

*The following letter was submitted to the 3/28/19 issue of the Concord Journal, but was accepted with only a short list of names for space reasons. Below is the original letter with over 40 signees.*

**Protect Concord Center  
Vote YES on Article 29**

Come to Town Meeting and vote YES on Article 29!

We've all seen this story before: the lovely old-fashioned town with inviting streets and one-of-a-kind shops. We remember it because it has heart and soul, and undeniable authenticity. We return years later and instead of the ice cream shop, the hardware store, and the bookshop, we find they've been replaced by businesses you see in countless other towns, along highways, and in malls -- and that heart and soul, that irreplaceable sense of community and place is gone.

The unique character of a town center is all too vulnerable to gradual, unintended changes without proactive measures to preserve it. When protected, everyone benefits – residents, businesses, commercial property owners, and visitors – because a center with genuine character contributes to the village's health and vitality by attracting people and businesses alike.

Article 29, the proposed Formula Business Bylaw (FBB) for Concord Center, is a proactive measure that would preserve the current mix of formula and independent businesses. It proposes to limit the number of formula businesses in Concord Center to twelve (currently ten), and is modeled after West Concord Center's bylaw, passed overwhelmingly at 2011 Town Meeting, which established a limit of ten in that now thriving center (currently seven).

No other Town measure can get this job done. Not the Historic Districts Commission, whose focus is limited to visual impacts from the public way. Not efforts to bring in more tourism -- tourism doesn't protect a town's character, it's attracted by it. The proposed FBB, submitted unanimously by the Planning Board, is firmly rooted in the 2018 Comprehensive Long Range Plan and 2007 Village Centers Study, where it is specifically identified as a recommended action. It will need a two-thirds majority to pass – so please vote! For more information, visit [ProtectConcordCenter.org](http://ProtectConcordCenter.org)

Bob Andrews  
Bill Becklean  
Peggy Burke  
Michele and Alan Bembenek  
Ellie Bemis  
Pierce and Elise Browne  
Dinah Buechner  
Joan Campbell  
Nancy Carey  
Sue Felshin  
Ralph Earle  
Dennis Fiori  
Susan Frommer  
Peter and Holly Gifford  
Sarah Goos  
Robert Gross  
Denise Haartz  
Judy Hadley  
Virginia and Sheldon Hines  
Bernie Jenkins

Gail Keane  
Karen Kirsten  
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Martin Lueck  
Andrea and David Meyers  
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Mark and Marcia Thomas  
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ConcordCAN (Concord Climate Action Network)  
Save Our Heritage