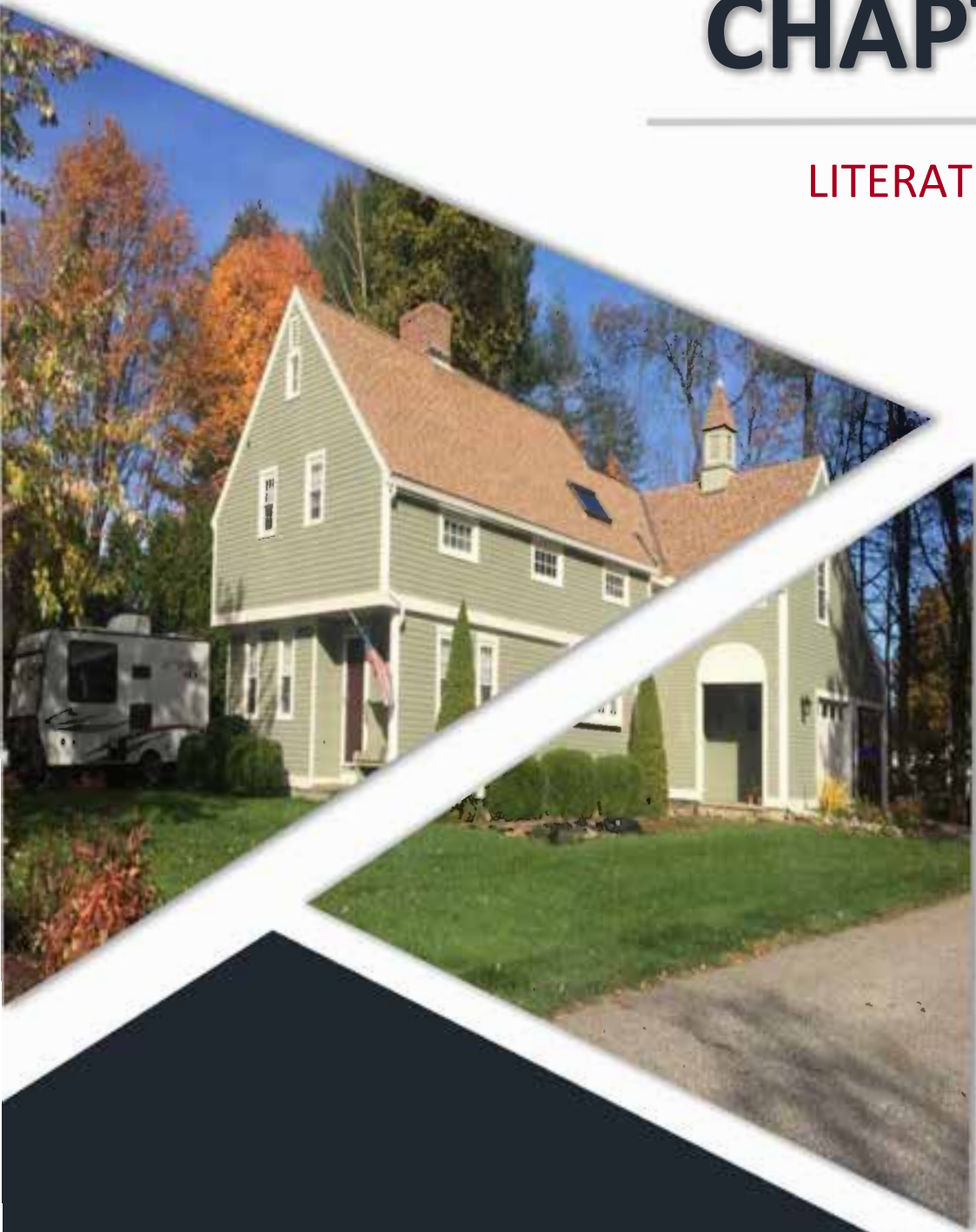
The hypotheses are as follows:

1. Overall Millennial satisfaction with Keene's housing is inadequate (lacking)
2. The Millennial shift in postponing homeownership causes a difference among Millennial renters' and homeowners' overall housing satisfaction
3. Due to less demanding standards and needs, college students believe that the quality off-campus housing and neighborhoods are satisfactory and are generally sufficient

Therefore, the purpose of this report is to critically and geographically analyze housing and demographic trends in the city of Keene, with the goal of providing a framework for attracting and maintaining Millennials through neighborhood revitalization. Addressing the housing occupancy and conditions in both the Keene State College off-campus housing and the city housing market is important for planning for the future of the city. It is also important to assess both markets because college age Millennials and working age Millennials have varying values and priorities when it comes to housing. By defining the differences between declining neighborhoods versus healthy neighborhoods, it is possible to determine the state of Keene's neighborhoods in hopes to find effective solutions. Additionally, attracting Millennials to any city is a worthy investment. These young professionals bring energy and enthusiasm to the workforce and culture. They generally impose few demands on city services such as health care, they are not afraid to take risks in finding more creative ways of problem solving, and they bring security and longevity for a region's economy. Cities that successfully attract and maintain young professionals thrive and the value of Millennials to the City of Keene is self-evident.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW



REVITALIZING NEIGHBORHOODS

Housing is a core component of any community's fabric. The housing market is a representation of the local economy and health of any community (Boehlke 2004). Not all housing markets in the United States are the same as there is a complex array of factors that play into whether a housing market is thriving or declining. Such factors include the variations of geographic space, economic hubs, and other push-pull factors. However, all markets conform to the same principles of supply and demand. A stagnant housing market is due in part by an absence of young professionals moving to the city. This has left a bleak outlook for the opportunity of economic growth. Many cities have too similar cities too many houses with too few buyers that possess the requisite resources to own and maintain properties at a level that attracts other residents (Boehlke 2004). Important challenges cultivate complex questions. Why do some neighborhoods fail while others succeed? Can a cycle of a declining housing market be reversed? How can this be accomplished?

What must government, businesses, civic leaders and residents do to make the transformation happen? Firstly, it is important to determine what constitutes a distressed neighborhood versus a healthy neighborhood. According to Donald Poland (2009), factors that exist in distressed neighborhoods are included in **Figure 2.1**.



Figure 2.1 Characteristics of distressed neighborhoods.

In addition, HUD determines the main signs of a declining neighborhood as:

- An overwhelming presence of an aging housing stock that is in significant physical despair and/or functionally obsolete
- A community that can be experiencing problems with crime and drug abuse
- Presence of housing or retail vacancies
- Inadequate, insufficient or poor quality service delivery

Studies have shown that adding new and modern housing options to weak-market neighborhoods with aging, outdated and deteriorating housing stock only leads to more distress as supply increases and demand stays the same (Poland 2009). Cities can then begin seeing these problems spread as the factors of distress factors persist. Any housing market is essentially a business in the sense that each home is a billboard for the image of the community (Boehlke 2004). Abandoned/or run-down houses, such as the house in **Figure 2.2**, in any neighborhood drive down property values so much that nearby home owners discouraged to rationalize any home improvements. According the US Census Bureau, an abandoned house drives down the property values of houses within 500 feet by up to eight percent. This results in a feedback loop of disinvestment, which could lead to more abandonment and distress (Fitzpatrick 2012).



Figure 2.2 Off-campus student house on Elliot Street.
Photo Source: Authors

IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE

The overarching goal of any neighborhood revitalization effort is to re-establish a viable and sustainable livelihood in a community (HUD). Defining a healthy neighborhood is helpful to set standards for a city such as Keene. Generally, a healthy community is one where people want to live, work and spend time. Residents of a healthy community maintain and invest in their homes and their properties. Businesses are open, attract customers, and earn profits. Open spaces are used by residents and visitors, are well maintained and are perceived to be welcoming and safe places (HUD). The core structure of a healthy community is having a dynamic system of stable residential and commercial development that supports accessible transit, working infrastructure, open space, residential activates, social services and a sense of safety. According to Boehlke (2004), four elements of the stability of a healthy neighborhood are illustrated in **Figure 2.3**.

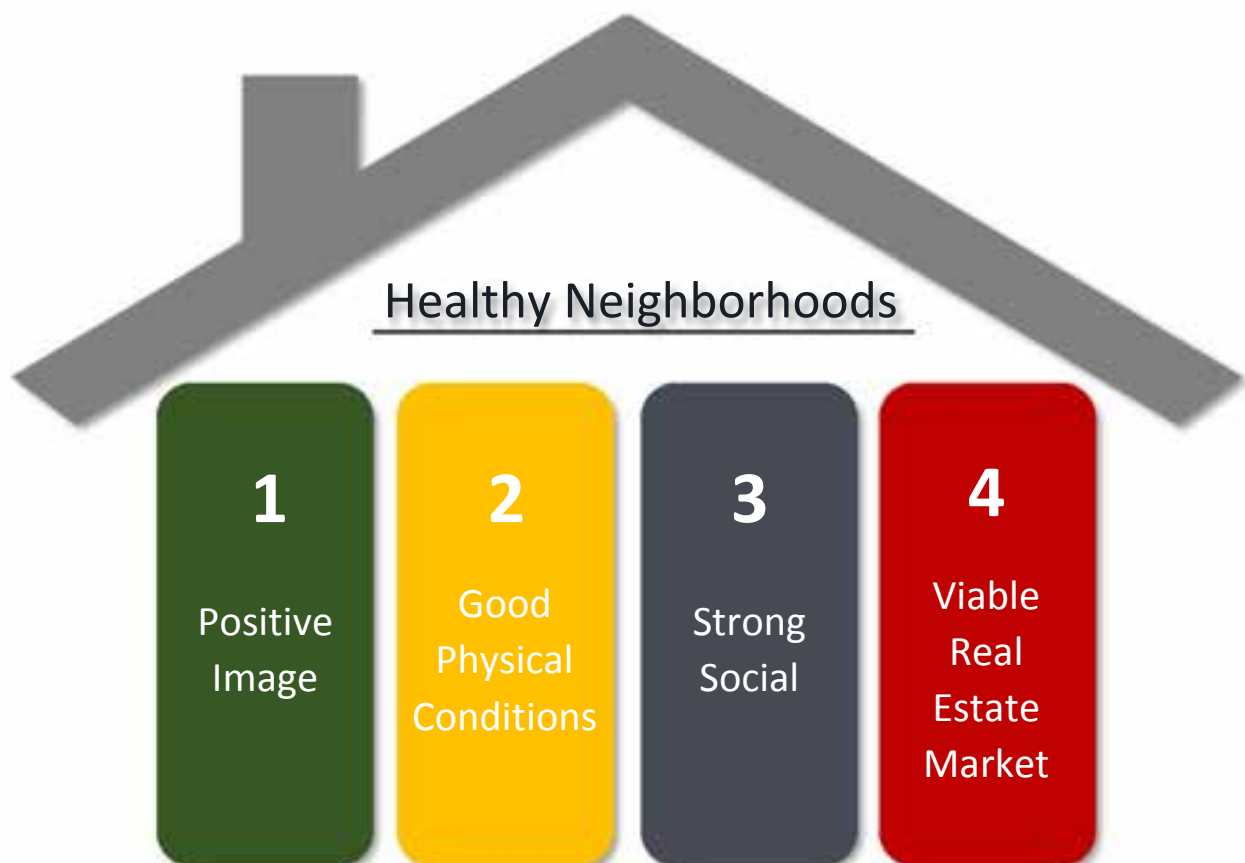


Figure 2.3 Four elements of a healthy neighborhood.

Addressing revitalization efforts requires a careful look at the big picture and the inner workings of the community at large. Issues regarding the housing market cannot be resolved with a single action. The issues surrounding a weak housing market are diverse and interconnected with all facets of a community. To address such issues, it is important that communities consider the commitment to a multidimensional approach to help bring the community to its feet again.

A policy approach to the revitalization of neighborhoods is an important first step. City Planning and Zoning Departments are in control of the development in a city, which makes them key contributors to the housing market (Pogodzinski 1990). Over several decades, public policies have merely disregarded the principles of supply and demand in the real estate market. Many cities believe building new houses will revive the housing market. In reality, this can only magnify the distress in the community if not planned correctly (Boehlke 2004).

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has administered several successful programs that are designed to spur community reinvestment, while contributing to neighborhood revitalization. There are numerous studies that analyze the impact of zoning on the housing and land market and on population density. One approach for revitalization of neighborhoods is to encourage the mixed use of space between businesses, housing and open space. The City of Kingston, New York is an example of a successful revitalization initiative that used mixed-use land use regulations. The city used land use regulations that facilitate growth of niche industries by using form-based code to focus on the relationship between the buildings and outdoor spaces instead of the type of land-use. The city improved the image of the city by directing public investments towards activity centers such as downtown and industry clusters. The overall goal was to create a sense of place by encouraging a mix of uses

(Mid-Hudson). Since the revitalization efforts, Kingston has seen a 30 percent increase in jobs, which are being filled by the next generation of workers: Millennials. Thus, attracting new employers and industries seeking their skills. Similar zoning initiatives are in the processes of being implemented east of downtown Keene, in the neighborhoods adjacent to Marlboro Street. Zoning regulation changes and redevelopments in cities such as Kingston and Keene promote the reuse of underutilized properties by allowing businesses to operate among healthy living areas that are walkable and collaborative. These policy approaches can introduce new funds towards neighborhood revitalization efforts in hopes to re-establish a positive neighborhood image to attract young professionals (Nelson 2015).

Integrating these characteristics into research about zoning regulations offers insight into how the local government is impacting the economy and housing market conditions. A policy approach is especially important because zoning is the most common tool for municipalities to influence the real-estate market for the best interest of the community. However, there is little agreement about the effects of zoning, or even how to correctly measure it. Government interference in the free-market is something often debated. Some believe the market should drive itself, while other believe the government should set regulations to “protect land values” and lead to the maximization of land values (Ohls 1973).

The local government also plays a major role in the economics of housing. Housing is interconnected with the local, state and national economies in ways that make them dependent on one another. The most prevalent form of economic gain towns receive is in the form of property taxes. When more housing units are filled, there is more tax revenue provided for the city (Fitzpatrick 2012). New Hampshire towns and cities, including Keene, are dependent on property

taxes because of the lack of sales taxes. In addition to the number of housing units, property values are equally as important for the town's budget (New Hampshire 2017).

Without question, thriving communities are characterized as having houses that retain or increase their value. Stagnant or declining home values, often associated with a failing sense of neighborly responsibility, may translate into a community few would choose to call home. Deliberate action must be implemented through tried and tested neighborhood revitalization strategies in cities that are experiencing hardship (Poland 2009).

GENTRIFICATION AND REVITALIZATION

Gentrification is a process in which a neighborhood is improved to the point of a social change in which problems can occur. Harvard defines the term as “demographic and physical changes in neighborhoods that bring in wealthier residents, greater investment, and more development” (Bosquet 2017). Ruth Glass, who coined the term, observed this phenomena in London in 1964 local working-class groups were displaced from their homes (Atkinson 2003). Areas that were once run down, unsafe at times, and inexpensive to live in are revitalized to the point where a completely new demographic settles into this area. The collective of refurbished houses and buildings, addition of “complete” streets (trees, sidewalks, accessible and safe crosswalks, for example), introduction of new industry, and more can raise property values and the economy of a given area. This in turn attracts more residents and can boost local economies by becoming more welcoming to those who wish to spend their money.

The notion of “Live, Work, Play” is one that directly feeds off gentrification. When neighborhoods are revitalized to their fullest extent, people want to live, work, and spend leisure time in the same place. This is, in a sense, the holy trinity that most locales wish to achieve. This is

beneficial for towns and cities because it increases the amount of spending and production within their limits, while people strive for this because it decreases amount of time traveling and being away from who they care about most. Many cities have attempted and succeeded at revitalization, and according to a study conducted by *Governing Magazine*, the cities with the highest amount of gentrified neighborhoods are Portland, Oregon (53.1 percent), Washington, D.C. (51.9 percent), Minneapolis, Minnesota (50.6 percent), and Seattle, Washington (50 percent) (Maciag 2013). Many critics of gentrification say that the costs outweigh the benefits, but that is far from certain. In a case study on the small city of Dillsboro, North Carolina, similar circumstances as Keene, New Hampshire, are prevalent. With a small, two-block downtown with tourism as its main source of revenue, both are historic and scenic towns. While Dillsboro had different circumstances which led to revitalization, both cities are in similar shape. Dillsboro tackled the economic issue of stagnating population and economic output by partnering with Brandon University to assess how to revitalize the city. By questioning university staff and employees of the city's major employers, they were able to reach a consensus on how to improve their marketability for employees and new residents of the area. They concluded that the "study grew out of the recognition that a university has a role to perform in the economic, social, and cultural well-being of its surrounding geographic regional area" (Grunwell 2014, 43). This shows that there is a necessary give-and-take relationship that universities and colleges must have with their cities.

The most important part to revitalization is to provide the tight-knit community that residents wish for. In order to harbor the "Live, Work, Play" mentality, there needs to be institutions in place. One tactic is by nurturing cultural development. Cultural development can be supplemented through three strategy types:

Entrepreneurial: through the focus of tourists, affluent residents and suburbanites, economic growth through tourism and city image can bring the community positive press that brings people into the city to increase revenue;

- *Creative Class*: with the most attention on young professionals and skilled workers, arts and entertainment facilitate improvement of quality of life amenities through collaboration between the arts and private sectors;
- *Progressive*: looking at underserved neighborhoods to encourage community development and cultural production by creating community centers.

These three strategies can help bring the community closer which in turn revitalizes otherwise depressed neighborhoods. With the implementation of these strategies, officials can “work to create an attractive business environment through a host of incentives such as tax abatements, land contributions and write-downs, and relaxed zoning regulations, placing strong emphasis on creating high-profile facilities and events to catalyze private developments and market their cities as ‘places to play’” (Grodach 2007, 353). When businesses, schools, and the town work in harmony, people will naturally flock and participate in the revitalization process.

Abatements and other programs aimed towards citizens can also help revitalize a city. Most young professionals have a student loans along with an entry level, so by giving them a chance to find affordable housing while receiving loan pardons is one monumental struggle that would be alleviated. The “Live, Work, Play” frame of mind can only be achieved when there is a homeostasis of housing affordability, cultural and community development, and local enterprise working together to create an ideal place to live.

MILLENNIALS AND HOMEOWNERSHIP

In the United States, housing and homeownership has long been romanticized and subsidized with policies that encourage Americans to buy their own homes. However, since the devastating losses of the Great Recession 2008, it has been brutally proven that owning a house is not always better than renting, either for the owner or the neighborhood. Unfortunately, many U.S. housing markets are still slow to recover, and according the U.S. Census Bureau (2017) homeownership rates have now dropped to the lowest rates in nearly 50 years, sitting at around 63 percent. This represents a nine percent decrease since 2004.

A major contributor to the historically low ownership rates, are the 18-34 year olds that make up the Millennial generation and that had constituted the bulk of first-time homebuyers. Until the recession, more than half of all first-time homebuyers were between the ages of 25 and 34, and approximately 40 percent of all homebuyers have been first-time homebuyers. With many young adults avoiding post-recession homeownership, the share of total home sales made to first-time buyers dropped to 33 percent by 2014. In fact, the share of first-time buyers of single-family home sales in 2015 dropped to the lowest level since 1987 (Gittelsohn 2014). While Millennials still appear to value homeownership and desire to own their own homes, a number of lifestyle choices and financial barriers have postponed them from reaching their aspirations (MacArthur Foundation 2015). With the homeownership rates so low, the past decade shaped up to be the landlord's market, with renter households increasing by nine million between 2005 and 2015 - the largest increase in any 10 year period. However, the U.S. rental market is still facing a staggering Millennial rental base, with an estimated two million Millennials that have not even entered the rental market yet (Goodman 2015).

One principal reason for this delay is that it has become the default for many willing Millennials to return home to live with their parents in what would could be considered multi-generational homes. Financially it just makes sense for Millennials to live at home, with the poverty rate among young adults who live with their parents at 9.8 percent, as compared to their counterparts living on their own at 17.4 percent. An all-time high of 35.6 percent of 18-34 years old lived at home in 2015 (American Community Survey), with 83 percent of young adults who returned home during the recession doing so to ease financial hardship. These young adults continue to be burdened with low stagnant incomes and mounting student debt as well. Figure 2.4 shows the median debt at graduation for bachelor’s degree recipients, as well as median wages for graduates aged 22-27. It reveals that overall median wages have increased 1.6 percent over the last 25 years while median student debt has risen 163.8 percent. In other words, the typical college student graduated with debt equal to 28.6 percent of their annual earnings in 1990, and 74.3 percent in 2015.

