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***Town Planner's Recommendations***  
**DURHAM PLANNING BOARD**  
**Wednesday, March 27, 2013**

Item numbers refer to position on meeting agenda.

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**V. Town Planner's Report**

See the recommendations for each of the five projects on the agenda on the separate enclosed sheets.

The Technical Review Group met on March 12 with prospective buyers of the properties on Young Drive and the former Mill Pond Center for the Arts property. The current owner of Young Drive recently combined three pairs of vacant lots into three lots. The prospective buyer is contemplating adding duplexes to six remaining vacant lots. Since two-family houses are exempt from site plan review, such development would not come to the Planning Board for approval, but rather would simply be reviewed by the Building Official for compliance with zoning and the building code. The original subdivision approval from many years ago required construction of a sidewalk on Young Drive. The sidewalk was never constructed. Thus, prior to issuing building permits for new structures on Young Drive the sidewalk would need to be built (or surety placed) unless the Planning Board amended the approval now to remove that requirement. The Department of Public Works is planning to repave Young Drive soon. If the prospective buyer is to install sidewalks and build units involving driveway and utility construction, he will coordinate with DPW on this process.

The prospective buyer of the Mill Pond Center has significant experience managing music festivals and has won several awards for his stewardship. He is contemplating living at the property with his family, managing some limited festivals/arts events at the facility, and running a small hobby farm there.

Both prospective purchasers continue to pursue their due diligence.

The board postponed discussion of a prospective amendment to the Site Plan Regulations at its last meeting. Tonight's agenda seemed to full to add it. I will include it on the April 10 agenda toward the end.

The Historic District Commission held a special meeting on Thursday to do a site walk and discuss the Orion project on Church Hill. The applicant has submitted several iterations. The design is well considered as it fronts Main Street (with various changes needed but nothing greatly challenging, in my opinion) but the mass at the rear of the building, facing Mill Plaza is rather overwhelming. The developers believe that they need a certain number of beds to make the project viable and financeable, leading to a large scale project. The discussion with the HDC continues to see if common ground can be found.