



ROCHESTER MAIN STREET

18 South Main Street, Suite 2B
Rochester, NH 03867

Rochester Main Street Program is a non-profit volunteer organization devoted to the preservation, growth and vitality of downtown Rochester. Participate-Volunteer-Donate

October 3, 2016

RE: Proposed use of former Fosters building at 90 North Main Street as Used Car Dealership/Sales

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Board of Directors and volunteers of Rochester Main Street, a volunteer non-profit organization dedicated to the revitalization of downtown Rochester into a vibrant and active arts, dining, entertainment and shopping district. Whenever a vacancy opens in the downtown district it presents an opportunity to move the downtown forward as described in the vision of the Master Plan for the City of Rochester. This proposal is not consistent with the vision of a vibrant and active downtown Main Street District. We urge that the Planning Department, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Adjustment consider very carefully before granting a request for variance that would be a large step backwards for the citizens and visitors to downtown.

The proposed use is also not compatible to the surrounding businesses in the area which are walkable retail, professional and food service oriented. This proposed use should be located outside of the downtown district.

The property is located alongside the Rochester Riverwalk, which has seen a renewed interest in final development of the Riverwalk plan as a passive urban recreational area.

The property is located within the Downtown Rochester National Register Historic District and adjacent to the historic Stone Arch Bridge. As the property appears to be over 50 years old it is now eligible for listing as a contributing structure within the district, evocative of the commercial architectural style of its period, and would be eligible for tax credit projects.

It is also not the highest and best use of a property which overlooks the city's waterfront area. A use should be considered which would significantly add to the tax base and benefit the general welfare of the citizens of Rochester, not detract.

Lastly, the proposed use of the property at 90 North Main Street does not meet any of the primary or secondary strategies approved and adopted by the Rochester Main Street Board of Directors in their work to revitalize downtown Rochester: Primary- Arts/Dining, Entertainment & Nightlife/Family Friendly/ Attracting Millennials, and Secondary: Elder Friendly/Tourism/Diversity/and Professional Services.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter regarding the future of downtown.

Sincerely,

Michael Provost, CMSM
Executive Director, Rochester Main Street