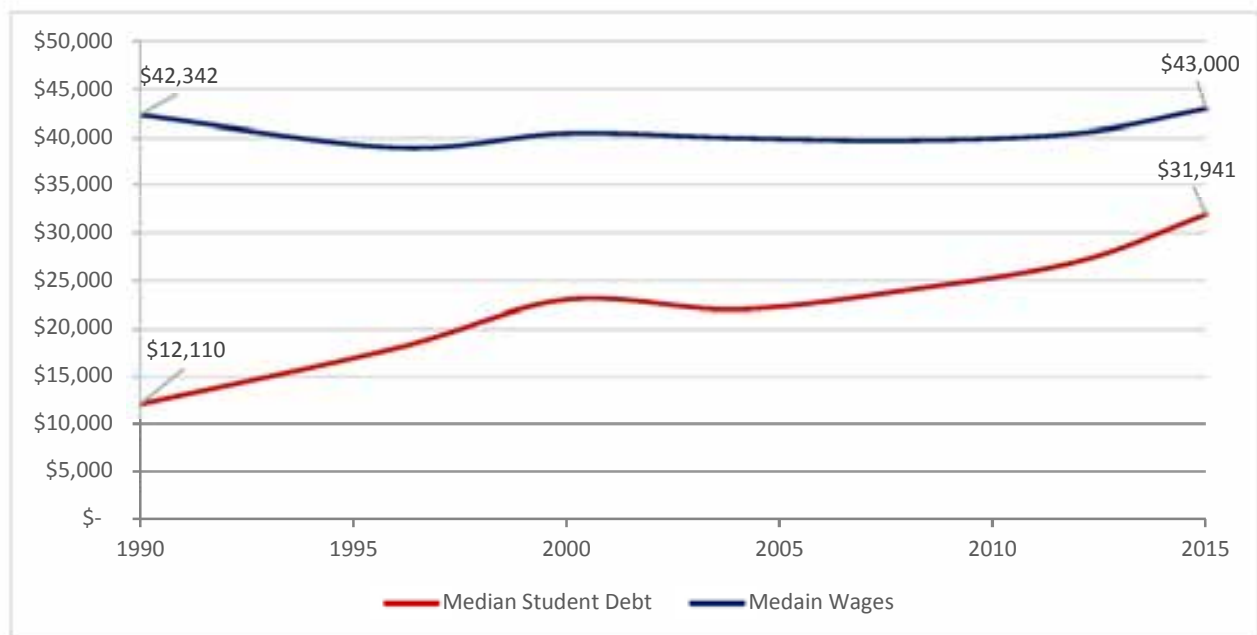


Figure 2.4 Median student debt versus median wages. **Data Source:** Federal Reserve Bank of New York and Upjohn Institute for Employment Statistics.

Despite this slow start for Millennials and their muted impact on housing demand, they will soon have a significant presence in housing markets as the simple fact of aging pushes the oldest members of their generation into their mid to late 30s, a point at which most adults live independently. The annual *State of the Nation's Housing* published by the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University (JCHS), dives deeper into this notion. At 87 million strong Millennials are the largest and most diverse generation in the history of the United States. Estimates show that by 2025, minorities will make up 36 percent of all U.S. households and 46 percent of all minorities will be aged 25-34. Minorities will account for nearly half of the typical first time home-buyer (Hsu 2014). It is also estimated that by 2035 Millennials will head 49.8 million households, as compared to the 16 million in 2015. Thus, effectively and profoundly reshaping the housing demand in the United States (JCHS 2017). The U.S. rental and housing markets will have to soon accommodate this significant impact and diversity the millennial generation will bring. This includes tackling problems such as high housing costs and the possibility that millions of older households will decide to age in place, which could limit the supply of suburban homes available for sale to millennials; or even possibly for the fact that Millennials may not want to live in suburbia at all.

It is crucial for towns, cities and housing markets across the country to understand the Millennial generation - their needs and wants, social characteristic and lifestyle preferences - as the United States tries to reinvent itself in the vision of what it thinks Millennials want. This is no easy task however, as it is difficult to accurately generalize an entire diverse generation of 87 million people. However, there are some broad assumptions and characteristics that many Millennials do in fact share, as reported in the 2014 *Millennials - Breaking the Myth* study

conducted by the Nielsen Holdings Company. This study found that 62 percent of Millennials prefer to live in the mixed-use communities, often ones found in urban centers where they can live in close proximity to a mix a commercial activity such as shopping, restaurants and business offices (Nielsen 2014). Millennials currently live in urban areas at higher rates than previous generations, and 40 percent say they would like to live in an urban area in the future (Russonello 2013).

The transition from the classic 'white picket fence in the suburbs' American Dream to 'brownstone stoop in the heart of the city' is a radical change from the social and lifestyle preferences of older generations, but what is interesting is how they may begin to blend together into some sort of hybrid. Even when Millennials start to age and move out of highly dense urban centers and the older cohorts of the generation begin to start families in single-family homes, Millennials will want to live in places that are a hybrid of both cities and suburbs. These places revolve around a relatively new concept of urban burbs. Urban burbs are becoming more popular in redevelopment as suburban communities make changes to create urban environments with walkable downtown areas and everyday necessities within close reach.

Leigh Gallagher touches on this concept in her 2013 book and Ted Talk *The End of the Suburbs: Where the American Dream Is Moving*, in which she describes developers' desire to urbanize the suburbs. Areas such as Kentlands Maryland, which mix traditional and townhouse style living, or Libertyville, Illinois, which recently developed a 26 single-family home community with sidewalks and walkability to the nearby downtown became successful even in the depths of the financial crisis. Examples from across the country that share very similar characteristics to Keene are not uncommon.

This concept of new smart growth and urban living are also connected to the concept of New Urbanism brought up by urban planner Peter Calthrope (1993). New Urbanism applies the successful design principles of urban areas to suburban developments including an emphasis on “diversity in both community design and population, pedestrian and transit-friendly, environmental consciousness, mixed housing types (single-family, townhomes and apartments), historic preservation and public parks for community gathering” (Nielsen 2014).

COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Not only are these new concepts being applied in American suburbia, but college campuses as well are great examples of urbanization that planners have been working so hard to emulate. Campuses are models of compact design and mixes of housing types; green space is central to their aesthetic appeal; their residents are economically and ethnically diverse; and they incorporate a variety of uses and offer multiple transportation options (Khalil 2012).

The University of South Carolina is an example of a school that is in the process of instituting a new urban redevelopment plan (named the Innovista Master Plan) for a 500-acre brownfield that aims to integrate downtown Columbia with the university campus by establishing new urban neighborhoods (Sasaki 2017). The project looks to promote pedestrian interaction, reinforce positive urban form, establish active street-facing-facades, provide appropriate signage and lighting, minimize the visual impact of parking and service areas, and use trees, landscaping and other streetscape amenities for street enhancements (Khalil 2012). One of the main goals however, is to retain university graduates and attract new young adults to live and work for the city as well as to foster continued economic development for the downtown. The university and Columbia community hope the mixture of urban density development with retail, residential and

commercial space will create the live, work, play and learning environment young adults actively seek out.

Other examples of colleges engaging with their local housing community include Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, a city that has struggled with under crowding and crime problems in the past. In 1996, Trinity announced a \$175 million neighborhood revitalization plan of the community surrounding its campus. Working with local education and health organizations, as well as area banks, state and city agencies, the college provided low-interest mortgages to encourage home ownership and supported the rebuilding of a safe, viable and strong neighborhood (Bowditch 2001).

Another example can be found in Worcester, Massachusetts, where the neighborhood around Clark University was losing population at one point so fast the local Catholic Church reportedly experienced a 50 percent drop in collections. Thus the college forged a partnership with the community and created the Main South Community Development Corporation (MSCDC), a nonprofit that has constructed several housing projects including the renovation of 170 affordable housing units and 14 triple-decker



Figure 2.5 MSCDC Revitalization of inner city unit. *Photo Source: MSCDC 2017*

residencies near the college (**Figure 2.5**). In addition, a homebuyer incentive program that provides housing grants to staff members who buy in the neighborhood was also implemented. Free college tuition programs for residents who have lived in a qualify Main South neighborhoods for five years has also been offered. (Bowditch 2001; Center for Community Progress 2017).

COLLEGE AND STUDENT HOUSING MARKETS

It is also important to understand the role a college plays in the local housing market. Colleges provide cultural and recreational amenities to the surrounding area, but lifestyle choices of students may create negative externalities that depress property prices causing uncertainties in local markets. For example, the benefits colleges bring to municipalities, such as the campus itself, open green space, water bodies, recreation facilities, arts, and technology all play a positive role in housing prices, as well as having the possibility to attract more commercial development due to a sufficiently large student body market (Lahr 2009). While at the same time they can increase dis-amenities such as litter, traffic, safety concerns, substance abuse and noise as the college-aged population grows in local housing and rental markets. This may also cause these neighborhoods to be less stable as student housing patterns shift yearly.

Despite such concerns, college towns in New Jersey are associated with house prices that are about 10 percent higher than towns that do not have a college (Lahr 2009). However, the interaction of college residents and enrollment has a significant and negative correlation. It was found that smaller colleges have the largest effect on housing prices, and this positive effect on price diminishes when college enrollment reaches about 12,500 students. Thus, Keene State College with a student population of less than 4,000 could be considered a college that has significant effect on local housing.

It is often seen that student migration into surrounding neighborhoods causes family residential homes to be turned into rental properties (Gopal 2008). These converted properties often end up substandard as they were not purposely built for students and therefore lack sufficient requisite facilities for student living (Ghani 2016). Getting houses for rent in the private

market by students may be difficult in most cases as private housing for rent may not be sufficient in supply, students may not know the intricacies of the housing market, and information between landlords and students may lack transparency in terms of property claims and violations (Sadayuki 2015; Ghani 2016).

However, it has also been revealed that university on campus housing is often times more expensive for students than private off campus rental options. At the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, on campus housing was up to 130 percent higher than the rent charged for housing managed by private property owners (Sadayuki 2015). The same held true at Purdue University and The Ohio State University, which were about 185 percent and 210 percent more expensive than the cost of off campus housing respectively. These schools share similar policies to KSC in which first year students (and second year students at KSC) are required to live on campus, while upperclassmen may choose to live on or off-campus. Comparatively, about 60 percent of University of Illinois students living on campus move to off-campus the next year, and 81 percent of KSC upperclassmen decide to to move off campus too (2017 data). This suggests students prefer lower costs, freedom from stricter rules and regulations of residence halls even if it means sacrificing security, reliable maintenance, location, and the positive influence campus housing has on persistence, degree completion and opportunities to interact with peers.

With a large proportion of KSC students willing to live off campus, landlords have little incentive to keep properties well maintained. This notion coupled with typical student behavior lowers the general housing quality and perception of these neighborhoods. Poor housing and overall property quality can rub off on surrounding properties and have a spiraling negative effect on neighborhoods (Doran 2005). Keene State College and the city of Keene have an opportunity,

especially with recent declines in KSC enrollment, to revitalize these city neighborhoods, increase property quality and perception, and lure younger professional into the area to make use of the amenities Keene has to offer.

CHAPTER 3

BACKGROUND



GEOGRAPHY

The City of Keene is located at the center of Cheshire County, and occupies the southwest corner of the State of New Hampshire (Figure 3.1). It is part of the northeastern region of the United States, which is well known for experiencing the charm of all four seasons, and a wealth of history and attractions. Keene is situated just northwest of Mount Monadnock, one of the most summited mountains in the world. The city lies on top of an ancient glacial lake bed that is now a low, flat valley within the foothills of the Wapack Mountain Range. The Ashuelot River, one of the tributaries of the Connecticut River, weaves through the heart of Keene and the surrounding hills and mountains. These natural features provide excellent recreational opportunities including hiking, bike riding, mountain climbing, skiing, kayaking and camping. Along with these recreational activities within the beautiful natural scenery outside of the city center, Keene also offers plenty of parks and greenspace for residents and visitors to enjoy.

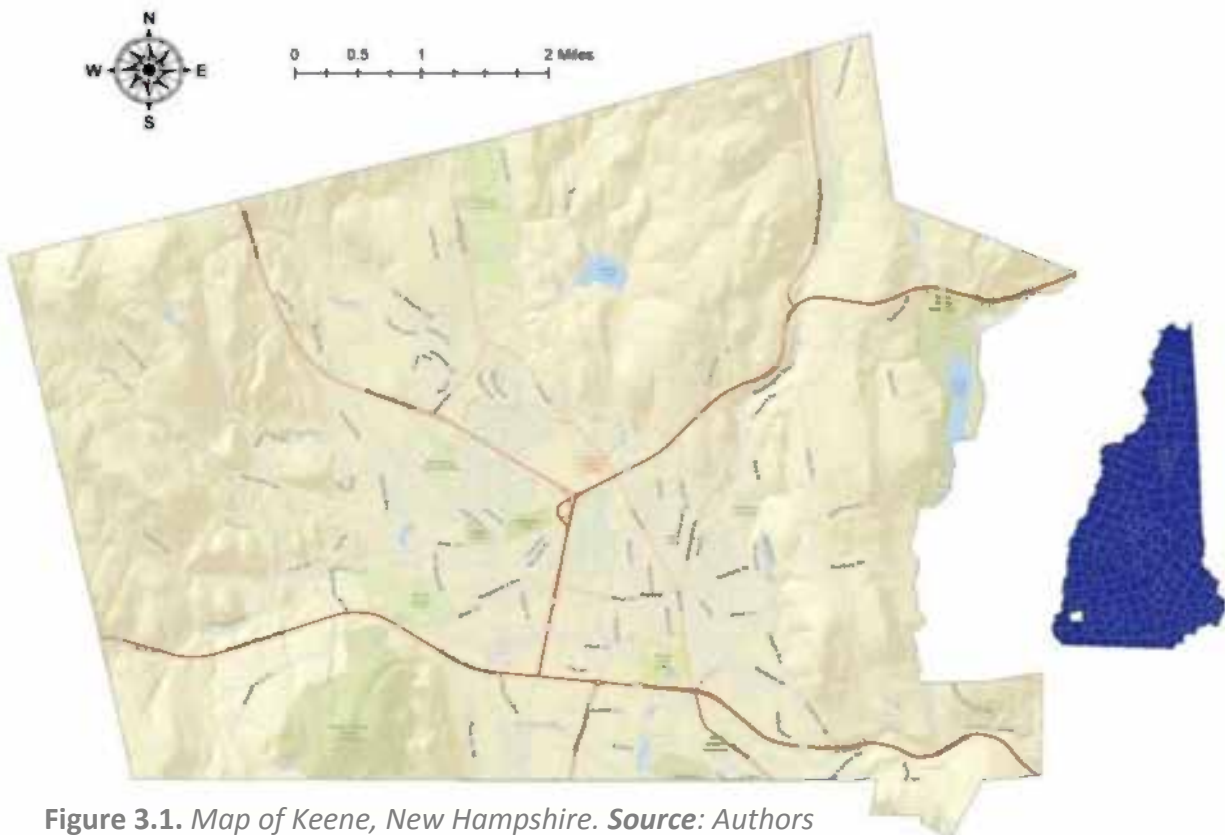


Figure 3.1. Map of Keene, New Hampshire. *Source:* Authors

Keene is well known for its legacy of arts and culture. Downtown Keene is a quintessential example of a quaint New England city. From the historical homes from the early 19th century lining the street, to the bustling sidewalks along the busy restaurants and shops and the church steeple overlooking the great Central Square; there is a perfect combination of urban and rural that life leaves something for everyone to enjoy. Keene hosts a plentiful number of cultural events throughout the year, including the famous Pumpkin Festival, which brings people from around New England to celebrate the fall season. There is enough excitement and charm for anyone to be proud to call Keene home.

The location of Keene is within proximity to a number of attractions outside of the city boundaries. State Highways Route 9, Route 12 and Route 101 run right through Keene, making traveling convenient. Keene is situated just under 100 miles from Boston, Massachusetts; about 220 miles from New York City; 100 miles from Hampton Beach/Portsmouth and 150 miles to the White Mountains. Thus, residents in Keene have plenty around to meet the needs of any weekend or business related travels.



Figure 3.2. Main Street in downtown Keene. *Photo Source:* Authors



Figure 3.3. Horatio Museum in downtown Keene. *Photo Source:* Authors

Keene is also known for its nightlife, especially for the college students. On Main Street, there are a series of bars, including Cobblestone Ale House, Lab 'n' Lager, and Scores. These bars are often crowded with college students and recent graduates. People line the sidewalks on Thursday nights for what is known as “dollars”, which the bars in Keene offer \$1-\$2 well drinks. Besides bars, Main Street is a major

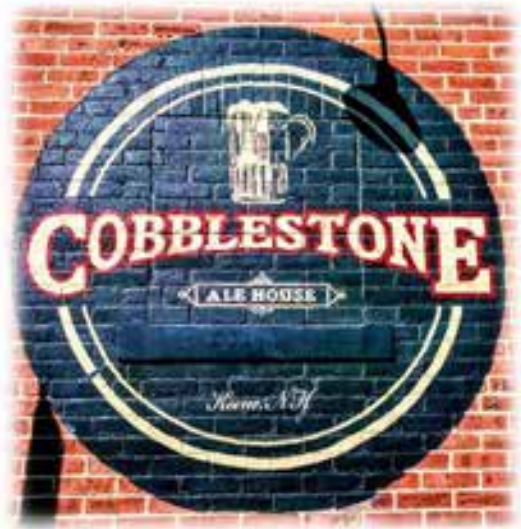


Figure 3.4. Cobblestone bar in Keene.

Photo Source: Authors

source of revenue for Keene. There are many shops and quaint restaurants that people of all ages enjoy. There are several barbers and hair studios, clothing boutiques, and patio seating in front of the restaurants. The tree-lined street is a bustling part of the city that is beautiful and functional. West Street is perpendicular to Main Street. This busy street houses two strip malls with tattoo shops and small businesses along its sides. One of the strip malls has a grocery store and retail shopping. The mall directly across from it is mostly retail with an Aldi grocery store. Further down West Street is a bowling alley that has specials for college students. Closer to the college, Winchester Street is another section of restaurants, shopping, and other amenities, such as a movie theatre. Keene is mostly known for its variety of restaurants and bars. It is somewhat lacking other features, such as other sources of nightlife and activities for young families.

DEMOGRAPHY

New Hampshire, as a whole, is a state that is currently facing a demographic shift. According to a study conducted by the University of New Hampshire, the rate of population growth is stagnating. The biggest reason for this is that there are fewer people migrating to the state

(Johnson 2012). This is extremely important because the shift ultimately affects the local economy. Historically, New Hampshire's population growth was mostly the result from migration, so having this diminish only hurts the state. The study does mention that a large factor to population decline is due to the Great Recession of 2007, but these trends have appeared even before then. The loss of migrants "has an immediate financial impact on the state and implications for its human, intellectual, and social capital" (Johnson 2012). New Hampshire needs to continue to attract people in order to remain productive in the United States.

Keene itself has a total population of 23,406 residents, which has grown by 843 residents from the year 2000, and has seen a slight decrease in the last 5 years. This trend is similar to the surrounding Cheshire County; however, population growth has been increasing more quickly in the state of New Hampshire as a whole than in either Keene or Cheshire County. The median age of Keene is 33.5, which is relatively low when compared to both Cheshire County and the state of NH, which have median ages of 42 and 42.2 respectively. The main reason for such a low median age in Keene is largely due in part to the presence of Keene State College (KSC) that has an undergraduate student population of 4,068 students aged 18-22 traditionally.

