



**TOWN OF DURHAM**  
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***Town Planner's Recommendation***  
**Wednesday, March 11, 2015**

IX. **Public Hearing - Automobile Service Facility – 3 Dover Road**. Redevelopment of former Cumberland Farms property into facility with 3 service bays, an office and 12 parking spaces. James Mitchell, Tropic Star Development, applicant; Cumberland Farms, property owner; Barry Gier and Wayne Morrill, Jones & Beach, Design Engineers. Map 4, Lot 49. Courthouse Zoning District. Recommended action: Discussion and continuation of public hearing to March 25 or April 8. I recommend the board continue the public hearing to a meeting in March.

➤ I recommend discussion and continuing the public hearing to March 25 or April 2

Please note the following:

**Process**

- 1) **Postponement**. The project was postponed by the applicant from the February 25 meeting.
- 2) **Change in design**. Based on numerous comments, the applicant has modified the plan to reduce the number of bays from 4 to 3, allowing for better access around the rear, and eliminated any openings on the back side of the building toward the Holiday Inn Express. These changes are very helpful.
- 3) **Updated plans**. See the updated plans submitted February 16 – drawings, lighting, a drainage analysis, and a memorandum from Jones and Beach in response to a number of issues that I had raised earlier.
- 4) **New plans**. I do not think that any revised plans are needed at this point. Depending on resolution of any outstanding issues, we might not need a final set of plans until *after* final action (as a precedent condition).

**Traffic**

- 5) **Traffic study**. The Planning Board stipulated that a traffic, circulation, access, and parking study be provided (as I recall). The study by Steve Pernaw, Traffic Engineer, has been prepared.
- 6) **Trip generation**. The prospective peak hour trip generation is much reduced – roughly 10% of what it was - from what it was when Cumberland Farms operated.
- 7) **Other issues**. However, I think there are other concerns, and these have been expressed – circulation into and through the site for trucks; impact of vehicles entering and leaving with congestion on Dover Road (recognizing it would be much reduced from what it was); the number of vehicles that will be parked on site for employees, customers, and vehicles before and after they are worked on; and a thoughtful discussion of how the site will work overall

given its tight configuration and the amount of potential vehicular activity. The applicant said they would provide a truck turning template later. Peter Wolfe raised some points:

- a) Difficulty leaving the service facility making a left hand turn going toward Route 4 during rush hour
- b) Possible back up on Route 108 for vehicles trying to enter facility if faced with drive blocked by vehicle trying to exit.
- c) Turning radius for wreckers/box trucks. If they enter how do they get out?

### **Design Elements**

- 8) Landscaping. The applicant has enhanced the landscaping plan. I think that more trees, including some shade trees, should be added, especially in the front of the site, as the plan now shows only 3 service berry trees (a small ornamental tree) very close together at the entrance and 3 blue spruce on the left side toward the rear. Is it expected that all of the existing trees in the planting strip on the right side will remain/survive?
- 9) Architecture. I do not believe that the proposed plan meets the Architectural Standards in numerous ways. I will send a separate email to the board early in the week with some specific references from the regulations. It would be helpful if the board can appoint a committee to work with me to provide comments to the board, and work with the applicant if they are willing to do so. We posted a notice in Friday Updates last week encouraging interested people to send me an email. So far, there are 6 people who have expressed interest in serving on this committee: Barbara Dill, Beth Olshansky, and Nancy Webb, all of whom served on the committees for Madbury Commons and Pauly's Pockets; Andrea Bodo, a member of the HDC; Leslie Schwartz, a former HDC chair; and Kate Ruml, who has a background in architecture (Ms. Ruml has expressed prospective interest; I am waiting for confirmation).
- 10) Holiday Inn Express. The revised plans certainly will have a significantly less impact upon the Holiday Inn Express. Issues related to noise, lighting, hours of operation, etc. will need to be addressed. The rear wall toward the hotel should be dressed up some, along with landscaping (some is shown) so that the hotel does not face a blank wall.
- 11) Lighting. The lighting plan looks reasonable. The maximum illuminance shown anywhere on site is 2.1 footcandles which is appropriate. Why is there one measurement of 4.1 footcandles at the rear?
- 12) Signage. The sign ordinance prohibits signs located above the "roof or parapet line" of the building.

### **Utilities/Infrastructure**

- 13) Snow. The applicant would haul snow off site for large storms.
- 14) Sidewalk. The applicant will be replacing the sidewalk in front of the property.
- 15) Street light. The board should determine soon whether the applicant should pay for the street light or whether the Town should. DPW believes that the applicant should pay for this light. The applicant does not believe they should be required to pay for the light. The streetlight pattern was interrupted because Cumberland Farms had a canopy where the light would have gone, so the Town did not install one when other lights were installed on the street. Plus, the canopy provided sufficient light. Now that the canopy is gone, a street light is needed. The estimated cost for installation is about \$5,000 (I will clarify this). For street lights, once

installed, the Town owns the light and pays the cost of electricity. The light provided by the street light would also, of course, provide lighting for the automobile facility. I think it appropriate that the applicant pay for the street light because: a) the light could not be installed originally because of the canopy; b) the applicant removed the canopy so there is now a need for light; c) the light will also provide lighting for the auto facility, reducing the need for on site lighting; and d) it is appropriate that this sort of fairly minor improvement do installed as part of the site plan review.

- 16) Storm and waste water. There will be no floor drains. The applicant will have hooded catch basins with deep sumps that will be cleaned out periodically. We will probably want a maintenance plan later.

**Other Issues**

- 17) Management plan. The applicant concurs that a plan with specifics about the type of activities that will occur and a management plan should be presented later, once a tenant is identified. The plan would be brought back to the Planning Board later for approval.
- 18) Other significant issues. What other significant issues does the board see that need to be addressed?