



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT of RESOURCES and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE of the COMMISSIONER
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R. SEAN O'KANE
Commissioner

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Nelson R. Disco, Chairman
Merrimack Planning Board
PO Box 940
Merrimack, NH 03054

Dear Chairman Disco,

It has come to my attention that the Merrimack Planning Board is considering a zoning amendment, that if approved by voters at Town Meeting, would allow the Board to consider a proposal from the Chelsea Property Group develop a Premium Outlet retail center on industrial land near Exit 10. Having reviewed Chelsea Group's proposal for the Merrimack Premium Outlets center, as well as the records of existing Chelsea owned Premium Outlet Centers in other locations, we respectfully encourage your Board to allow the people of Merrimack to vote on this zoning amendment.

I believe the proposed Merrimack Premium Outlets center could potentially result in several benefits for Merrimack, the region, and the state of New Hampshire. In addition to substantial new property tax revenue for the Town, the Outlet Center is anticipated to create up to 1,000 new jobs for the area. And because premium outlet centers typically draw consumers from up to 60 miles away, it is anticipated that most of the 5-7 million annual shoppers to Merrimack Premium Outlets would be new visitors to town. This annual influx of new consumers would serve as a dramatic economic stimulus for existing businesses in Merrimack and New Hampshire's southern tier, and help Merrimack become a destination for the growing tourist shopper market.

The market for new industrial development is extremely challenging for the foreseeable future. For the few large companies who are actually in a position to consider locating in New Hampshire, there is currently a large surplus of existing industrial and commercial space from which to choose. Given these market conditions, we believe the kind of unique and exciting retail development proposed by Chelsea Group could potentially be among the best possible uses for this site.

We respect the right, and the ability, of Merrimack residents to decide the future of this proposal. We encourage your Board to give them that opportunity at Town Meeting.

Sincerely,

R. Sean O'Kane
Commissioner