These numbers are reflected in **Figure 3.5** on the next page, which shows the population distribution in Keene. What is also worthy of recognition, are the latter age cohorts of the Millennial generation: ages 25-29 and 30-34. These groups severely fall off after the college aged population, and also have smaller stacks than those aged between 40-60 years old. This suggests that Keene is not able to fully capitalize on the young workforce brought to the city via the college, and many college graduates leave in search of other places to live and work, either in New Hampshire or elsewhere. In addition, the diminished Millennial prevalence leads to fewer kids and

families in Keene, also in Figure 5. Children under 5 and between ages 6-10 have smaller cohorts than a majority of the age groups 40-60.

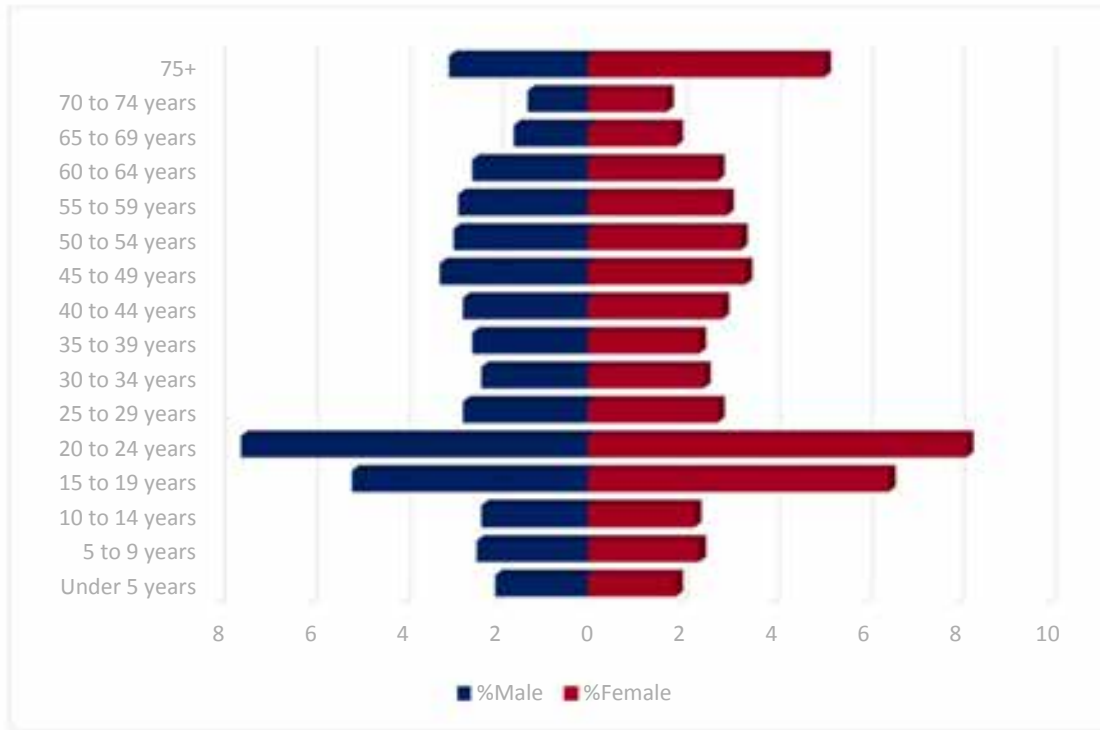


Figure 3.5. Population distribution in Keene, New Hampshire.

KEENE STATE COLLEGE



Figure 3.6. Entrance to the college.
Photo Source: Authors



Figure 3.7. Appian Way at the college.
Photo Source: Authors

Keene State College is a fundamental feature of the city of Keene, founded in 1909 originally as a teacher's college along Main Street adjacent to the historical district of Keene. KSC presently is a liberal arts school that offers 40 areas of study and is a member of the University System of New Hampshire. KSC currently has 4,068 full time and part time undergraduate students. This number has been declining steadily over the past six years however, and is currently down almost 900 students (18 percent) from 2011 when the total undergraduate population was about 4,947. This is a new trend for Keene, as for the prior seven years' total undergraduate enrollment went up 15 percent or 635 students. When compared to other four year public institutions in New Hampshire, Plymouth State shares a similar yet less dramatic seven percent decrease between 2011 and 2016, while the University of New Hampshire (UNH) saw an increase of about two percent (Figure 3.8).

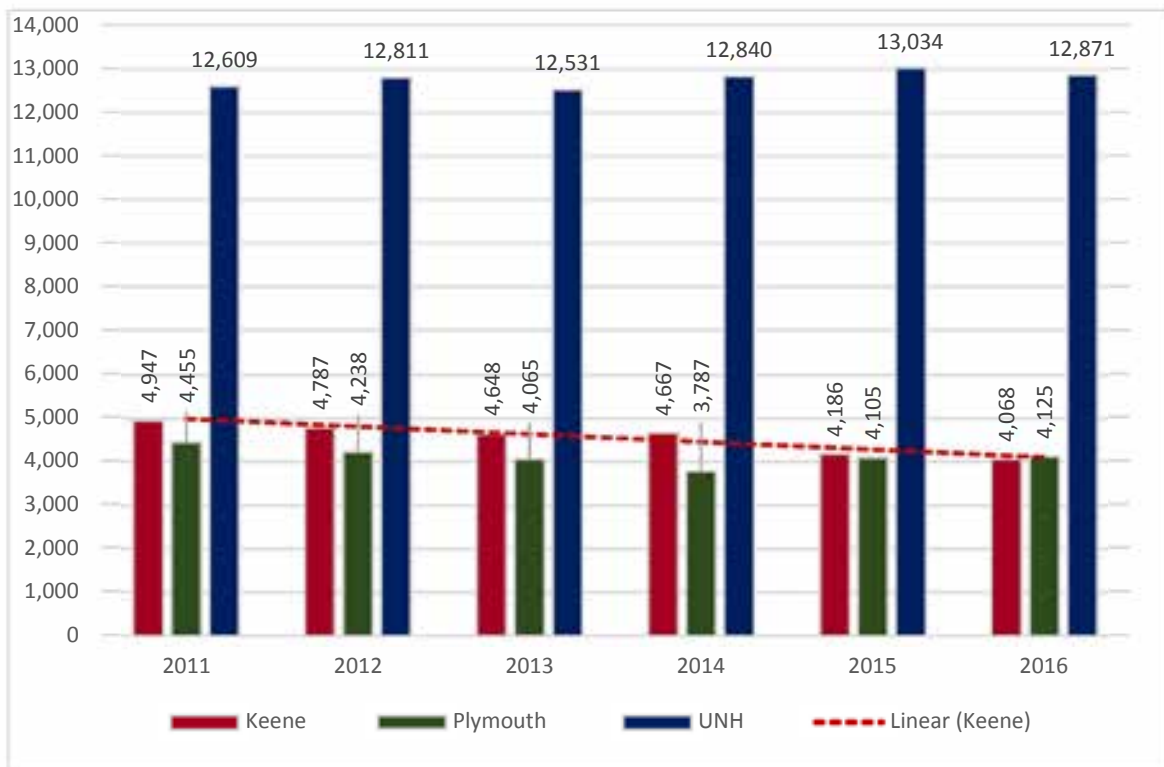


Figure 3.8. Undergraduate enrollment in New Hampshire's public universities. **Data Source:** NH University Fact Books



Figure 3.9. Fiske Residence Hall. Photo Source: Authors

UNH and Plymouth State have also outperformed Keene State in the number of applications received from prospective first-year students (4185, 2811, and 529 respectively) and in the number of those students who enroll. This

loss of enrollment effects revenue from tuition. In 2013, the Education Policy Institution conducted a study on the relationship between attrition to revenue loss from students leaving a university. When comparing Keene and Plymouth, Keene State loses about 7.5 percent more revenue than Plymouth due to attrition (EPI 2013). The reasoning behind Keene's loss in student enrollment can factor back to 2014 when riots erupted on the outskirts of the Keene Pumpkin Festival near the school. Moreover, changing standards for incoming students, demographic shifts and stronger efforts by Massachusetts and Connecticut colleges and universities to keep their students in-state effect enrollment. From 2014 to 2015, Keene lost 66 first time students from Massachusetts, 99 from Connecticut, and 147 from New Hampshire (Keene Fact book).

New Hampshire also boasts some staggering facts in regards to college enrollment, tuition and student debt that can have negative effects on Keene State enrollment. Nationally, 18.8 percent of recent high school graduates leave the home to attend college out-of-state. In New Hampshire however, 48 percent of recent high school graduates migrate out of the state to attend college and 60 percent of New Hampshire's college-going high school graduates leave the state, making New Hampshire the highest exporter of four year college students in the nation. New

Hampshire also has among the highest tuition rates for public two-year and four-year universities in the nation. The state ranked 49th out of 50th states in net tuition as percent of total educational revenue in 2015, and last in higher education support per capita by state in 2014. In addition, the average student debt in 2015 for New Hampshire four-year college graduates was \$36,101, making it the highest in the country for that year (New Hampshire Department of Education 2015).

HOUSING AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

There are essentially two overarching types of housing markets in Keene: student housing, and everything else. There are, of course, different tiers of the 'regular public housing market', which may include affordable housing options run by landlords, low-income housing run by the Keene Housing Authority, and then regular real-estate housing options for medium and high income families/individuals. Additionally, the geography of these different housing markets are



Figure 3.10. *Keene Student Rentals still looking for tenants. Photo Source: Authors*

predominantly separate from one another.

West Keene, which is mostly composed of suburban neighborhoods, has a housing market predominantly run by homeowners.

While East Keene, near the college campus, is characterized by a mix of housing and

includes the overwhelming preponderance of student housing landlords, who rent their

units to only Keene State College students. These different housing markets are often independent of each other, but may have some overlapping. For instance, college enrollment does effect

whether there is an overstock or understock of college housing, but does not directly influence whether a family in West Keene wants to buy a house.

The local economy has lasting effects on any local housing market. Over time, the Keene housing market and economy have molded into what it is today. Keene was previously a major industrial city in New Hampshire, by producing wooden-ware, pails, chairs, sashes, shutters, doors, pottery, glass, soap, woolen textiles, shoes, and other goods. The post-Great Depression era changed the industrial fabric of the city, much like the rest of New England, which in-turn changed the community as a whole. **Figures 3.11** and **3.12** represent downtown Keene in the early 1900's and the 1950's respectively. As shown in the early photo of Keene, the buildings and streets are primarily built as mill buildings for manufacturing. The post-industrial era photo below shows the beginning of the Keene that is still present today, where retail shops took over the downtown region. Today, Keene still resides as the economic center of Cheshire County. However, Keene's economy is composed of a variety of industries and occupations that collectively contribute to the local economy. The city has over 12,900 people in the labor force. Currently, educational services, and health care and social assistance leads all industry categories by employing 3,762 people (or 34 percent of all employment). Additional major industries include retail trade with 1,402 employees (12 percent); and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services with 1,300 employees (11 percent). As far as occupations in Keene; management, business, science and arts employ 4,530 people (or 39 percent of the population) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).



Figure 3.11. *Downtown Keene in the 1900s. Photo Source: Historical Society of Cheshire County*



Figure 3.12. *Downtown Keene in the 1950s. Photo Source: Historical Society of Cheshire County*

Keene is home to many large employers, and even more small family-owned businesses.

Figure 3.13 indicates the top employers in Keene in terms of number of employees (NHES). These businesses fall under many industry types, for instance: top social service based employers like Keene State College, the Keene School District and the Cheshire Medical Center; notable science/medical based businesses

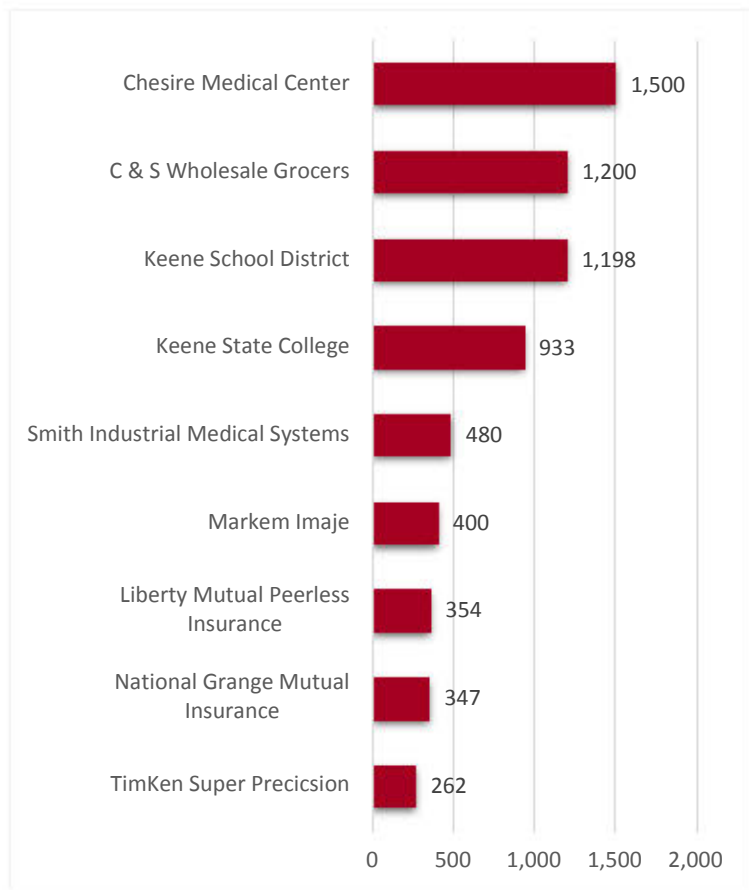


Figure 3.13. Top employers in Keene. Data Source: New Hampshire Employment Security

include Smith Industrial Medical Systems and some manufacturing

based businesses include Markem Imaje and Timken. Several of the top ten employers in Keene are manufacturing based which is a representation of Keene's former industrial roots.

An integral part of a city being the economic center of the region is that it must include shopping centers to meet the needs of local consumers. Keene has numerous retailers like Walmart, Home Depot, Target and the many grocery store chains including Market Basket, Hannaford's and Price Chopper that bring in customers from the region. Additionally, small family-owned businesses have establishments all throughout downtown Keene and in the many shopping

centers in Keene; such as Hannah Grimes, the Brewbakers Coffee Shop, and Ted’s Shoe and Sports. These businesses are cornerstones of the local community image and serve as employment sources and draws on customers. The housing market in Keene is dependent on the success of these stores and businesses.

Along with employment, median income is a critical factor of the economy and housing market. The median household income in 2015 for Keene is \$52,636, whereas the median income for New Hampshire residents was \$66,779. This may have to do with the fact that there are about 4,300 non family households in Keene, making a median income of only \$31,495, many of which are likely to be from student occupied housing, or Millennials. This income gap for residents of Keene makes it hard for many to find affordable housing and reliable housing within the town and may force younger workable residents to find housing elsewhere.



Figure 3.14. *Traffic circle on Main Street. Photo Source: Authors*

The above average tax rates residents pay in comparison to other towns in New Hampshire is another factor that is keeping younger home buyers and renters out of Keene’s market. The New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration annually calculates full tax rates for all 230 New Hampshire municipality. The full tax rate represents the estimated tax rate for a municipality if all taxable property was assessed at 100 percent (per \$1,000). According to the 2016 data, Keene currently ranks

226 of 230 with a full tax rate of \$35.98. In comparison,

towns bordering Keene such as Westmoreland and Swanzey have rates of \$23.87 and \$27.50 respectively, and towns with similar populations to Keene such as Portsmouth and Londonderry have rates of \$14.15 and \$20.46 respectively. **Figure 15** represents the tax rates in New Hampshire.

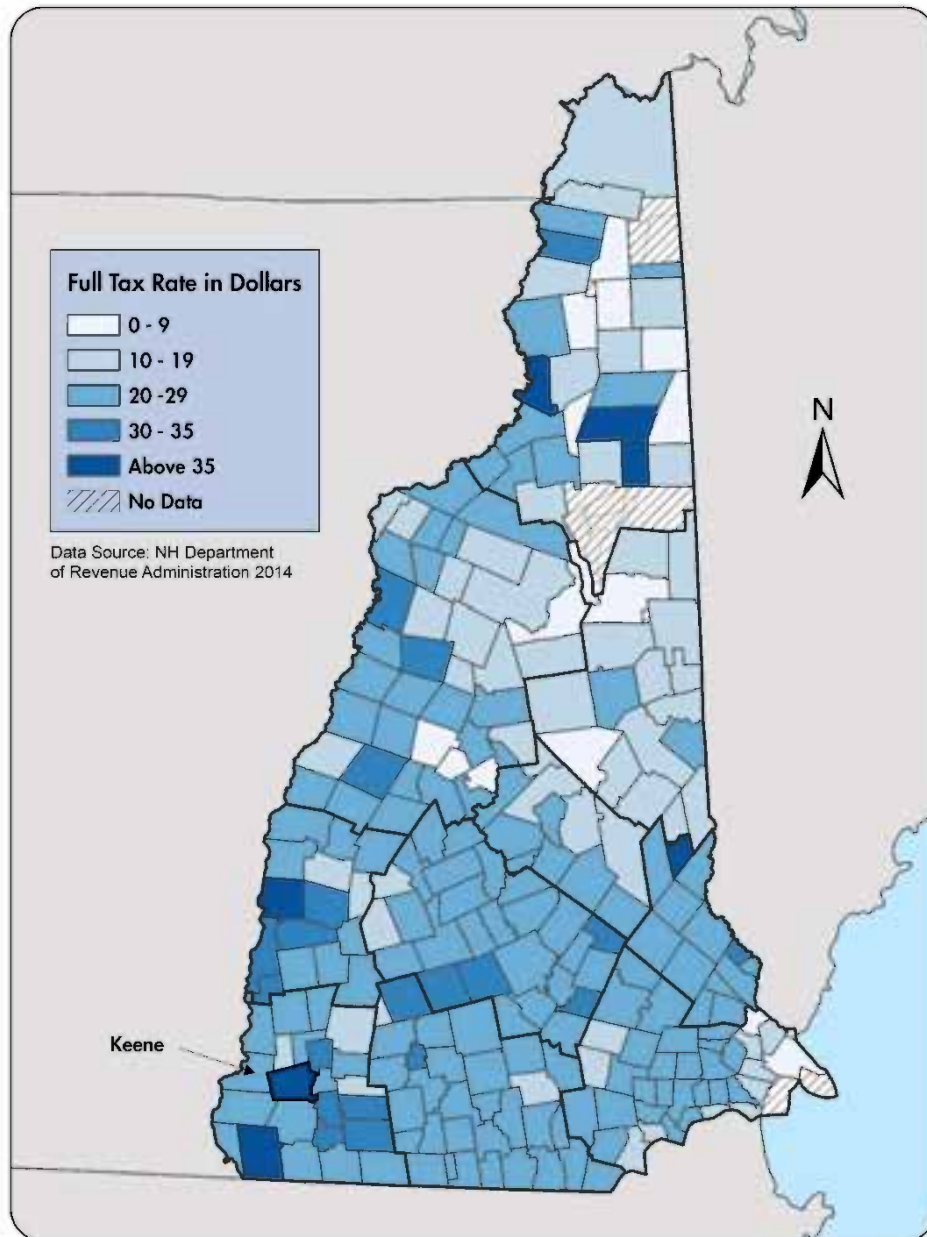


Figure 3.15. Full tax rates in dollars in New Hampshire. Map created by authors.
Data Source: New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration, 2014

The issue of the impending “Silver Tsunami” of older people paired with concerns of the relative absence of productive young professionals has been discussed extensively within New Hampshire. Steven Norton, executive director of the New Hampshire Center for Public Policy Studies, warns that the Baby Boomer generation will soon outnumber the rest of the population, with estimates that the number of residents over the age of 85 will rise over 35,000 by 2035. He said that, “the state is not looking strategically at this issue. This is not on anyone’s radar” (McGauley 2016, A1). This is significant because the demand for medical care and infrastructure may soon buckle under the aging population’s needs and the thinning of support of working professionals. As the former Medicaid director of New Hampshire, Norton outlined the series of events that will happen if the aging trend continues:

- Home health care will be driven by modifications in Medicare and Medicaid programs. The elderly will demand more resources and stress social security;
- Spending trends will shift because they consume less and spend more on health care;
- Older people will be more vulnerable in rural areas because cities have the more advanced health opportunities.

