



April 7, 2014

Dear Members of the Town of Dover Planning Board,

As an employee of the Freshtown of Dover Plains, I am writing to you anonymously in regards to the proposed site plan for the Dover Plaza. I would like to express to you my views on the project, but have chosen to conceal my identity in order to prevent any ill will from my employer. It is my understanding that the items in the site plan are being considered in order to close Freshtown and relocate CVS. I am in disagreement with this plan for several reasons.

The first and most obvious reason that I do not want Freshtown to close is that my coworkers and I will most likely lose our jobs. Unfortunately, in our present economy lay offs of hundreds of workers have become common. Although Freshtown does not employ hundreds, for a small town like ours 30+ +/- people without jobs will have an impact. Our employees are not just all teenagers collecting minimum wage, although even the loss of a place for our kids to get an after school job close to home will be missed. Some of our employees include single parents, sole bread winners, and people trying to pay mortgages and heating bills. We have small children, children in college, and grandchildren. We are retirees trying to make ends meet when our pensions/social security just isn't enough. Several of us receive health benefits, participate in a 401K plan, and have earned vacation and personal time. The loss of a job will be devastating to many.

I also oppose this project because I love my town. I've lived here all of my life and it saddens me to look around and see so many empty businesses. From what I understand, Freshtown proposes to close the grocery store and move CVS to its location. They then want to divide the current CVS into multiple smaller stores. The plaza already has a vacant shop (the former El Paradiso Restaurant) that has not been rented out yet. Who is going to fill all

these spaces? The town does not need more empty businesses. We need a grocery store.

Through my years of service at Freshtown I've enjoyed helping the members of my community. I feel like I know everyone in town. As a member of this community my heart goes out to the people that I see everyday that will be hurt by the closing of this store. We have many shoppers that have a lack of transportation to the store. Many of our customers walk or ride bicycles or depend on the kindness of a neighbor, friend, or family member. In general these people tend to have low incomes or are elderly. With the lack of public transportation in our area the closing of the only grocery store in town leaves the most vulnerable members of our community with a huge problem. Over the past few weeks when news of the potential store closing has traveled through town, many people have spoken to me at the store about this issue. I've witnessed some very emotional reactions. A lot of people are very distraught about losing this store.

I'm not sure what, if anything, the Planning Board is able to do to prevent the closing of Freshtown, but I would certainly appreciate you doing whatever you can to prevent this from happening. The closing of the only grocery store in town would be a great loss to this community.

Sincerely,
A Freshtown Employee and
Citizen of the Town of Dover