

My name is Cheryl Clark. I live at 35 Dresden Ave, and until recently we owned an abutting property to the hospital lot, at 165 Dresden Ave. I don't have any experience with planning boards, or zoning, or any real understanding of how to read these ordinances. My interest is in building community. Six years ago, I moved to Gardiner from Pennsylvania. I chose Gardiner as a place to live because even from as far away as Pennsylvania, I had heard about the Heart and Soul initiative that Gardiner had begun. I began to investigate and envision a life here, based on community values and responsive governance.

That is what I would like to talk about here today. I bought my home, on this street because it was a walkable, safe community. It is a street made up of a mixture of single and multifamily homes and neighbors of different income brackets. There is a pride of ownership and a welcoming attitude. It is a community where you can meet and get to know your neighbors. Over the six years I have lived here, I have come to rely on those relationships. In snow storms and fires we have responded to each other's needs. This is an intrinsic part of the "Character" of this neighborhood...it is established, it is safe, it is welcoming. Back in the late 1800's when the hospital was originally moved to this end of Dresden Ave, it was built very much in the architectural style of the neighborhood, it was welcomed because it *served* the needs of the community. I imagine the planning board in 1971 faced some opposition to the enlarged and more modern annex that we are reconsidering today. But again, it *served* the needs of this community. Until it was deemed unusable. And so, what now?

I am part of a welcoming committee here in Gardiner, and *I truly would* welcome new neighbors here on my street, in what might otherwise become a blighted part of our neighborhood. I recognize the need to develop this property. We need starter homes and places for young families to begin their lives.

Three years ago, my husband and I bought that small house across the street from the hospital. We bought it because we recognized the value in owning and renting a small house, and because we hoped to lure my West coast daughter to Gardiner. We also recognized the rental trap many young families get caught in. Owning and renting out this home gave us the opportunity to help two families move from an affordable rental situation to home ownership here in our community. Last month my daughter and son in law did relocate from San Francisco with our two young grandchildren. They bought that house from us, and this is where my grandchildren will grow up.

I am telling you this because my concerns about the Gardiner Green Project could be seen as a "not in my backyard" issue. The underlying question I ask myself whenever I am considering my community is "How and Who does it *serve*?" I want our neighborhood to remain a safe place, where we know each other and can be responsive to each other. Almost doubling the number of residences on our street, in a fraction of the acreage, does not seem like community. It may be considered economic development, but when you are considering density, and square footage *are you* envisioning the individuals and families that will live there? Who will live in a 240 square foot "home"? Where is the "Green" to be found for the families to enjoy, when there will need to be 100 parking spaces? When is a flag lot not a loophole, and an affordable housing allowance not a strategy for profit? When an application lacks specificity, or When Mr. Boghossian asks for special considerations, when you consider all provisions and ordinances that could allow 100 + new "neighbors", I hope this Planning Board will consider how and who this project serves?

I understand that there are many competing interests for the redevelopment of this property. I would very much like to see a sustainable, prosperous, and appropriately scaled project at this location. I understand that any developer needs to expect a reasonable rate of return, but I believe that this return

cannot and should not be achieved at the expense of the character of our neighborhood. I'm grateful that the comprehensive plan and that the land use ordinance contains provisions that allow and require the board to consider the neighborhood. If the developer will not or cannot achieve this result willingly then we request that you follow the guidance contained in our laws to deny the project as presented.

Dresden Ave is NOT a "Growth Area", NOT according to the comprehensive plan, NOT according to the values of Heart and Soul, and we believe NOT according to the ordinance as written.

Respectfully submitted for public record,

Cheryl Clark