The biggest problem, Norton adds, is that “Medicaid can take care of those who are poor, and the rich can afford care, but it’s the big middle that face problems” (McGauley 2016, A1). Young professionals throughout the country are struggling to afford their own housing due to student loans and other factors such as medical concerns. Premiums have risen along with rent and student loans, so the deck is tremendously stacked against their favor. Norton is warning New Hampshire that the aging population affects everyone, not just the people that are retiring.

To help combat the problems that the Silver Tsunami generate, New Hampshire governor Chris Sununu created a Millennial Advisory Council through an executive order on September 20, 2017. This council consists of 25 members of Millennials and their purpose is to provide the governor with insight and recommendations regarding the attraction and retention of young professionals (Landen 2017). The intent is to try to set policies to help keep Millennials interested in living in the state. This council is still within its infancy. Several of the young professionals in this committee have expressed their opinions and hopes for this development in an article published in the Keene Sentinel. George Hansel, 31, is a Keene city councilor who is also the national sales manager at Filtrine Manufacturing Co. He believes that “a lot of the cultural issues and the demand for more modern housing will be worked out once young people with high-paying jobs come into the state to contribute to our economy”. Perhaps rezoning downtown areas will encourage an influx in young professionals as it will provide a “more modern residential construction that is close to the downtown area” (Landen 2017). Danya Landis, 28, who is the co-founder of the Keene-based arts, events, and design company Machina Arts, stresses the need to provide welcoming places for young professionals to “have a good time”. She says that “as a rural state, it can be easy for young people to feel isolated in New Hampshire” (Landen 2017). She also mentions that the minimum wage is a deterrent and that big businesses are encouraged to provide livable wages for their employees.

CHAPTER 4

CURRENT STATE OF KEENE'S HOUSING MARKET



The City of Keene encompasses dynamic interactions between the residents, the housing market and businesses. Despite these vibrant interactions, currently a steady shift in each of the above elements clouds the predictability for the future of Keene. However, by analyzing and interpreting relevant data, it is possible to create a better understanding of these complex interactions. It is essential to understand these demographic, housing and economic transformations in order to stay ahead of the curve by planning for the future.

STUDENT AND PRIVATE HOUSING MARKETS

The two major sub-housing markets in Keene include student off-campus housing and privately owned housing units. These two markets are separate, but not mutually exclusive. When one market either declines or thrives, the other market will almost always feel the effects. However, the reasoning for each market's state of health is bound to different audiences but can overlap. For example, there are many instances where houses flip from being family owned, to being student rented, as shown in Appendix A. This occurrence can create instability in a neighborhood and housing market. In order to understand the overarching housing market of Keene, it is essential to examine each submarket.

First, the Keene State College student off-campus housing market is going through a significant shift in tenants and quantity of housing units with several factors in play. The first shift in off-campus housing came after the decision to require Sophomores to live on campus rather than having the choice to live on or off campus in 2013. With only Seniors and Juniors living off campus, a whole class of students was taken out of the market. Additionally, and perhaps the most notable factor of the distressed off-campus housing market, is the steep decline of student enrollment in the past five years. According to the Keene State College Fact Book the current

student enrollment is 4,068 full-time students, 18 percent less than the 2011 enrollment of 4,947. With fewer overall students attending the college, coupled with a whole class being taken out of the market, there is naturally less students filling the off-campus housing units. This, in turn, is causing higher vacancy rates. The Keene State off-campus housing market has traditionally been composed of single-family houses in the surrounding neighborhoods that are rented out to college students. Over time, new buildings have been added to the housing stock, while other houses have shifted from student housing to family housing (Appendix A). Like most major development projects, there are both positive and negative side effects. A perfect example of this are the new apartment buildings such as the Mills (**Figure 4.1**), Arcadia (**Figure 4.2**) and Davis Street Apartments that have all been introduced to the housing market within the past five years. These three apartment units alone added almost 500 new bedrooms to the off-campus student housing market, and are both located in close proximity to campus and other college neighborhoods.



Figure 4.1. *The Mills Apartments.*
Photo Source: Authors



Figure 4.2. *Arcadia Apartments.*
Photo Source: Authors

The benefit brought by these contemporary apartment buildings is the new development of housing added to a severely aging housing stock. This provides more options and appeals to the college age group, but Millennials may still be hesitant to life in such proximity to the college

students. However, this does not take away from the fact that the principles of supply and demand have been ignored, resulting in a distressed off-campus housing market. The additional apartments likely contributed to the skyrocketed vacancy rates to 8.5 percent in 2012, a record in Keene since 1990. A greater supply of housing and shrinking number of consumers results in a decline of home values and an increase in number of empty units. This results in a loss of revenue and taxes. According to the New Hampshire Employment Security (2017), 2016 trends show a -6 percent drop in median sales price and a -14 percent drop in median rent per month.

AGING HOUSING STOCK

Building structures in Keene are becoming aged. More than 50 percent of houses are half a century or older and more than one third were built pre-1939. **Figure 4.3** shows the tenure by year of each housing structure built in Keene. Shifting demographics indicate that housing built from 1970 on may not meet the needs of Keene's current and future residents. The older housing stock may be a deterrent for some, as those units may lack modern amenities and luxuries Millennials actively seek out. **Figure 4.4** uses the median year housing structures where built in each census block of Keene. The distribution of houses based on year built is necessary for understanding the geography of distressed neighborhoods.

Much of the housing stock is aging and in many cases, deteriorating, especially when there is little investment in revitalization. As a result, housing quality becomes a relatively significant concern for the city of Keene, especially in East Keene and downtown where the median year households were built is 1939 (Figure 4.4). This impacts the housing market because older houses generally require more maintenance costs and they have safety concerns such as lead-based paint. Higher income residents that once lived in East Keene, in proximity to downtown, have now shifted

to the newer West Keene neighborhoods. This left behind a housing market in East Keene that, in part, is typified by investor landlords renting to lower income residents and students.

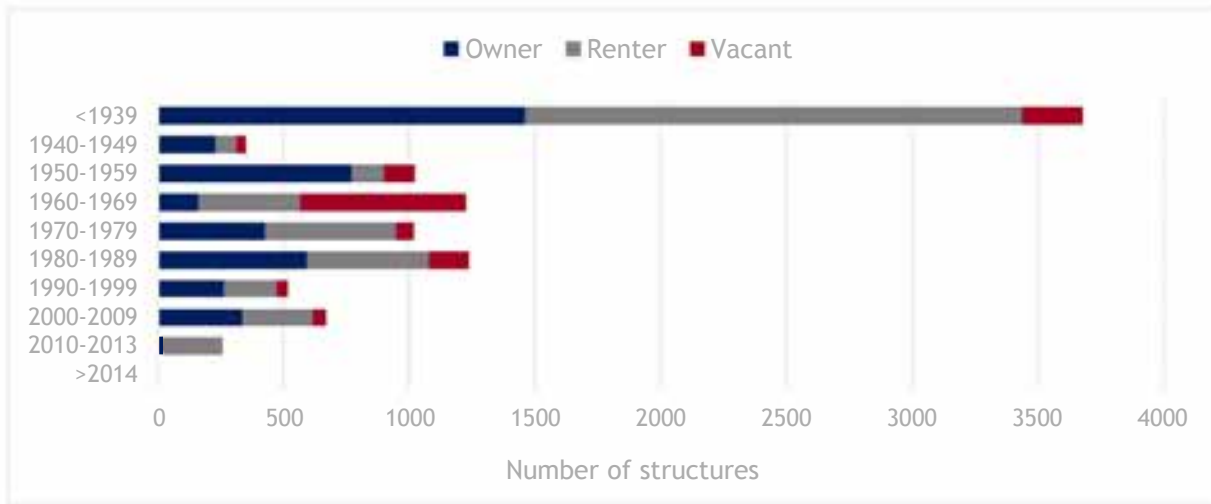


Figure 4.3 Tenure by year structure built, Keene NH. Data Source: Census Bureau 2017

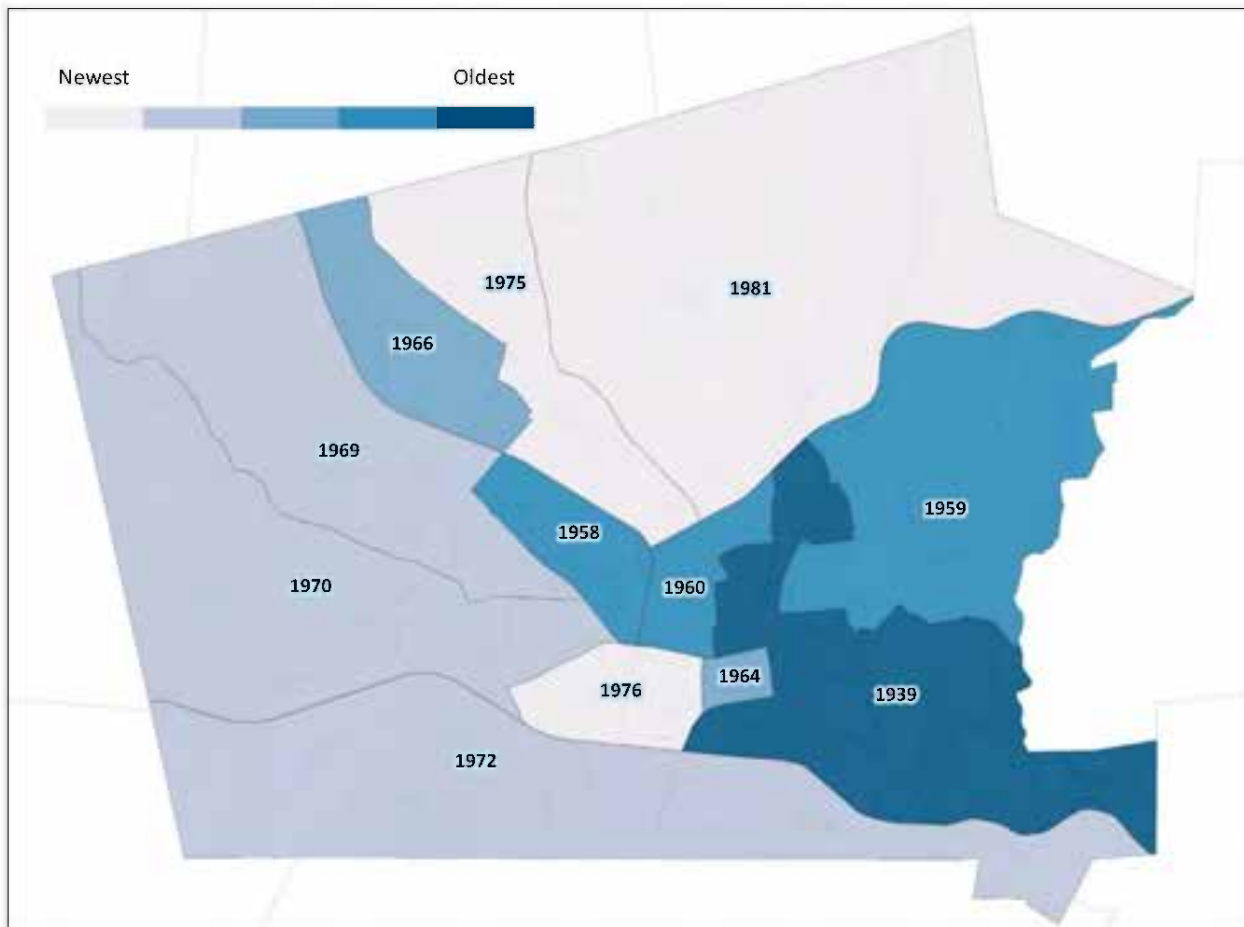


Figure 4.4 Median year household built per census block group. Data Source: Census Bureau 2017

NEW APARTMENT OPTIONS

Another factor with enduring influence on the housing market is the constructing of new multi-unit luxury apartment buildings in Keene. One such apartment complex is being built at the former middle school grounds (Figure 4.5). The structure will be four-stories in height with 65 two-bedroom and 70 one bed-room apartments, and are aimed at the



Figure 4.5. *Construction of new apartments at Washington Park of Keene LLC. Source: Authors*

“millennial demographic of 25- to 35-year-olds, earning in the range of \$40,000 a year” (Stein 2016). Another structure will be erected at the once-thriving Colony Mills plaza, which is owned by Brady Sullivan Properties. The project will convert the shopping plaza and adjacent accessory building into 90 apartments or condominiums, and currently has no direct demographic target.

These plan brings up many questions. First, Keene’s population growth has stagnated, with only a 1% increase since the year 2000. Much like the student housing market, adding to the supply of housing stock to a population that is not growing could mean more vacant units and loss of revenue. Secondly, there is uncertainty around where the people in these apartments would be working. There are few entry-to-mid level jobs in Keene with adequate wages to attract new millennials to Keene to live in these units. So, the question remains as to who will fill these new apartments without leaving other houses in Keene vacant. History proves that this is troubling for any housing market. Much like the effects the off-campus housing market felt after the

introduction of the new apartment buildings, the new luxury apartment complexes in Keene may cause similar effects on the housing market city-wide. However, these brand new units may be enticing enough for a new wave of Millennials to enter Keene. According to Senior Project Manager Tony Marcotte, there are many attractive and promising features incorporated with the new Washington Park development. Along with housing, plans for both structures call for a restaurant/bar on site. The Washington Park structure also has plans for office space and a large performance space. The hope is to create the ideal live, work, and play environment within the apartment building and to utilize aspects of ride sharing to reduce the dependency on vehicles. These amenities coupled with their close proximity to downtown could prove to be major selling points to potential Millennial buyers for both complexes.

ECONOMY

The local economy has direct effects on the housing market and the number of new residents that choose to move to Keene (or move away). One-third of Keene's population is composed of working individuals, while the rest of the population is either dependent children, disabled individuals, or retired elderly. Shifts in employment affects not only the employees, but their children and any other dependent of them. Current trends show a steady increase in average wages for the Keene private workforce, but a decrease in jobs, especially in goods producing industries (**Figure 4.6**).

Goods producing type industries have not seen a positive increase any year from 2005 to 2015, but instead roughly a 50 percent decline in ten years. On the other hand, service producing type industries have only seen slight increases in 2005, 2010 and 2011, but have overall seen decline in the decade. Additionally, increasing wages are likely a symptom of the aging workforce

in Keene as workers are gaining seniority status. This is troubling news for the city of Keene. As these jobs leave Keene, more residence are forced to leave as well. The housing market is then faced with a large uphill battle as finding new homeowners and tenants to fill units becomes tougher.

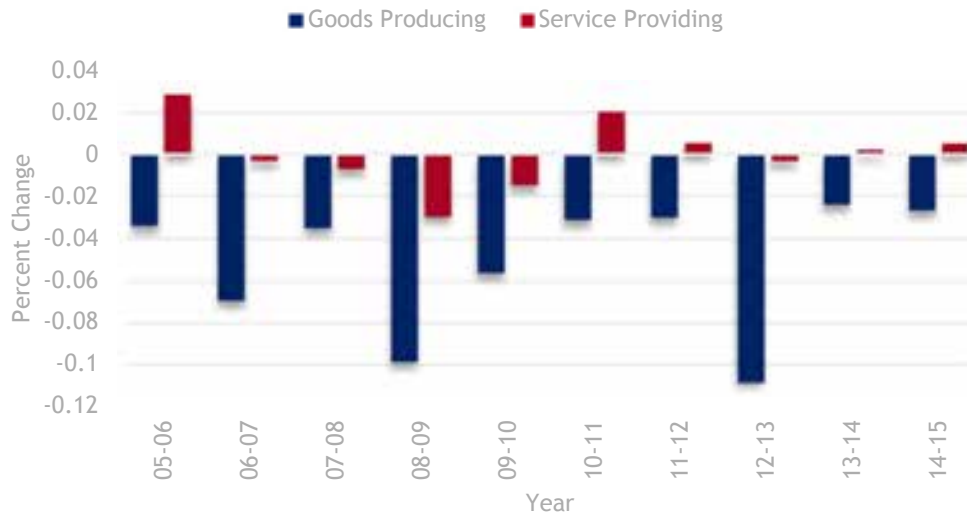


Figure 4.6. Year over year change in covered private employment in Keene, NH.
Data Source: NHHFA.

RENTAL PRICES

According to an Urban Land Institute survey of 1,270 Millennials in 2014, nearly 50 percent of respondents were renters. Of those 60 percent rented apartments or townhouse style units and 40 percent rented single-family homes. Financial constraints play a major role in many Millennial's lifestyle choices, and a reason why nearly 35 percent home in 2015 (American Community Survey 2015). However, as younger Millennials continue to age, transition to better paying jobs, and gain independence, many will look to move out on their own initially to rentals. Mobility, freedom, maintenance, and lower costs are all enticing reasons for Millennials to want to rent over buy, especially those in the younger portion of the generation.

The New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA) keeps up to date information on all of New Hampshire’s housing and rental trends. **Figure 4.7** shows median rent prices over the past ten years for Keene, Cheshire County, and the state of New Hampshire. It also compares national median rent prices for years 2010-2015; the most recent data available.

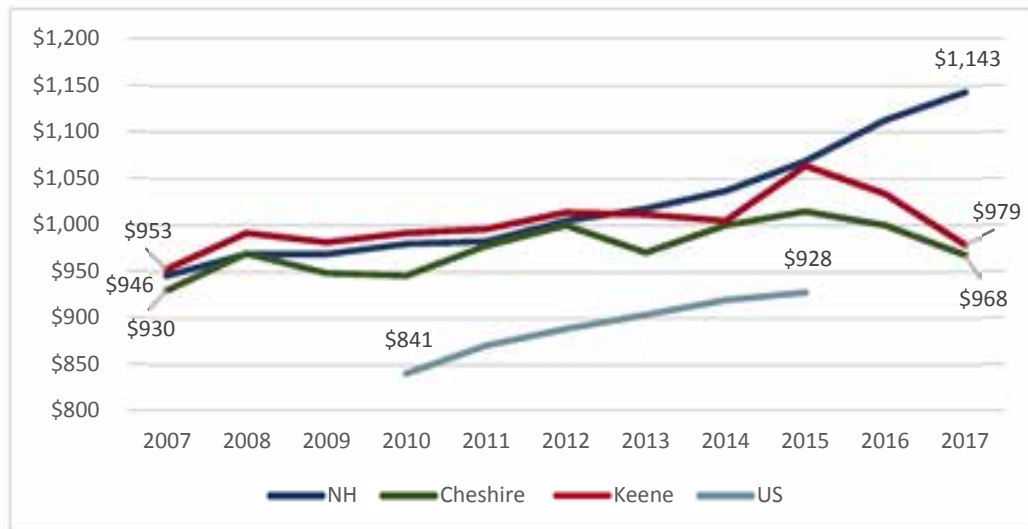


Figure 4.7. Median Rental Prices 2007 – 2017. *Data Source:* NHHFA 2017 & Census Bureau 2017

In 2007 the median rent prices for Keene, Cheshire, and New Hampshire were relatively close at \$953, \$930, and \$946 respectively. However, over the past 10 years the gap has widened. From 2007 to 2017 New Hampshire’s median rent has risen by 21 percent, or \$197. In comparison median rent in Keene and Cheshire County have only risen 2 percent and 4 percent respectively. The National median rent price from 2010-2015 rose about 10 percent. These numbers show relatively stable prices in Keene and lower overall price tags than New Hampshire as a whole. This could possibly indicate that the new apartment developments will not have a significant effect on existing rent prices throughout Keene, as the market has proven to be steady.

Figure 4.8 presents the median rental prices for various size rentals units within Keene, Cheshire County, and the State of New Hampshire for the year 2016 (NHHFA 2017). The three are

quite comparable, and nearly identical in price for various unit sizes. However, Keene’s 4 bedroom and plus unit sizes carry median costs of \$300 more than either Cheshire County or the State of New Hampshire. Many Millennials may find the \$1,000 median rental price for all rental sizes to be on the expensive side.

