

**Technical Review Group (TRG)**

**Tuesday, May 31, 2016**

**Town Council Chambers**

**NOTES OF MEETING**

**TRG members present:**

Michael Behrendt, Town Planner  
Andrea Bodo, Historic District Commission  
Audrey Cline, Building Official  
Barbara Dill, Planning Board Representative  
Mary Ellen Humphrey, Economic Development Director  
Dave Kurz, Police Chief  
John Powers, Deputy Fire Chief  
Paul Rasmussen, Planning Board Representative  
April Talon, Town Engineer

**Applicants present:**

Mill Plaza

Steve Cecil

Emily Innes

Ari Pollack

Brook Way

Paul Berton

Mike Sievert

**Other present:**

Sally Tobias

Robin Mower

Annmarie Harris

Andrew Corrow

**MILL PLAZA PROJECT**

Steve Cecil presented. 157 dwelling units. The goal is to have parking for half the Units. 330 beds is a baseline. They will be 1, 2, and 4 bedroom units. The parking goal is 425 spaces but could squeeze in 465.. Hannaford wants to retain their lease. They will excavate ledge in the back for the apartments. The building height for the apartments will be 50 feet.

They met with the public recently. The plan tries to respond to those ideas and concerns. There were ideas about permeability, walkability, and separating

commercial from residential. They are aware of the need to accommodate people walking through the site. They see value in separating the commercial from the residential. The Hannaford building is not built to have residential above.

Mary Ellen asked if it was important to show Hannaford the prospective plans. She said she got the sense this is not happening. This is important to the town. She offers this to be helpful, not to be critical. This could be much more attractive with a different configuration. Ari Pollack said they have talked to Hannaford and Rite Aid. The stores do have the concept for a relocation but the applicant is not showing it here because they can't deliver it.

Ari Pollack asked the TRG how they felt about separating residential and commercial. Chief Kurz asked about the landscaped terraces. He said he wasn't sure if this would work, that it could be a major draw for Cinco de Mayo. He said they would need 24-7 site security. Ari Pollack said this is an obligation for the project.

Steve Cecil said this will not be "student housing." Chief Kurz said, "Bless your heart, but in our world in Durham, rental housing means student housing."

Ari Pollack said there will be 330 beds maximum. This is not bedrooms, but beds. Chief Kurz said he is concerned about there being parking for apartments in outlying areas but not in the center. We should discourage residents having cars in the downtown. He encouraged as much video as possible.

April asked about drainage. Steve Cecil said this was to be determined. Some will need to be underground. She asked about porous pavement. Steve Cecil said it depends. April said prior iterations of plans showed some green areas for treatment. She asked if this issue had been overlooked in the new iteration and said drainage should be considered now. She asked about brook restoration and said UNH is doing some restoration upstream. Ari Pollack said this would be fine with the developer. April said there has been flooding on Chesley Drive.

Paul asked about the second floor commercial. Mill Plaza said they think they can fill the space; it would likely be office. Steve Cecil said parking needs of commercial and residential overlap. Paul asked about the park on Mill Road.

Andrea asked about building around Hannaford. She said at Mass Eye and Ear Hospital they built over an existing building. Steve Cecil said the cost for that project was huge. He said it is physically possible. Buildings on stilts are not

earthquake resistant.

Andrea said the Bagelry is moving. If Hannaford expands they could put an entrance on Mill Road for a bakery there. Ari Pollack said it depends. Paul said Wegman's has had two story buildings.

Michael said it would be best for the park next to Bagel Works to remain and to have a continuous park/plaza/open space along Mill Road to buffer the parking lot and to provide connectivity to Main Street. Andrea said there is a stone wall on the right side of the site near the Red Tower.

Barbara asked about the bank and if it was necessary to have a drive through and if Federal Savings would consider not having one. Ari Pollack said any bank would want that.

John said there are no big red flags here. Fire vehicles could probably get around but he would need to review the plans carefully and see how they develop. Landscaping and lighting needs to be considered carefully. If there is underground drainage it must support the fire trucks. Fire lanes will need to be identified. Type of construction must be considered for 4 story buildings. As long as they can get to one exterior door they do not need fire lanes all around buildings. There could be rollover curbs as a second access into the site. A 6" reveal would keep cars off it.

Audrey said it would be better to integrate residential and commercial in response to their question, and spread the residential around the site. The community has asked for a buffer from the residences on the southerly side. Solar orientation should be considered. We thought there would be more public greenspaces.

Steve Cecile said if there is some residential on the first floor there is more flexibility. Audrey questioned if they can design parking and have 330 beds without needing a variance. Ari Pollack said they didn't need any variances with their prior plan. Michael and Audrey said that was not necessarily the case at all.

Mr. Behrendt mentioned numerous items that would be beneficial to incorporate into the plans.

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Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Behrendt, Durham Town Planner/TRG Chair