



**TOWN OF DURHAM**  
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***Town Planner's Recommendation***  
**Wednesday, November 12, 2014**

IX. **The Lodges – Mast Road. Plantings and views.** Discussion about plantings and views at the Lodges. Approved site plan for 142 unit/460 bed housing development. Peak Development, LLC, c/o Jeff Githens and Jonathon Barge, developer. Tax Map 13, Lots 6-1, 10-0, 3-0 UNH and 4-0 UNH. Office Research Light Industry Zoning District. Recommended action. Endorsement of plan as presented or with changes.

- I recommend the board accept the proposed planting plan as presented/revised or with agreed-upon changes. If the board approves any additional beds for the requested amendment in item VIII. then it would be worthwhile tying the amendment to a requirement to complete the plantings, as appropriate.

Please note the following:

- See the enclosed planting plan and the email from John Parry, Forester and member of the Durham Conservation Commission.
- This is not an amendment or modification to the plan so the Planning Board need not approve it. However, an acceptance or endorsement would be in order.
- When will the plants be installed and how do we ensure they are installed, particularly if the amendment request is not approved?
- This plan is updated and enhanced from an earlier plan submitted by Peak
- The plan is terrific. It shows a substantial effort to buffer the development on the westerly side and along Mast Road, incorporating a variety of attractive landscaping species.
- The Town requested that Peak enhance its landscaping in two places where there are some gaps – the westerly view from Lee and along Mast Road. Peak installed landscaping as required and I believe is in full compliance with the approved plans. The Town, and I, in particular, missed the potential impact of the gap on the westerly side, in the course of the site plan review. So we returned to Peak, after the fact,

asking Peak to add planting as a good will gesture. They have done an exemplary job in trying to address this concern.

- Peak submitted the request for an amendment on occupancy at the same time that this issue arose. While the two are unrelated, separate issues, they are somewhat linked in that the additional beds could help pay for the landscaping, which is not included in Peak's budget.
- I sincerely hope that if the Planning Board denies the amendment, which I think we need to do, or alternatively approve a much reduced number of beds, or a certain number of beds for a limited period of time, that Peak will still be willing to carry out this landscaping program. I think the plan would also enhance the quality and value of the Peak project.
- Again, we are most appreciative of Peak's cooperation with the Town during this process.