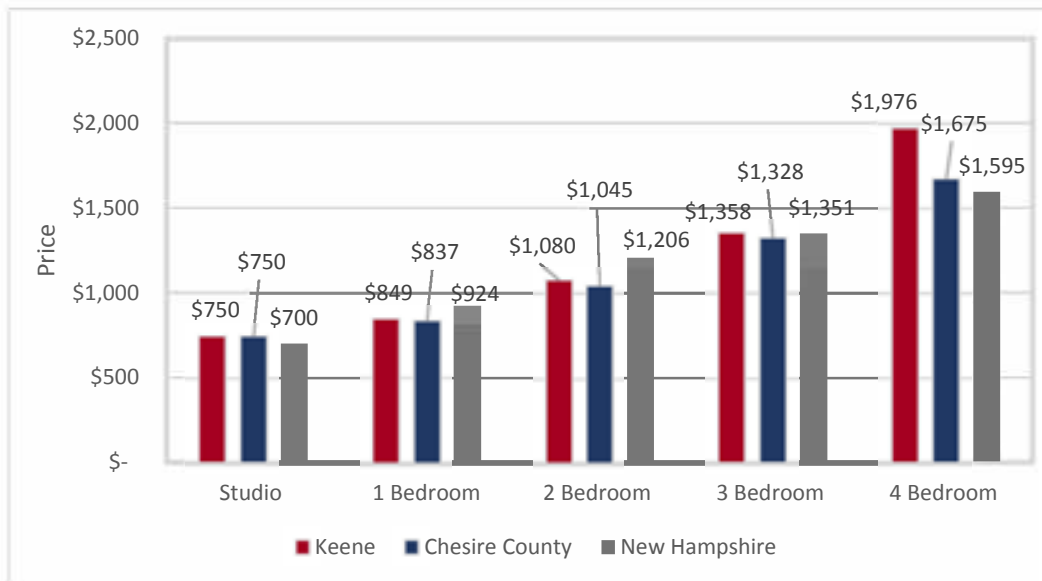


Figure 4.8. Median Rental Prices per unit size 2016. *Data Source:* NHHFA 2017

Many Millennials look for luxury apartments with amenities such as a central location, close enough to range of shops, restaurants and services providers. They also desire laundry facilities, fitness centers, and security; and, of course, it should be competitively priced in the region of \$1,000 or less per month. These demands are often times not available to first time renters/homebuyers, especially in Keene which has a particularly old housing stock. However, the new apartment complexes may change this dependent on the final pricing.

HOUSING PRICES

Not surprisingly, those seeking to set up a stable family unit desire a stable place in which to live. While most Millennials will rent their next home, more than 8 in 10 already own, or plan

to own their own home someday (Demand Institute Housing & Community Survey 2013). This makes the Millennial generation still an ‘ownership’ generation, as they value the space, financial investment, independence and security a home gives a family. Assessing the value of Keene’s owner-occupied units is therefore important in understanding how it compares to the surrounding area, state, and nation.

Figure 4.9 provides the median value of owner-occupied units over a 5 year period (2011-2015) (NHHFA 2017 & Census Bureau 2017). The values of homes in Keene decreased 8 percent from 2010 – 2015, while in comparison both Cheshire County and New Hampshire values dropped 6 percent, and nationally the values dropped 8 percent.

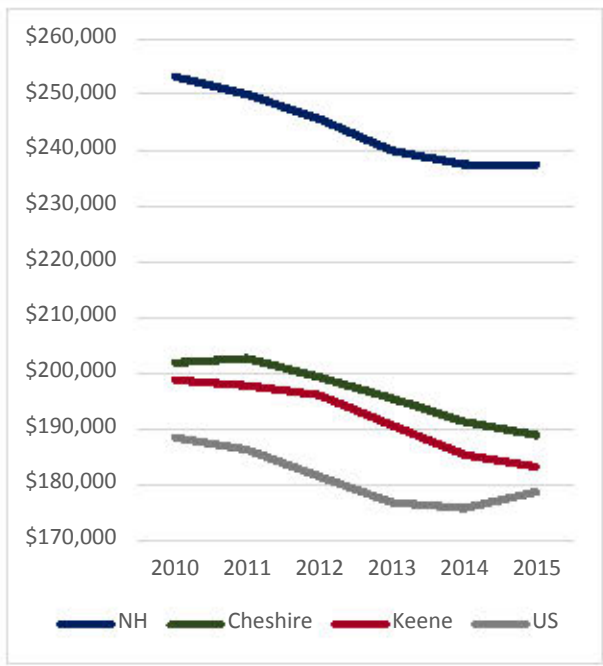


Figure 4.9. Median owner-occupied unit value. Data Source: NHHFA 2017

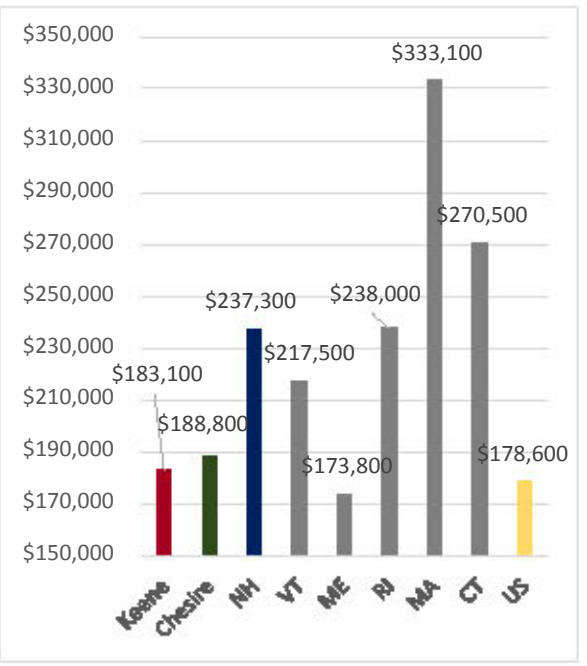


Figure 4.10. Median owner-occupied unit value in New England (2015). Data Source: NHHFA 2017

Figure 4.10 compares the 2015 value of owner-occupied units in New England and nationally (NHHFA 2017 & Census Bureau 2017). Keene’s value at \$183,000 puts home ownership

within reach for Millennials, especially when compared to the other states in New England. In New England, only Maine has a lower median price tag than Keene, and nationally Keene is only 2.5 percent above the median.

TENURE OF HOUSING

Today, there are almost 9,961 housing units in Keene. Of these units; 4,881 are single-family units, 5,100 are multiple-family units and 450 are mobile homes or other housing units (ACS 2015). It is worth noting that multi-family units include mostly college housing, town houses and apartment buildings. These are primarily found in the densely populated downtown (found in the East Keene region) and are primarily built before 1990. **Figure 4.11** illustrates the change of tenure over the past 10 years. The most notable change is the 7 percent drop in renter occupied multi-family units, which could be explained by the drop in attendance rates at Keene State and thus lower renting rates in college housing. However, renter and owner-occupied single-family units have seen an increase in 2 and 3 percent respectively, indicating a subtle change in the market.

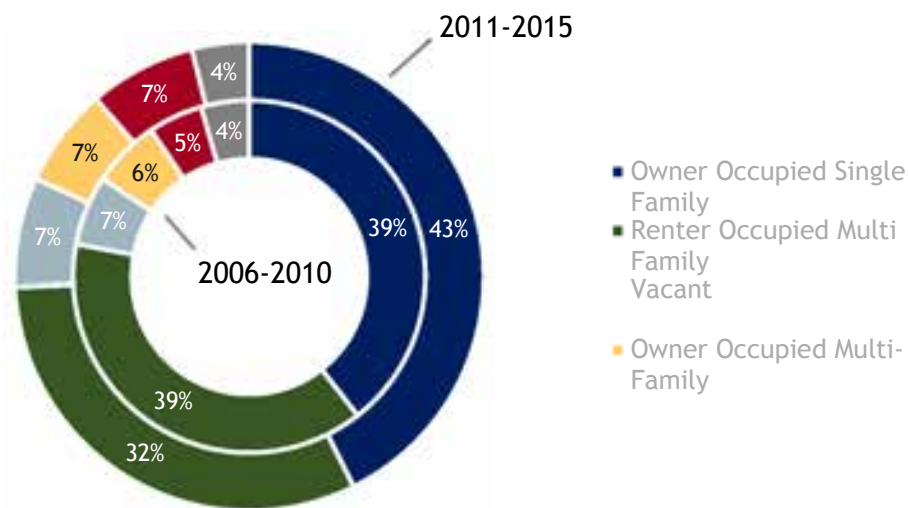


Figure 4.11. Tenure of Keene's housing units. Data Source: Census Bureau 2017

GEOGRAPHY OF HOUSING

Keene also has some reoccurring spatial patterns when looking at several characteristics of housing and demographics. **Figure 4.12** is a bivariate map of Keene's census block groups by median age and tenure (Census Bureau 2017). The color for the block group represents median age while each pie chart represents the percentage of renters to owners for that block group. Keene's central business district and the adjacent areas are the youngest block groups in Keene by far, with median ages of 19.8, 20.5, and 24.3 due to the presence of college students. These areas as a result have the highest rates of renters too. This spatial pattern shifts however the further expanded out into town. Median ages significantly increase to 52.9, 49.3, and 44.7 in West Keene, and 42, 41.4, and 47.8 in North Keene. The percentage of renters also drops as the further extended outward. This suggests a strong correlation between age and tenure, and it is spatially evident where each demographic predominantly resides.

Furthermore, this spatial trend also contrasts when analyzing housing values throughout the city. **Figure 4.13** takes housing valuations from the New Hampshire Department of Revenue and displays them each with a dot; the darker the dot the higher the value of the house (2008). Downtown and East Keene show relatively lower prices than when compared to some areas in West and North Keene, barring neighborhoods surrounding the Keene Middle School. Also noticeable is the wealthy strip of homes lining Court Street, incongruous of homes in adjacent neighborhoods. These values seem to spatially correlate with figure 4.12 and figure 4.4 in terms of median year built, median age, and percent of tenure. That is, areas with lower valuations tend to have an older median year built, younger median age, smaller property size, and higher

percentage of renters and vice versa. This conveys an observable segregation among housing throughout the city.

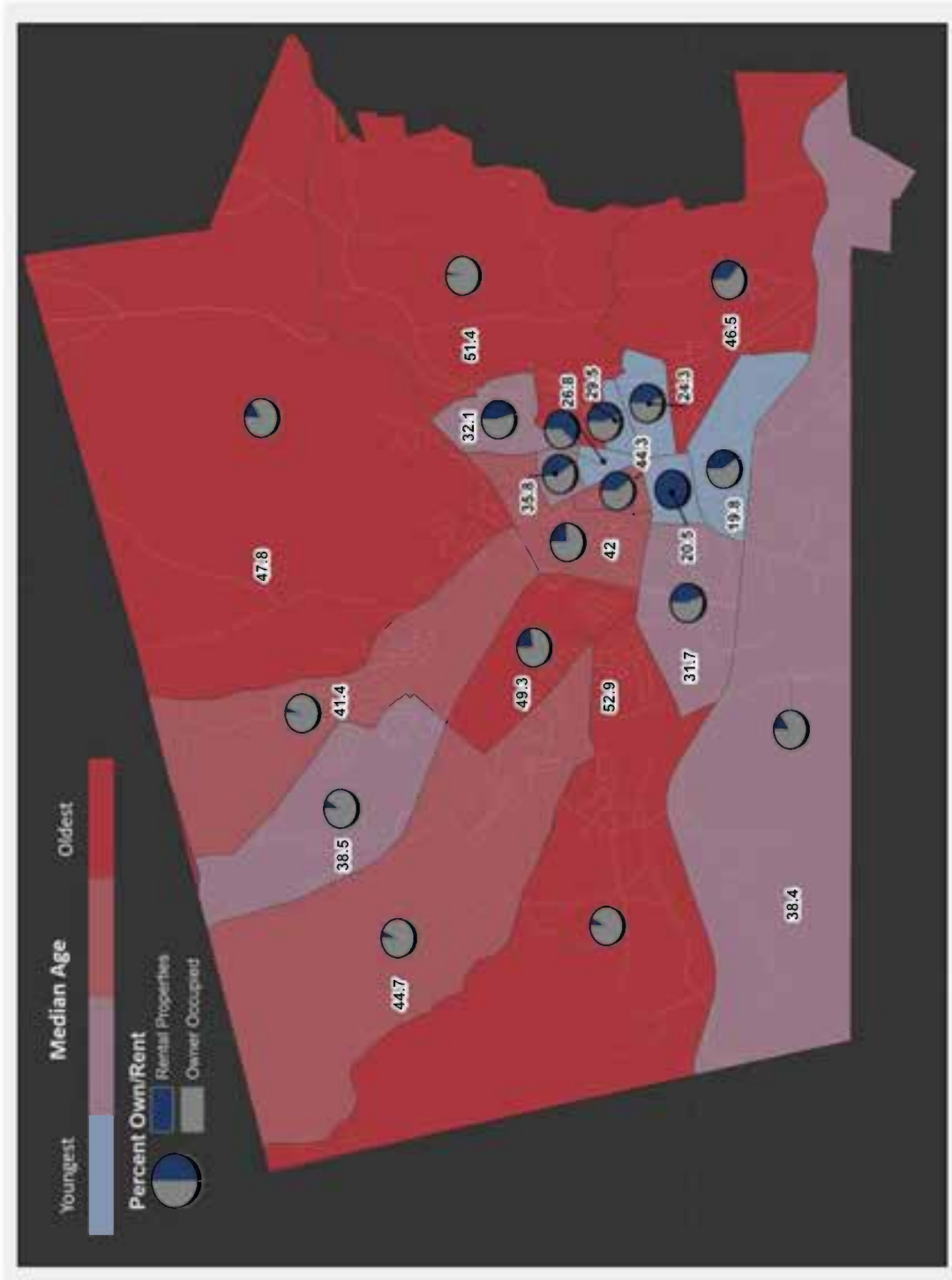


Figure 4.12. Median age and tenure by census block group. Data Source: Census Bureau 2017

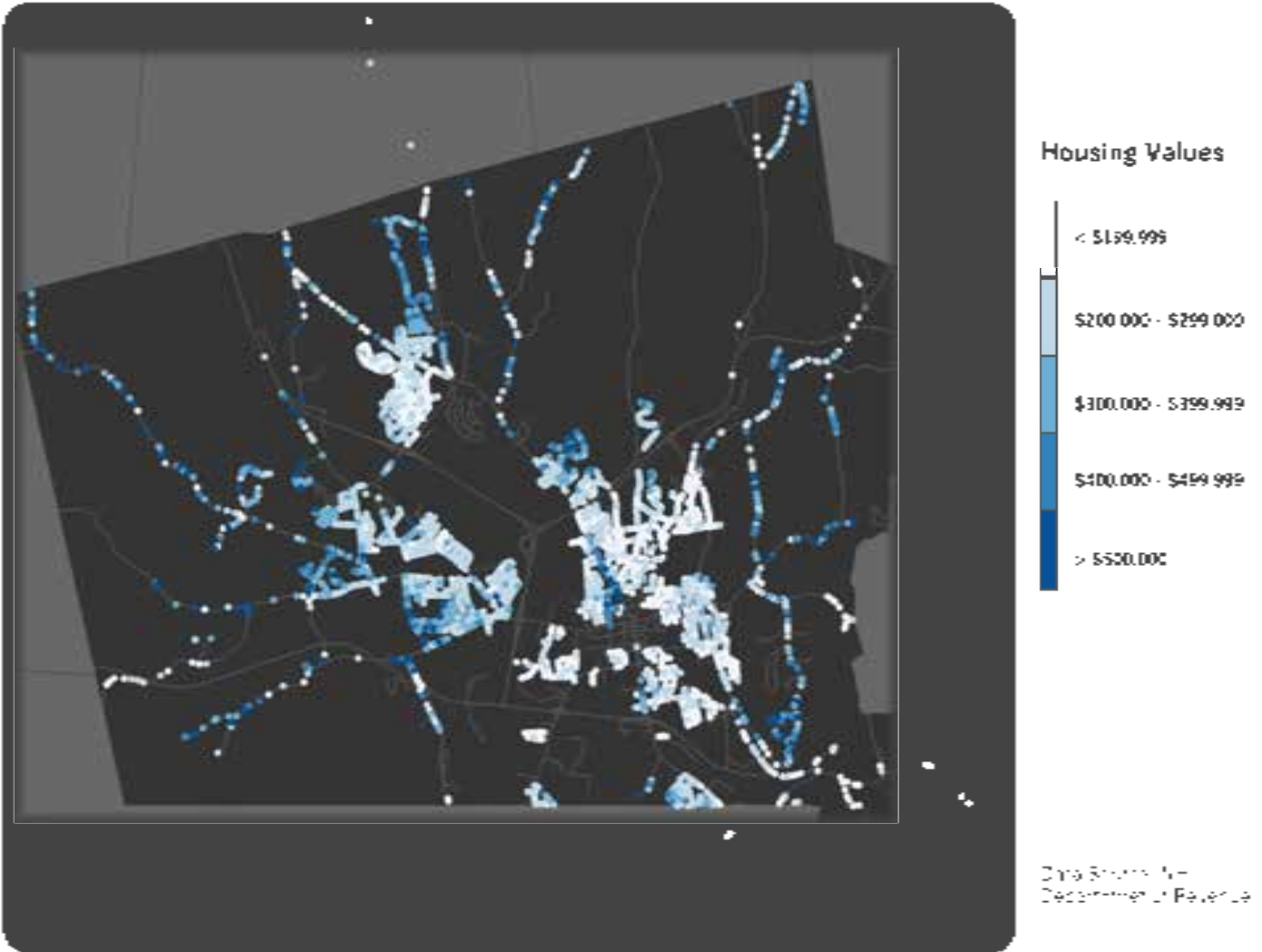


Figure 4.13. Keene Housing Values 2008. Data Source: NH Department of Revenue

CHAPTER 5

EXPERT INTERVIEWS



EXPERT INTERVIEWS

Throughout this case study, interviews with experts were key in figuring out the direction in which the city of Keene is going. City councilors, city planners, on-campus employees, and more explained all opinions on housing, zoning, management, demographics, legislation, and cost. Among those interviewed are:

- Frank Richter: Housing Inspector, City of Keene
- Tara Kessler: Planner, City of Keene
- Robin Picard: Coordinator of Student and Community Relations, Keene State College.

The three of these professionals are experts of Keene and the student population. The many insights they provided to the case study served as jumping-off points for further investigation.

ROBIN PICARD

The first interview was with both Ms. Kessler and Ms. Picard. Together, they were able to talk about the issues that Keene State students face, coupled with the city's role regarding undergraduate students. Picard was a landlord on Washington Street before working at Keene State. She notes that landlords and landowners may feel that some students may generate complaints associated with litter and noise. These complaints are perhaps magnified because of the proximity of student housing to Main Street. After her days of working as a landlord, Picard is now working for the college's Residential Life Office. She works closely with landlords, students, and city officials to ensure that off-campus housing is safe and healthy.

Picard notes that there is an issue with housing occupancies within the student rentals and that property owners are considering opening up their traditionally student-only rentals to everyone else. This is an issue more for the landlords because they are not making as much money

from single families than students. For example, Arcadia Apartments is a relatively new building near the college and charges \$599 per bedroom including utilities. For a three-bedroom, two-bathroom apartment, the total is almost \$1,800. In comparison, someone can rent a four-bedroom single-family home starting at \$1,650, not including utilities (according to current listings on realtor.com). Landlords are potentially losing money with the decrease in student population and non-student families are not likely to want to live in student apartments because there is not as much privacy or space. With the perception of living amongst “rowdy” college students, many families will completely dismiss such complexes entirely. Picard boils this problem down to there being two housing markets in Keene: student and everybody else. This becomes more apparent when student apartments such as The Mills and Arcadia Apartments have vacancies.

Unfortunately, there is some question as to the exact number of vacancies in Keene. Picard has talked to landlords in the city but, understandably, many of them do not want to share their vacancy rate due to the fierce competition. The responses she has received have corroborated that there are many vacancies. Interestingly, landlords are also mentioning that student needs are becoming an issue, noting especially the need for companion animals which has created a confusing legal grey zone for those landlords who do not allow pets.

