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May 27, 2016
Dover City Council
City Hall,
288 Central Avenue,
Dover, NH 03820

RE: Mills Scenic Byway

Dear Council Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Government Affairs Committee of the Greater Dover Chamber of Commerce to ask the Dover City Council to reconsider its earlier vote on participation in the Mills Scenic Byway program and reconvene a public hearing on the issue.

The New Hampshire Scenic and Cultural Byways Program was established in 1992 under RSA 238:19, "... to provide the opportunity for residents and visitors to travel a system of byways which feature the scenic and cultural qualities of the state within the existing highway system, promote retention of rural and urban scenic byways, support the cultural, recreational and historic attributes along these byways, and expose the unique elements of the state's beauty, culture and history." The legislation established the program and a Scenic and Cultural Byways Council that serve as an appointed advisory body for the program. The administration of the program is through the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance and managed by the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Council.

Designation as a New Hampshire Scenic and Cultural Byway requires a nomination process that is ultimately decided upon by the NH Scenic and Cultural Byway Council. After acceptance of the nomination, an Advisory Committee is formed made up of the communities that the byway route runs through. There are three designated Scenic Byways within the Strafford Region: The Mills Scenic Byway, the Branch River Valley Trail Scenic Byway, and the Upper Lamprey River Scenic Byway (which is also shared with the Southern NH Planning Commission region).

Representatives from the towns of Newmarket, Durham, Madbury, and Rollinsford have worked with each other, with the Strafford Regional Planning Commission, and with other partners over the past several years to develop plans for protecting and enhancing the cultural, natural, recreational, archeological, and historic resources along the byway. We see joining the byway as an opportunity to distinguish such resources in Dover.

Being an active member of the byway development process is an excellent opportunity for Dover to leverage funding and expertise for achieving local goals related to community development and economic growth. By joining the Mills Scenic Byway, Dover would be part of a regional effort that supports community growth while preserving the unique characteristics that make Dover a great city and attract visitors, businesses, and new residents.

Sincerely,

Sean O'Connell
Chair, Government Affairs Committee
Chair, Greater Dover Chamber of Commerce
Cc: Colin Lentz, Strafford Regional Planning