TARA KESSLER

As Tara Kessler was listening, she reverberated some of the same sentiments while providing additional information regarding housing vacancies. Ms. Kessler is more focused on residents and young professionals of Keene because she works with the public every day. She notes that the Monadnock region in general has a stable economy, but mentioned a study that shows that the region is about as productive as Coos County. She also raised the issue of the

generally growing aging population and its potential impact on economic growth. Interestingly, Kessler mentioned that both older and younger people have the same needs and preferences, such as proximity to services and stores. In response, the City of Keene is promoting mixed-use zoning to attract more people into the city instead of its outskirts.

One of the key points that Kessler stands on is that there is a discrepancy between housing



Figure 5.1 *Housing availability, affordability, and price are the key factors in Millennial home searches.*

prices, availability, and affordability (Figure

5.1). She emphasizes that because there is a

relatively low vacancy rate, it becomes

difficult for young professionals to find

quality housing in a mixed-use area that is

within their budget. This is in part why the

city has moved forward with the

Marlborough Street rezoning project, which

is transforming the street into mixed-use zoning in downtown Keene to allow for the three points

desired by Millennials and young professionals. Additionally, Kessler projects that this zoning

change will create jobs by bringing in more business. This, she hopes, will help to grow the local

economy

Kessler also proposed another idea that could help refresh Keene's economy and retain

more young professionals. She believes that incentivizing housing in the SEED District, an area of

downtown Keene dedicated to use of sustainable energy and resources, would be key in young

professional retention. This could be supported through loans and credits for reverting housing

from apartments back to single-family homes. Many young professionals want to have more

privacy and space in comparison to college students, so it is key to have more single-family houses available for rent. Another thought would be to encourage businesses to provide company housing. This would be helpful for workers who could not otherwise afford housing.

FRANK RICHTER

A third interview was conducted with Frank Richter, who performs inspections on properties throughout Keene. He has also been a landlord for twenty years in Keene and Spofford, and is very knowledgeable about housing. He first managed low-income housing, but now works with Millennials and young professionals. He has never had a difficult time filling his units and it is largely due to referrals. His job with Code Enforcement is to inspect over 600 apartments. With his experience between the two positions, he finds that the issue is not with housing vacancies, but with finding quality tenants. Being too close to campus can also potentially drive young professionals away.

Like Ms. Kessler, Mr. Richter suggests that one way to retain young professionals in Keene is by creating incentives for young professionals, and stresses that loan forgiveness is a huge proponent for professionals who recently graduated college. Many experts agree that student loans are the biggest barrier to home ownership and making other large financial decisions. Richter specifically mentioned introducing tax abatements from the city, which would be used to make housing more affordable.

Tara Kessler, Robin Picard, and Frank Richter are three experts that help explain the housing market in Keene. There are essentially two markets, one for students and one for everyone else, and this creates a dichotomy in the community. Permanent residents of Keene have voiced concerns regarding college housing and its impact on an otherwise beautiful and vibrant

city. These three experts mentioned several ways to alleviate the housing situation. These include tax abatements and grants. Without question, the college and community are working together in order to improve the housing situation in Keene, and to make the city a better place in which to live.

FOCUS GROUP

In addition to the interviews, conducting a focus group of young professionals was crucial in providing firsthand knowledge for this case study. Knowing what young professionals and Millennials think about Keene and living in New Hampshire is the foundation of this study. The panel consisted of nine participants from various institutions and professions. All are either professionals of Keene and/or live in Keene. All have shown interest in this case study and were eager to contribute to the conversation. Nikki Sauber, a graduate of Antioch University, provided a list of people in the Young Professionals Network – an organization of which she serves as President – with the opportunity to join the discussion. The YPN is where most of the participants were derived.



Figure 5.2 Focus group setup at Keene Chamber of Commerce.

The format of the focus group was meant to be informal so the participants felt comfortable sharing their experiences, concerns, and ideas. The meeting was purposely in a central location at Keene’s Chamber of Commerce, which is located on Central Square. The top floor serves as a conference and meeting room, so a large table with

chairs accommodated everyone nicely. Sauber was kind enough to provide the arrangements. The style of the focus group was meant to be conversational and not tied to an overly specific set of questions.

HOUSING

At the outset, the researchers asked if everyone was satisfied with their living situation. The participants had varying responses, ranging from happiness to frustration. The group agreed that Keene is an expensive place in which to live. Rents are considered to be abnormally high, and one respondent needs roommates in order to afford to live in Keene. She also mentioned that she loves living in Keene, but is having increasing difficulty finding a nicer quality house for an affordable price. She stated that she has been searching for a house for five years with no luck. Others mentioned that the taxes are what drives the price too high and makes housing unnaturally high for a low-quality house. One participant rents out a duplex and finds that his rate of return to be fairly profitable.



Figure 5.3 Focus group during discussion. **Left-Clockwise:** Nikki Sauber, Andrew Madison, Drew Bryenton, Kasha Bell, Jahdiel Torres-Cabá, Meghan Spaulding; **Right-Clockwise:** Mari Brunner, Kevin Salina, Mark Landolina, Mike Giacomo, George Hansel. **Photo Source:** Authors.

In terms of cost and quality of housing, the potential of revitalization was then broached. One participant noted that there is such a high turnaround with apartments that landlords seem

not to want to spend the money to spruce up their properties. With such a high turnaround, many people may abuse the property. Another young professional explained that most houses in Keene were built at the turn of the century, and are several decades – if not centuries – old. The process of converting single-family houses into multi-family accommodations furthers the lack of quality with shoddy materials and undesirable features, such as small cabinets that have not been updated in decades.

In an attempt to suggest alternate housing, the authors brought up the idea of traditionally student-only housing, such as The Mills and Arcadia apartments, being open up to the general public. The entire focus group unanimously agreed within a heartbeat that college students negatively impact their housing decisions. Absolutely zero Millennials are willing to live with students. Returning back to housing costs, it was suggested that houses may be more affordable than apartments and that owning a home is less expensive in Keene compared to other places in New Hampshire. For young professionals, this is partly a concern because many prefer to live in an apartment because of the simplicity. One participant prefers not to own a house because she wants the ability to move when needed and not to worry about maintenance costs, even if it was an ultimately cheaper way to live. Another responded by saying that it is the student rental demographic that is driving the rent prices because Keene State College “has given landlords opportunity to constantly have rentals filled... for everyone else” and house prices remain unaffected.

One Millennial, a registered nurse in the region, explained that she bought a “flipped” or renovated house as a private sale. She has been happy with her house and has had no issues with it so far. This elicited a response that “not all houses are poor quality, some are just good deals,”

in that bargains can be found in Keene that do not necessarily need to be renovated to become livable. A participant then advocated for revitalization, saying that it allows the owners to make their house the way they want it to be. Another cautioned that buying a house is complicated and qualifying for a mortgage is the hardest part of the process. Revitalization, he agreed, is the best way to add equity into the house and is worth the investment of time and money.

EMPLOYMENT

After discussing the issues and concerns of housing in Keene, the next order of business was to discuss employment options and opportunities in the city, as many Millennials and young professionals move for their jobs. The authors were interested in understanding the number and quality of jobs offered in the area. A participant immediately noted a problem that Keene is currently facing. She fears that there is a lack of suitable jobs that pay enough, and that there are



“There is an oversaturation of highly educated people, but there are many unskilled jobs available”



many “hiring” signs, but those positions do not provide livable wages. She also voiced her concerns with the lack of full-time positions with benefits. This could lead to an exodus of Millennials since they cannot afford to live in the area and have no savings upon graduating from college.

She further noted that there are “many educated people with Antioch [University] and KSC [Keene State College],”

but they produce people who are forced to leave in pursuit of jobs within their field of expertise. She blames the “oversaturation of highly educated people, but there are many unskilled jobs available”. Another participant noted that there are plenty of manufacturing jobs in Keene that are not advertised enough. She also mentioned the blue collar culture, thinking that many people

believe that those jobs are “beneath them” even though they are great jobs. A Millennial who works at Markem has been in the market for hiring manufacturing workers, though finding qualified candidates is not easy. Another participant agreed, saying that there needs to be “programs to teach how manufacturing jobs can lead to growth,” in that workers will not get “stuck” in a position, but will have a long and successful career.

To further the conversation, the next question was to see if there is a specific industry that is lacking in Keene and if there is anything that should be capitalized on. Green energy was identified as an industry that needs to be augmented, offering jobs in energy security and targeting the cost of energy. This could be accomplished with the manufacturing backbone of Keene, contributing to BPI weatherization and recruiting developers to install new technology. Another industry that is lacking in the Monadnock region is tourism. It was mentioned that the region’s assets need to be highlighted with investments in ecotourism and utilization of technology to attract more visitors to Keene. The volume of undergraduate, graduate, and Ph.D. graduates in fields related to the environment was then identified as something that Keene should incentivize so as to retain those students from Antioch University and Keene State College. Likewise, it was posited there are plenty of jobs in education, so Keene is a perfect area for those who wish to work in the education field.

RECREATION

Lastly, the authors wanted to know how recreation and leisure activities impact the livability of Keene. Most of the participants in the focus group believed that Keene actually has as much or more to do than other places in New Hampshire, and that there is not much that needs to change about the culture of the city. One participant observed that “people underestimate just

how much is in Keene” and that there may be a marketing issue, but “there is probably something for everyone, they just need to find it.” Another Millennial noted that she is always finding new things to do in Keene, which is why she loves living in the city so much. She agrees that there is a marketing issue, which is why some may claim that there is not enough to do in Keene. Another participant suggested that the Thorne Art Gallery on the Keene State



5.4 Millennial themes from the focus group.

College campus is a “cultural opportunity that isn’t usually in this area.” After one of the participants had graduated from Antioch, he found reasons to stay. He thinks that accessibility is fine in Keene and that there is enough connectivity to other cities, such as Concord and Boston.

A participant did mention that the one thing that Keene is missing is live music. Another noted that two venues for live music closed in the city and other restaurants used to have live music, but for the most part it has dried up. Still another contributor observed that there is not much of a “late night town” in that not many venues want to open business since not many people are out and about later at night. Even with these few suggestions, Millennials and young professionals are mostly happy with recreational opportunities in the City of Keene.

Overall, the focus group was successful in providing an understanding of the attitudes and climate of Millennials and young professionals in Keene. The purpose was to see what Keene could potentially do to increase the suitability for this demographic to live, work, and play. Out of the

three, recreational activities should be the least of the city's concerns. Housing is tricky, and people are struggling to find quality housing at an affordable price. Revitalization is not necessarily an issue, and this group seemed to be accepting of home renovation. However, it is the renters that seem to be having the most issues with housing. Young professionals are having trouble affording housing for themselves. For some, the only way to live in Keene is by having roommates, which is not necessarily what people want. The overarching problem in Keene is job selection. There is a flood of very educated graduates from Antioch and Keene State, snatching what little opportunities are available. According to this focus group, Keene needs to incentivize new markets to attract different sectors and skillsets.

CHAPTER 6

ORIGINAL RESEARCH: MILLENNIAL SURVEY



MILLENNIALS SURVEY METHODOLOGY

In order to create a comprehensive evaluation of how Keene can attract and retain the Millennial population, we conducted a survey to gain an understanding of the opinions and experiences of Millennials in Keene. The survey's focus is related to the quality of life in Keene with a specific emphasis on housing. The main goal of the survey is to gain enough insight needed to determine how Keene can attract and maintain the young adult population. Based on research and similar studies about the high standards of housing qualities and the Millennial shift in postponing homeownership, we can expect to find the following results:

- Overall Millennial satisfaction with Keene's housing is inadequate.
- Millennials who rent are more satisfied than Millennials who own.

The survey questions, created to help answer if these statements in fact true, shown in the Appendix B. We worked in collaboration with the *Keene Young Professionals Network* and used feedback from the Millennials focus group to tailor the questions to gain the most from the survey (**Figure 6.1**). The survey 28 questions composed of closed response questions such as yes or no; list rankings (1-5), and Likert scale ratings; some open ended questions for brief explanations, and a question with a map for the respondent to indicate their ideal living location in Keene. The survey is split into two parts. The first half is focused on information relevant for understanding the background of the survey taker. This helps categorize individuals in certain



Figure 6.1. Millennials Housing Survey sent out online through the Keene Young Professionals Network.

demographics and to enable statistical testing and analysis that helps find patterns in the data. The variables covered in the background section include; age, gender, family status (single/married, children/no children), education level, household income, town of residence, and the type of housing in which the survey taker resides.

The second half of the survey investigates the respondents' opinions related to housing in Keene as the main focus, with other qualities of living in Keene acting as a supporting role. The housing factors brought up in the survey include the respondents:

- Current ideal housing type
- Ideal housing type in 10 years
- Willingness to live in a mixed neighborhood of college student
- Location in Keene in which the respondent would ideally live
- Overall satisfaction with qualities of housing in Keene, including:
- Housing quality, affordability, location, selection, property taxes.
- Other factors that are important to the overall quality of living in Keene that were addressed in the survey include satisfaction levels of:
- The sense of community, the local government, walkability, safety, types of jobs availability/selection, salary/benefits, entertainment, social life, recreational activities, sustainability, and the local education system.

The survey was created using Qualtrics software and sent to local Millennials through the *Keene Young Professionals Network* email chain and private Facebook page, as well as in emails to various other Millennials in Keene. Qualtrics then provides a detailed report of the completed surveys, which can then be exported to statistical programs such as Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) as raw data.

The data are then analyzed in order to test the two hypotheses related to the Millennial population as well as gain a full grasp of the current and future trends. These trends include

comparisons between owners versus renters, younger versus older Millennials, and income levels to understand the relationship between the numerous factors weighing in on patterns in opinions and experiences based on demographics. One method of analysis used was SPSS, which tests if there is a statistically significant difference between variables (such as owners versus renters). The program offers an array of statistical tests that the user can choose from based on the data. For example, a two-sample difference of means test determines if there a statistically significant difference between the average results of the two separate samples. If the test results in a significance level of less than .05, then the null hypothesis is rejected, meaning there is a statistically significant difference between the two averages. This form of analysis is important for making concrete conclusions of patterns in the data. Another method of analysis used was inputted data into excel to address patterns in the data and graph results. By using these two forms of data analysis, a complete mosaic of the current state of local millennials' opinions and experiences is will be created.

SURVEY RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Upon receiving an adequate number of surveys to represent a fair sample size of the millennial population in Keene, the results of the survey were then quantified and compiled into a single dataset. Of the 58 surveys that were completed, 51 are considered Millennials between the ages of 21 and 36, while 7 are at or older than 37 years old. For the purpose of this survey, we are only concerned with the Millennial population and thus did not include the seven surveys over the age of 36 in statistical analysis, but rather gained other valuable information from their input.

The demographic makeup of survey respondents had relatively even distributions of each group. In other words, there were a balanced number of males versus females, distribution of age and renters versus owners (Figure 6.2). This is important for creating a full analysis of the Millennial population in Keene without over representing one group while misrepresenting another.

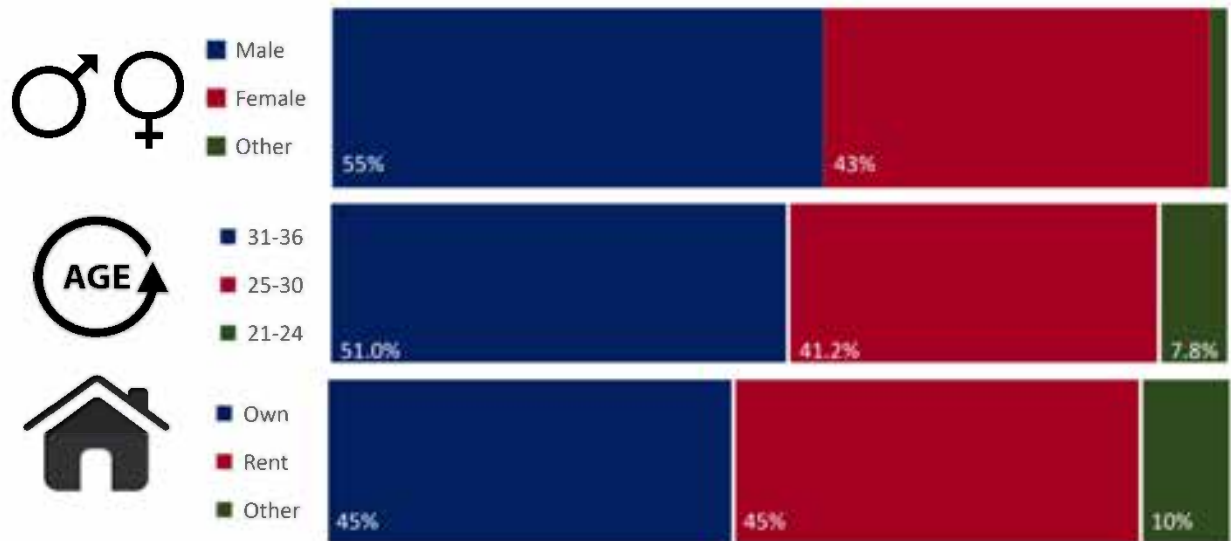


Figure 6.2. Keene Millennial Survey demographic percentages including gender, age and current housing type.

EXAMINATION OF SURVEY RESULTS

Gaining insight on satisfaction of various qualities of Keene is vital for attracting and retaining Millennials now and in the future. To test our hypothesis, ‘Overall millennial satisfaction with Keene’s housing is inadequate’ a Likert scale question was implemented. Participants ranked various qualities of Keene based on their satisfaction level of each, including: the quality of housing, housing affordability, modern housing, types of housing section, location of housing,

types of job availability, salary/benefits of local jobs, local government, sense of community, safety, property taxes, walkability and K-12 Education (Figure 6.3). Each category was rated out of five stars, with 0 stars being very unsatisfied and 5 being very satisfied. Any category that was ranked above 3 stars is considered satisfactory, while anything ranked below 3 stars is considered unsatisfactory. The final averages show that most qualities of Keene that are integral to the public community fabric; such as walkability, the sense of community, safety, K-12 Education, sustainability and local government were rated as satisfactory. In contrast, factors related to private/individual qualities such as jobs and housing in Keene had poor ratings. Thus, the null hypothesis is supported because it is perceived that young adults are not satisfied with the housing in Keene.

Housing and jobs are vital components of attracting and maintaining Millennials in any city. Addressing the unsatisfactory opinions of the housing and job market requires a complex view of all components leading to such perceptions. For the purpose of this research; housing is the focus because a city where Millennials want to live, work and play, starts with having enough adequate housing to

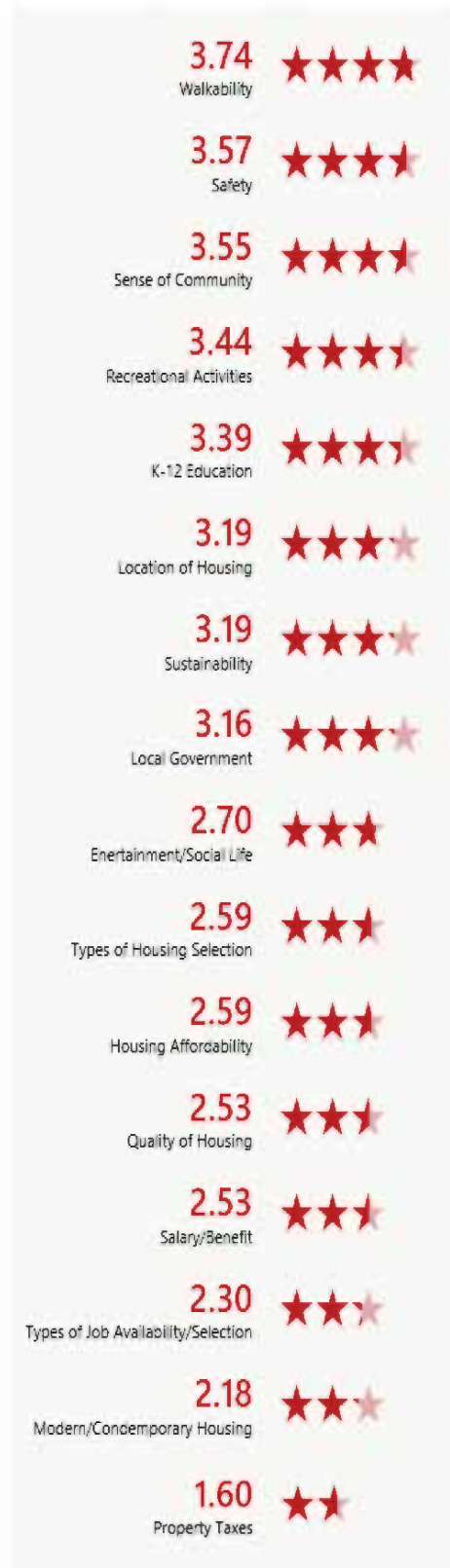
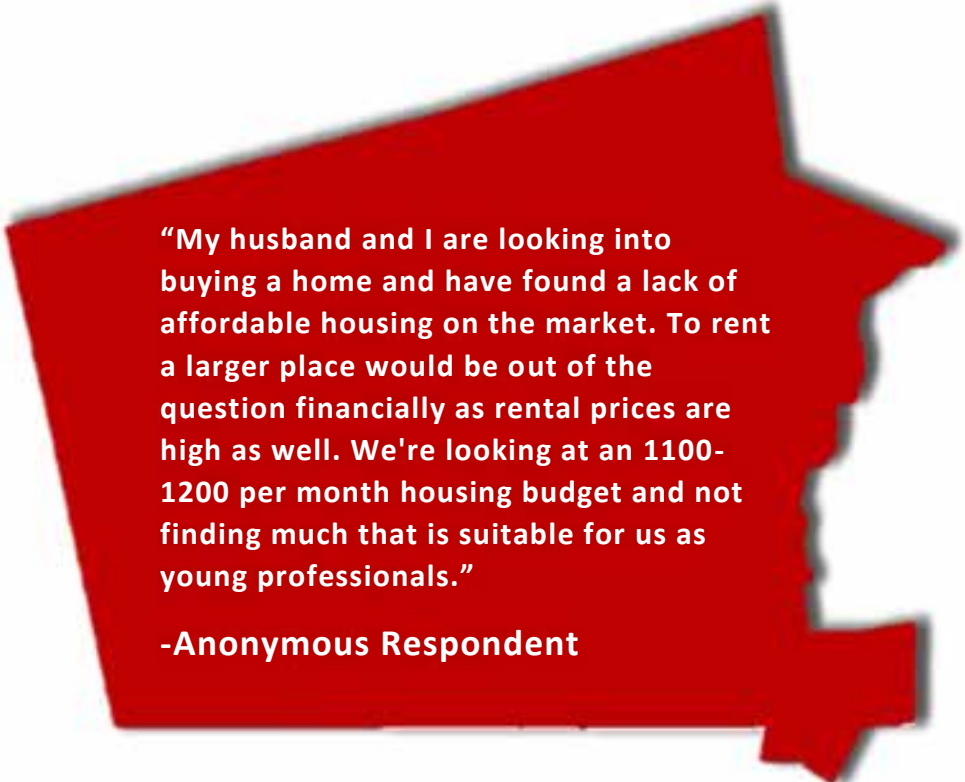


Figure 6.3. Millennial's Satisfaction levels for various qualities of Keene.

meet the demands of young professionals. It is imperative to interpret the satisfactory ratings of different groups of millennials based on owners versus renters, income levels and younger millennials versus older millennials. This will provide insight into whether some groups are more satisfied than others, which will determine if the possible solutions should be tailored towards certain demographics.



“My husband and I are looking into buying a home and have found a lack of affordable housing on the market. To rent a larger place would be out of the question financially as rental prices are high as well. We're looking at an 1100-1200 per month housing budget and not finding much that is suitable for us as young professionals.”

-Anonymous Respondent

To test for a statistical significance between the perceptions of those who own their housing versus those who rent, an Independent Samples T-Test in SPSS is employed. The results, shown in **Table 6.1**, indicate that there was only a statistical significance between total averages of owners versus renter opinions of walkability and K-12 education, with a significance level of .003 (walkability) and .049 (K-12 Education). Renters rated walkability as an average 4.18 where owners

rated walkability as a 3.33. Renters higher views of walkability is likely because renters are highly concentrated in the downtown region where there is an abundance of sidewalks and density, versus owners who live in the more rural parts of Keene that have a lower density. (Figure 4.12). In addition, renters maintain lower views of the K-12 education in Keene (3.167) than owners (3.77) likely because those that invest money to own a house and expect to raise a family in Keene likely would not do so if they thought poorly of the schooling in Keene. Thus, those who own a house and have children in Keene rated the K-12 education with an average of 3.9 stars out of 5.

Table 6.1. Independent Samples T-Test of Millennial satisfaction levels of various qualities of Keene Owner versus Renters.

Group Statistics

	OwnVsRent	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Walkability	Own	24	3.333	1.1672	.2383
	Rent	27	4.185	.6377	.1227
K-12 Education	Own	24	3.771	.9086	.1855
	Rent	27	3.167	1.1929	.2296
Housing Satisfaction	Own	24	2.5529	.88852	.18137
	Rent	27	2.4104	.89081	.17144
Total Satisfaction	Own	24	2.9758	.70599	.14411
	Rent	27	2.8596	.63837	.12285

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Walkability	Equal variances assumed	6.873	.012	-3.283	49	.002	-.8519	.2594	-1.3732	-.3305
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.179	34.667	.003	-.8519	.2680	-1.3961	-.3076
K-12 Education	Equal variances assumed	1.101	.299	2.015	49	.049	.6042	.2999	.0015	1.2068
	Equal variances not assumed			2.047	47.933	.046	.6042	.2951	.0107	1.1976
Housing Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.001	.972	.571	49	.571	14255	24961	-35906	64415
	Equal variances not assumed			.571	48.330	.571	14255	24957	-35916	64425
Total Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.353	.555	.617	49	.540	11620	18823	-26206	49447
	Equal variances not assumed			.614	46.740	.542	11620	18937	-26481	49722

Another variable important to understand is the relative age of the Millennials, and how that relates to satisfaction levels. The reasoning for this is that younger Millennials are more inclined

to be paying off student loans and have entry level positions or still in school as compared to their older counterparts, which may influence satisfaction levels in Keene. In order to test this, we ran an Independent Samples T-Test in SPSS comparing satisfaction levels of respondents 30 years old or younger to those than 30 years old. The results show that there is no significance between the two age groups and their satisfaction for any category. Shown below in **Table 6.2** is the test run for the total housing satisfaction and the total satisfaction.

Table 6.2. *Independent Samples T-Test of Millennial satisfaction levels of various qualities of Keene older (31-36) versus younger (30 and under).*

Group Statistics

	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Housing Satisfaction	30 and Under	25	2.5336	.96138	.19228
	31 to 36	24	2.3613	.80248	.16381
Total Satisfaction	30 and Under	25	2.8772	.76208	.15242
	31 to 36	24	2.9092	.53080	.10835

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-Test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Housing Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.008	.928	.800	47	.500	.17235	.25353	-.33769	.68229
	Equal variances not assumed			.682	45.126	.498	.17235	.25259	-.33605	.68075
Total Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	2.187	.148	-.170	47	.865	-.03197	.18836	-.41090	.34696
	Equal variances not assumed			-.171	42.942	.865	-.03197	.18700	-.40911	.34518

Similarly, household income is an important contributor to how satisfied a person is with a city. This is because some cities have stronger programs and affordability for lower income households than others. Many cities have strong affordable housing projects for low-income families, but

when it comes to the private market houses are too expensive for Millennials to afford. Thus, by addressing the satisfaction levels of young adults from various income levels, we can begin to understand if Keene is affordable enough to attract a larger population of Millennials. We ran an Independent Samples T-Test between those with a household income of less than \$59,999 and those with a household income of greater than \$60,000. **Table 6.3** below shows the variables that produces a statistically significant difference in means between the two income level groups. Based on the results, income plays a significant role on Millennial satisfaction of Keene's housing location, property taxes, and housing satisfaction. Interestingly, those who have below a \$60,000 household income had higher satisfaction levels than Millennials that have higher income. There is no reasonable explanation of this other than the fact individuals with lower income are likely either renting or own smaller properties, thus paying less in taxes than people with higher income levels and larger properties. In addition, the location of housing and walkability satisfaction among lower income individuals are likely due to less expensive housing and more rentals adjacent to downtown, compared to more expensive housing in the suburbs in West Keene.

Table 6.3. Millennial Income Results. Tested between two groups: Millennials with a household income of less than \$59,999 (1) and those with a household income of more than \$60,000 (2).

Group Statistics					
	Income	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Location of Housing	1.00	24	3.500	.8597	.1755
	2.00	24	2.938	.8637	.1763
Property Taxes	1.00	24	2.188	1.3895	.2836
	2.00	24	1.063	1.0034	.2048
Walkability	1.00	24	4.021	.6338	.1294
	2.00	24	3.500	1.2158	.2482
Housing Satisfaction	1.00	24	2.7296	.89197	.18207
	2.00	24	2.2292	.77765	.15874
Total Satisfaction	1.00	24	3.0471	.59923	.12232
	2.00	24	2.7929	.64822	.13232

Independent Samples Test											
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-Test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	
Location of Housing	Equal variances assumed	.531	.470	2.261	46	.030	.5625	.2488	.0618	1.0632	
	Equal variances not assumed			2.261	45.999	.029	.5625	.2488	.0618	1.0632	
Property Taxes	Equal variances assumed	6.970	.011	3.216	46	.002	1.1250	.3499	4.208	1.8292	
	Equal variances not assumed			3.216	41.859	.002	1.1250	.3499	4.189	1.8311	
Walkability	Equal variances assumed	7.928	.007	1.861	46	.069	-.5208	.2799	-.0425	1.0842	
	Equal variances not assumed			1.861	34.641	.071	-.5208	.2799	-.0476	1.0892	
Housing Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.002	.962	2.072	46	.044	50042	.24155	01419	98664	
	Equal variances not assumed			2.072	45.161	.044	50042	.24155	01395	98668	
Total Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.359	.552	1.411	46	.165	25417	.18019	-10854	61688	
	Equal variances not assumed			1.411	45.719	.165	25417	.18019	-10860	61694	

Testing our second hypothesis ‘Millennials who rent are more satisfied than Millennials who own’ requires a comprehensive look at both the Likert scale ranking question as well as the questions regarding the respondents ideal housing. Based on the Likert scale question, every quality of Keene related to housing including the total average of all housing qualities and total average of all qualities, shows no statistical significant difference between owners versus renters. This question

represents the respondent's perceptions of the city. However, based on binomial tests in SPSS, Millennials significantly prefer owning a home or condominium both now and in the future, as opposed to renting (Table 6.4). As shown in Figure 6.4, 74 percent of people who own their own households are living in their ideal living situation. On the other hand, only 33 percent people who rent a house are living in their ideal housing situation, and only 25 percent of people that rent an apartment are living in their ideal housing situation. This shows that Millennials who own homes are far more satisfied with their housing than those who rent.

Table 6.4. Millennial ideal living situations currently (top) and future (bottom). Group 1 represents people who chose owning as their ideal, and Group 2 represents people who chose renting as their ideal.

Binomial Test

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
CurrentIdeal	Group 1	1	36	.73	.50	.001
	Group 2	2	13	.27		
	Total		49	1.00		

Binomial Test

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
FutureIdeal	Group 1	1	47	.96	.50	.000
	Group 2	2	2	.04		
	Total		49	1.00		

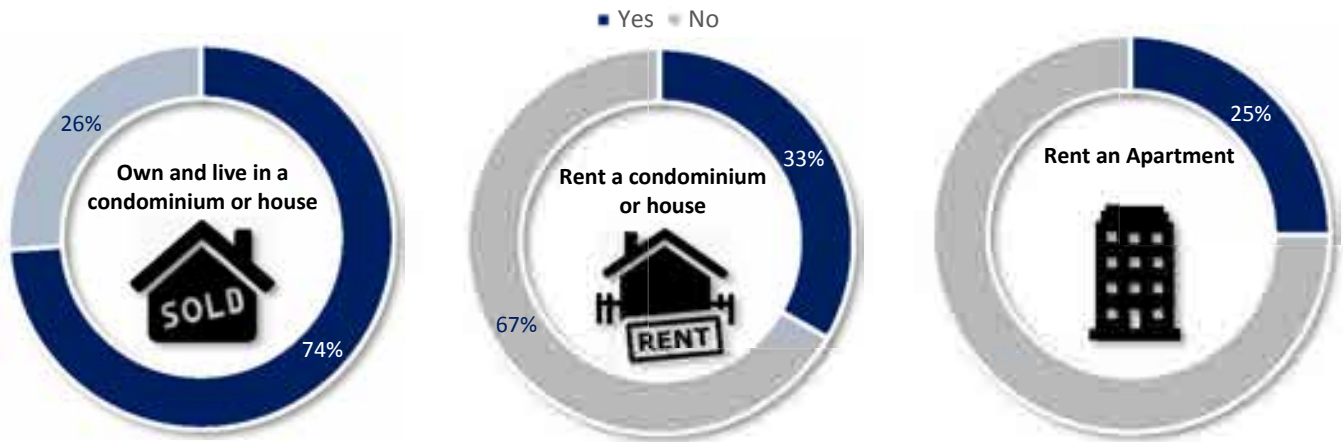


Figure 6.4. Answers to the question ‘are you currently living in your ideal housing situation’. Shows the answers of individuals who currently own a house/condominium (left), individuals who currently rent a house/condominium (middle), and individuals who currently rent an apartment (right).

Millennials in Keene prefer owning a home over renting. This is contrary to some scholarly research, which indicates that Millennials are more attracted to renting a property for reasons that include the fact that rentals require less maintenance, less financial burdens, and more flexibility (MacArthur Foundation 2015). As Millennials age, however, they become more inclined to own a home. When asked what their ideal living situation would be in 10 years, 94 percent of millennials (all but three people) said they want to own a home or condominium (Figure 6.5).

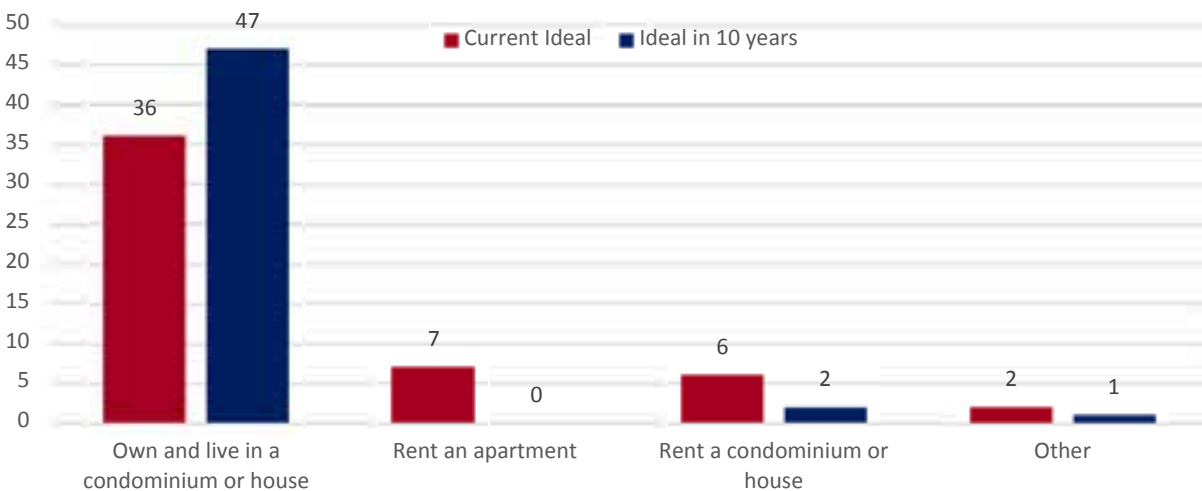


Figure 6.5. Millennials ideal housing situation currently and in 10 years.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results, we can make the claim that Millennials in Keene are generally dissatisfied with the housing market. We can also make the claim that Millennials, whether they rent or own, or are of different ages, have the same overall perspectives on the Keene housing market. Keene Millennials are also much more attracted to owning single-family homes rather than renting an apartment or home. Keene must address these issues if the city wants to draw more of the young professionals into the municipality and making them want to stay. **Figure 6.6** displays the results to the question that asked respondents if they plan on moving out of their current residence within

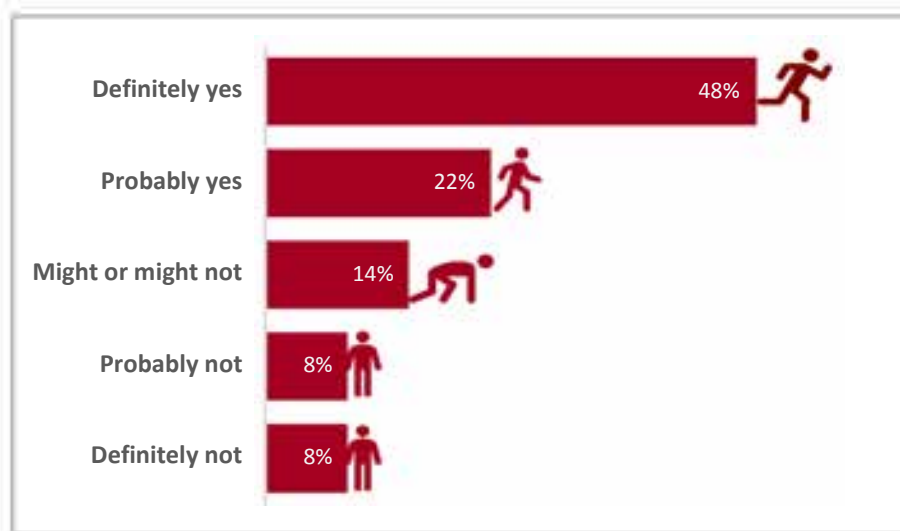


Figure 6.6. Millennials answers to the question 'Do you plan on moving out of your current residence in the next 5 years'.

the next five years. As shown, 48 percent of respondents said they are definitely moving out in the next five years, and another 22 said they probably will be moving out in that

time. With 70 percent of

respondents planning to move, it is imperative that the city acts as soon as possible to ensure the city meets their needs and demands, or else they may move out of Keene entirely. Making Keene a city in which more young professionals want to live, work and play requires examination of what millennials look for in a city, as well as common needs that they require for comfortable living.

These qualities must then be implemented into the community. The first step is to identify these qualities, followed by an analysis of what the city can do in response.

Figure 6.7 shows the qualities of a community that are the most important to Millennials as compared to the qualities that need the most improvement in Keene. Each respondent was asked to select the top three qualities out of the list. It is apparent the Keene property taxes are unsatisfactory for millennials because it is seen as the quality that need most improvements. Property taxes are a large repellent for millennials because it is clear they want to own a house, but when property taxes are so high they are often forced to rent instead. Job availability and selection is the quality that was ranked highest for both importance and needing the most improvements. The next highest ranked quality was housing affordability. Millennials are subject to many financial barriers due lack of extensive financial stability. Student loans are the largest financial burden for 30 percent of the respondents, with credit acting as the second largest at 22 percent (**Figure 6.8**). When individuals are looking to own a house, student loans and credit burdens deter people from qualifying for a mortgage or be able to afford the extra bills. This is especially unattractive when the quality of houses does not meet its price, which is the case in much of Keene based on the focus group discussion. One respondent left an additional comment, explaining 'I tried so hard to find decent housing in Keene when we first moved here but I was priced out of the market from landlords trying to keep students out (and therefore also anyone else under 50 because it was so expensive).' This person ended up being able to rent a three-bedroom house in Dublin for less than a poor quality two-bedroom apartment in Keene.

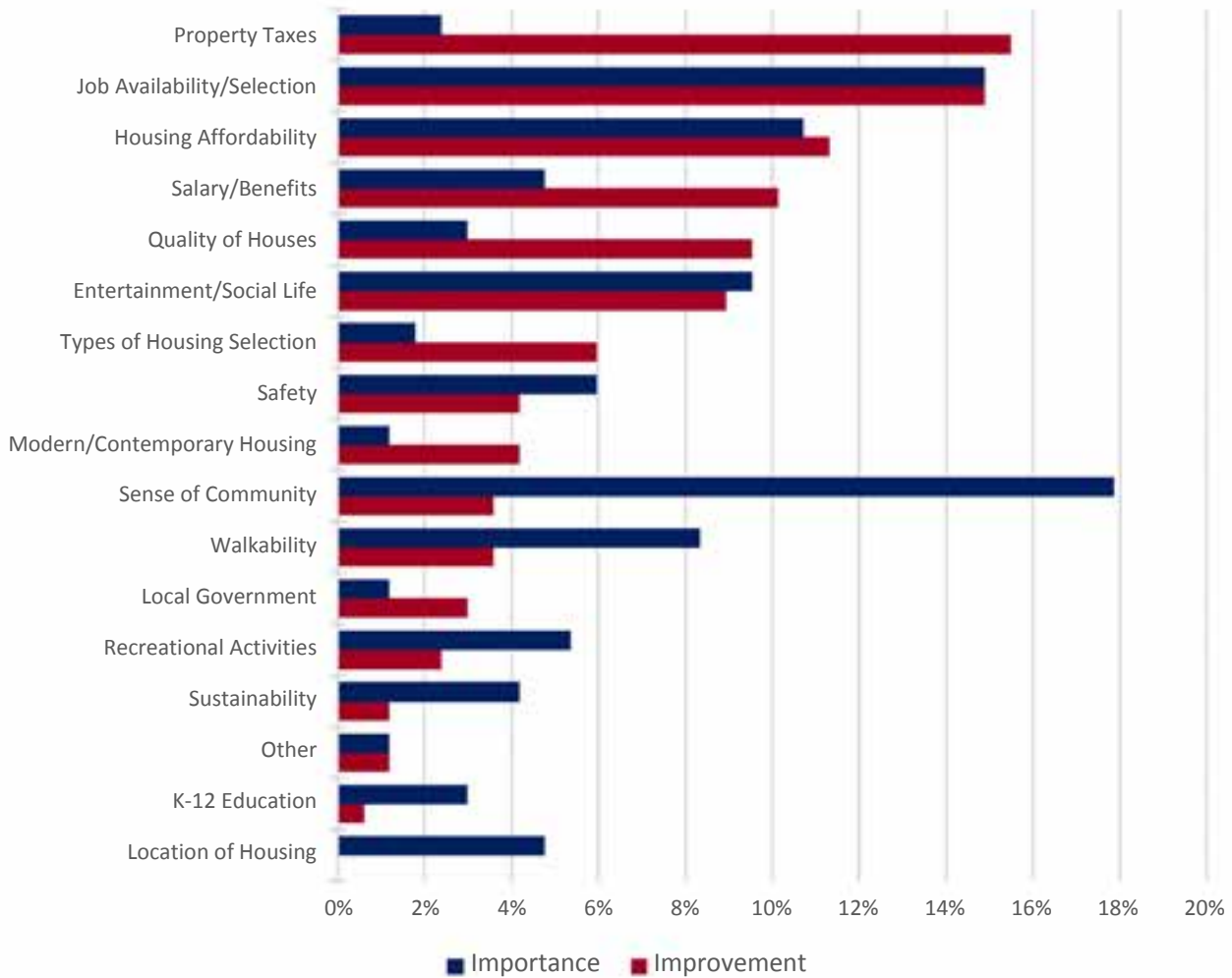


Figure 6.7. The qualities Millennials find most important compared to the qualities that they think needs most improvement in Keene.



Figure 6.8. The top rated financial barriers of Millennials.

If neighborhood revitalization was to be a strategy for attraction and retention of Millennials in Keene, it is important to know which neighborhoods upon which to focus. In similar studies, Millennials have been attracted to more lively urbanized settings, but without losing the comforts of suburban life. To understand where Millennials in Keene would ideally live, we included a map for respondents to mark. Based on the results, the majority of respondents were more attracted to downtown near Central Square (**Figure 6.9**). Thus, if Keene were to focus on housing, the neighborhoods adjacent to downtown would likely show the highest demand by young professionals.

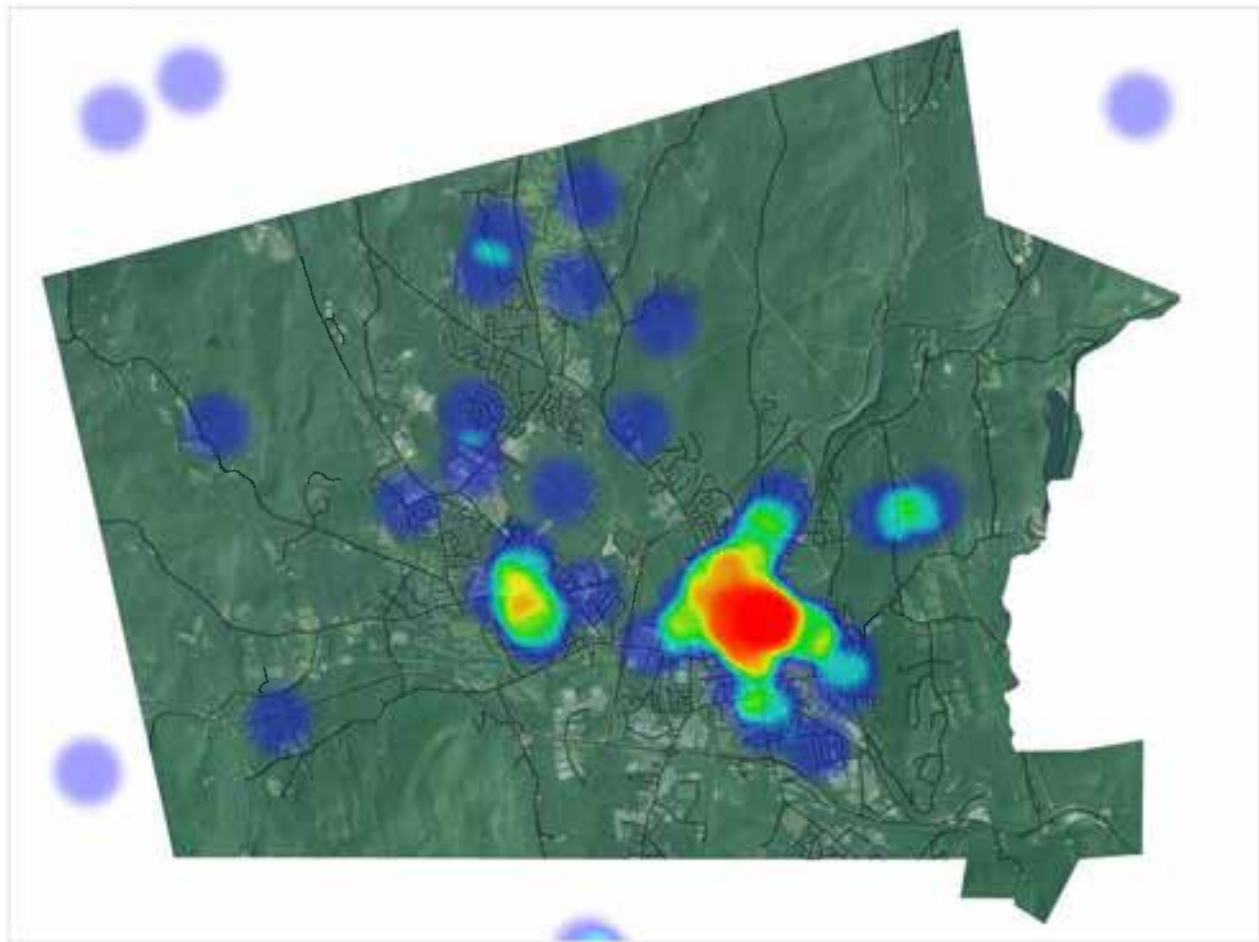


Figure 6.9. *Millennial ideal living locations in (or near) Keene.*

The survey results are extremely useful for understanding how Keene can bring more millennials into the city, while keeping the population for years to come. Millennials choose to live in a city for several reasons. **Figure 6.10** shows the many responses to the question ‘briefly explain the reasons you live in Keene’. The survey asked each respondent to identify what brought him or her to Keene. The reasons that were frequently brought up was their job, family, the many activities in the area, the New England feel and the vibrant community and downtown. Keene is a place that many people are proud to call home. It is a city that has many desirable qualities. The first step in drawing a larger population is by enhancing and marketing the qualities that make Keene great; including the sense of community, outdoor recreational activities, vibrant downtown and rich history. The next step is to understand and meet the needs of Millennials. This new population can bring economic and social growth in Keene for future generations. Young professionals are not satisfied with the economic and housing qualities of Keene. The focus of the city should be to revitalize neighborhoods with single-family homes, and provide programs to make these neighborhoods affordable and attractive to Millennials. This can provide a positive feedback loop of economic growth as more are attracted to live, work and play in Keene.



250 foot Abutters List Report

Keene, NH
August 19, 2021

Subject Property:

Parcel Number: 568-016-000
CAMA Number: 568-016-000-000-000
Property Address: 27-29 CENTER ST.

Mailing Address: HARMON, BRIAN HARMON, AMALIA
184 COLBY RD.
DANVILLE, NH 03819

Abutters:

Parcel Number: 568-009-000
CAMA Number: 568-009-000-000-000
Property Address: 61 WINTER ST.

Mailing Address: POWERS RICHARD D. & NANCY C.
LIVING TRUST
370 OLD WALPOLE RD.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-010-000
CAMA Number: 568-010-000-000-000
Property Address: 8 MIDDLE ST.

Mailing Address: PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF
NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND
784 HERCULES DR. SUITE 110
COLCHESTER, VT 05446-8049

Parcel Number: 568-011-000
CAMA Number: 568-011-000-000-000
Property Address: 16 MIDDLE ST.

Mailing Address: POLLOCK, CAITLIN M.
43 PLEASANT HILL AVE. #34
MATTAPAN, MA 02126

Parcel Number: 568-012-000
CAMA Number: 568-012-000-000-000
Property Address: 22 MIDDLE ST.

Mailing Address: SOUSA, PAULA NOLAN
22 MIDDLE ST.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-013-000
CAMA Number: 568-013-000-000-000
Property Address: 28 MIDDLE ST.

Mailing Address: 28 MIDDLE STREET REALTY LLC
99 VALLEY PARK DR.
SPOFFORD, NH 03462

Parcel Number: 568-014-000
CAMA Number: 568-014-000-000-000
Property Address: 29 MIDDLE ST.

Mailing Address: ESPIEFS PETER S. REV. TRUST
29 MIDDLE ST.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-015-000
CAMA Number: 568-015-000-000-000
Property Address: 33 CENTER ST.

Mailing Address: BLUE SPRUCE OCEAN HOLDINGS LLC
PO BOX 1347
HAMPTON, NH 03843

Parcel Number: 568-017-000
CAMA Number: 568-017-000-000-000
Property Address: 23 CENTER ST.

Mailing Address: MONADNOCK UNITED FUND
23 CENTER ST.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-018-000
CAMA Number: 568-018-000-000-000
Property Address: 17 CENTER ST.

Mailing Address: MGJ REALTY LLC
PO BOX 562
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-019-000
CAMA Number: 568-019-000-000-000
Property Address: 33 WINTER ST.

Mailing Address: CHESHIRE COUNTY
33 WINTER ST.
KEENE, NH 03431



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8/19/2021

Page 1 of 3

Abutters List Report - Keene, NH



250 foot Abutters List Report

Keene, NH
August 19, 2021

Parcel Number: 568-020-000
CAMA Number: 568-020-000-000-000
Property Address: 12 COURT ST.

Mailing Address: COUNTY OF CHESHIRE
12 COURT ST.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-021-000
CAMA Number: 568-021-000-000-000
Property Address: 26 COURT ST.

Mailing Address: MGJ REALTY LLC
PO BOX 562
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-022-000
CAMA Number: 568-022-000-000-000
Property Address: 34 COURT ST.

Mailing Address: 34 COURT LLC
63 EMERALD ST. #468
KEENE, NH 03431-3626

Parcel Number: 568-023-000
CAMA Number: 568-023-000-000-000
Property Address: 42-44 COURT ST.

Mailing Address: EIGHTY-EIGHT LAMBERT AVENUE
NOMINEE TRUST
17 ROXBURY ST.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-024-000
CAMA Number: 568-024-000-000-000
Property Address: 18 SUMMER ST.

Mailing Address: ZOLL, MICHAEL J. ZOLL, JENNIFER L.
18 SUMMER ST.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-025-000
CAMA Number: 568-025-000-000-000
Property Address: 37 MIDDLE ST.

Mailing Address: LEACH JODY A. LEACH KRISTEN
37 MIDDLE ST.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-026-000
CAMA Number: 568-026-000-000-000
Property Address: 38 MIDDLE ST.

Mailing Address: BERGERON, JOHN GROISS, LINDA
38 MIDDLE ST.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-037-000
CAMA Number: 568-037-000-000-000
Property Address: 39 SUMMER ST.

Mailing Address: SCHOFIELD WILLIAM K.
27 DUBLIN RD.
JAFFREY, NH 03452-5008

Parcel Number: 568-038-000
CAMA Number: 568-038-000-000-000
Property Address: 31 SUMMER ST.

Mailing Address: BALLAS ASPASIA N.
31 SUMMER ST.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-039-000
CAMA Number: 568-039-000-000-000
Property Address: 21 SUMMER ST.

Mailing Address: CUNHA-VASCONCELOS SOFIA C.
21 SUMMER ST.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-040-000
CAMA Number: 568-040-000-000-000
Property Address: 56 COURT ST.

Mailing Address: BURK NANCY E.
PO BOX 413
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 568-041-000
CAMA Number: 568-041-000-000-000
Property Address: 70 COURT ST.

Mailing Address: KEENE SENIOR CITIZENS INC
70 COURT ST.
KEENE, NH 03431



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8/19/2021

Page 2 of 3



250 foot Abutters List Report

Keene, NH
August 19, 2021

Parcel Number: 568-041-000
CAMA Number: 568-041-000-001-000
Property Address: 70 COURT ST.

Mailing Address: KEENE SENIOR CITIZENS INC
70 COURT ST.
KEENE, NH 03431

Parcel Number: 575-048-000
CAMA Number: 575-048-000-000-000
Property Address: 55 WEST ST.

Mailing Address: NGM INSURANCE CO.
ATTEN: INVOICE PO BOX 2300
KEENE, NH 03431



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27-29 CENTER ST. ZBA 21-18



Petitioner requests a Variance to permit three parking spaces rather than the four required for residential housing per Section 102-793 of the Zoning Ordinance.



City of Keene
New Hampshire

NOTICE OF HEARING

ZBA 21-18

A meeting of the Zoning Board of Adjustment will be held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 6:30 PM in City Hall Council Chambers, 2nd floor, 3 Washington St, Keene, New Hampshire to consider the following petition. Petitioner, Brian and Amalia Harmon of 184 Colby Rd., Danville, NH, request a Variance for property located at 27-29 Center St., Tax Map #568-016-000-000-000 that is in the Office District. The Petitioner requests a variance for residential housing with three and a third parking spaces rather than the required four per Section 102-793 of the Zoning Code.

This application is available for public review in the Community Development Department at City Hall, 3 Washington Street, Keene, NH 03431 between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm. or online at <https://ci.keene.nh.us/zoning-board-adjustment>

Corinne Marcou, Zoning Clerk

Notice issuance date August 27, 2021

APPLICATION FOR APPEAL

Zoning Board of Adjustment
3 Washington Street, Fourth Floor
Keene, New Hampshire 03431
Phone: (603) 352-5440

For Office Use Only:	
Case No.	<u>ZBA 11-18</u>
Date Filed	<u>8/23/2021</u>
Received By	<u>CM</u>
Page	<u>1</u> of <u>3</u>
Reviewed By	_____

The undersigned hereby applies to the City of Keene Zoning Board of Adjustment for an Appeal in accordance with provisions of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated 674:33.

TYPE OF APPEAL -- MARK AS MANY AS NECESSARY

- APPEAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION
- APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR ENLARGEMENT OF A NONCONFORMING USE
- APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL EXCEPTION
- APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE
- APPLICATION FOR AN EQUITABLE WAIVER OF DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

Name(s) of Applicant(s) Brian + Amalia Harmon Phone: 617 201 6108 603 216 7348
Address 184 Colby Rd Danville, NH 03819
Name(s) of Owner(s) same as above
Address _____
Location of Property 27-29 Center St Keene, NH

SECTION II - LOT CHARACTERISTICS

Tax Map Parcel Number 568-016-000 Zoning District office
Lot Dimensions: Front 57 Rear 54.1 Side 59 Side 58.1
Lot Area: Acres .07 Square Feet 3049.2
% of Lot Covered by Structures (buildings, garages, pools, decks, etc.): Existing 70 Proposed N/A
% of Impervious Coverage (structures plus driveways and/or parking areas, etc.): Existing 90 Proposed N/A
Present Use office
Proposed Use residential

SECTION III - AFFIDAVIT

I hereby certify that I am the owner or the authorized agent of the owner of the property upon which this appeal is sought and that all information provided by me is true under penalty of law.

[Signature] Date 8-23-2021
(Signature of Owner or Authorized Agent) Amalia Harmon

Please Print Name Brian Harmon Amalia L Harmon

From: [Amy Harmon](#)
To: [Corinne Marcou](#)
Subject: Re: 27-29 Center street
Date: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 4:48:25 PM

On Wed, Aug 25, 2021, 1:59 PM Amy Harmon <amalia1529@gmail.com> wrote:

Please allow us to provide residential housing at this property with three and 1/3rd parking spaces, rather than the required four parking spaces.

Living so close to downtown is a blessing, walking or biking or smaller smartcars are becoming more popular.

PROPERTY ADDRESS 27-29 Center St Keene, NH

APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE

- A Variance is requested from Section (s) 102-1793 of the Zoning Ordinance to permit:

the possibility of a six foot area required for the transformation of this property to be a 2 family dwelling to help the housing crisis.

DESCRIBE BRIEFLY YOUR RESPONSE TO EACH VARIANCE CRITERIA:

1. Granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest because: *This property does not impact the public other than in a positive manner if allowed to become a 2 family dwelling.*

2. If the variance were granted, the spirit of the ordinance would be observed because: *it will allow more housing in this beautiful area by allowing an additional spot (or possibility of one).*

3. Granting the variance would do substantial justice because: *It allows the building to now have a use and a positive purpose. The current (offices) purpose is antequated as many businesses/people are able to work from home using internet services other than renting office space.*

4. If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be diminished because *This granted variance would help beautify the neighborhood and hopefully be a valued space for someone to live and work here in this town.*

5. Unnecessary Hardship

A. Owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship because:

the space would not be able to be used. It may end up being left empty

i. No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property because:

This is not a public building, there is no current public use.

and

ii. The proposed use is a reasonable one because: *the current use is antiquated and not needed.*

B. Explain how, if the criteria in subparagraph (A) are not established, an unnecessary hardship will be deemed to exist if, and only if, owing to special conditions of the property that distinguish it from other properties in the area, the property cannot be reasonably used in strict conformance with the ordinance, and a variance is therefore necessary to enable a reasonable use of it.

The property cannot be reasonably used in strict conformance due to the lack of professionals needing office space (2^o to internet capabilities improving and Covid) A variance is therefore necessary to enable a new and reasonable use because NH, especially Keene having a housing crisis. Many articles have been published confirming the fact housing is needed especially within the city

K:\ZBA\Web_Forms\Variance_Application_2010.doc 8/22/2017

*Thank you for your time and consideration to this matter,
Amelia Harmon*

ZBA Regulations, Section II, I – Supplemental Information

Current language:

Supplemental Information: Any information and/or evidence that is provided after the submittal deadline which the Board determines to be material and necessary may result in a continuation of the public hearing in order to allow the Board an opportunity to review the information and/or evidence and/or to have City staff, legal counsel, abutters, or other interested persons review and provide input or advice to the Board in regards to such information and/or evidence.

From Art/John & Josh's meeting:

If an applicant or applicant's agent submits supplemental information pertaining to an application within (10) days prior to the public hearing at which the application is to be heard, the board shall consider during the meeting and decide by majority vote, whether to accept the supplemental information for consideration at the meeting, or to continue the application to the next scheduled meeting to allow adequate time to review the supplemental information.