



## PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Town of Durham

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### Planning Consultant's Review

#### Planning Board Meeting – Wednesday, June 10, 2020

IX. **Public Hearing - Mill Plaza Redevelopment**, 7 Mill Road. *Discussion focused on landscaping revisions.* Continued review of application for site plan and conditional use for mixed use redevelopment project and activity within the wetland and shoreland overlay districts. Colonial Durham Associates, property owner. Sean McCauley, agent. Joe Persechino, Tighe & Bond, engineer. Ari Pollack, attorney. (Rick Taintor is serving as the Town's Contract Planner.) Central Business District. Map 5, Lot 1-1.

- I recommend that the Board reopen the public hearing and vote to continue it to June 24, 2020.

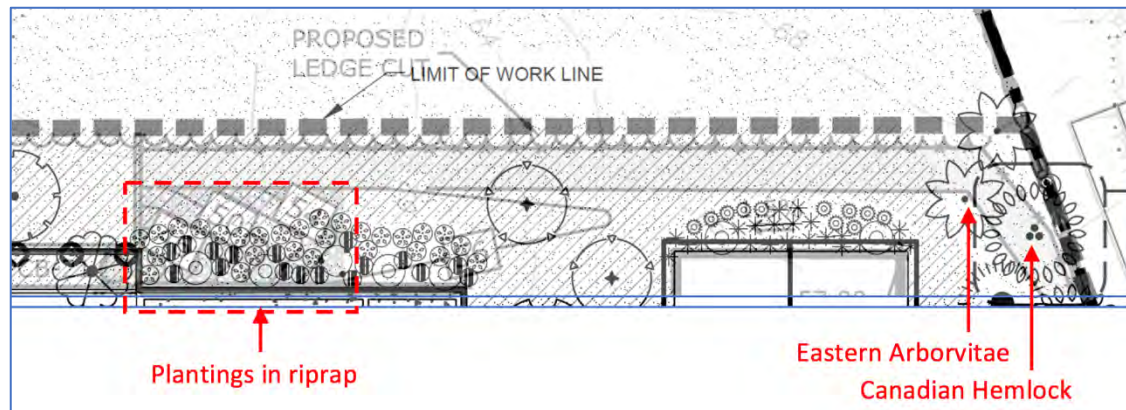
Please note the following:

- 1) On May 27, 2020, the Planning Board opened the continued public hearing on the revised Site Plan for the Mill Plaza redevelopment project. The hearing began with resident comments on the fiscal impact report which had been presented at the May 13 meeting. Next, Janet Bernardo of Horsley Witten Group, the Town's peer review consultant, presented her findings with respect to the applicant's stormwater management plan, and this was followed by discussion and public comment on stormwater and other matters. The hearing was then continued to June 10 for presentation and discussion of proposed revisions to the site landscaping.
- 2) On May 20, along with their response to the stormwater peer review, Colonial Durham's consultants submitted revised site and landscape plans, which will be the topic of discussion at the June 10 meeting. The landscape plans have been changed to reduce the extent of nonconformance with the site plan regulations. Sheet L00.7 of the revised landscape plans identifies the two areas of parking islands that will be nonconforming to the 6-foot minimum width requirement.
- 3) In reviewing the revised site and landscape plans I noted some discrepancies which I have conveyed to the CDA team. These include the following:
  - On the north side of proposed building C (i.e., the side facing the Orion property), the landscape plans show foundation plantings in an area designated as riprap on the grading plan. The consultant has acknowledged this issue and indicates that the

landscape plan will need to be updated in this area, likely eliminating those proposed plantings.

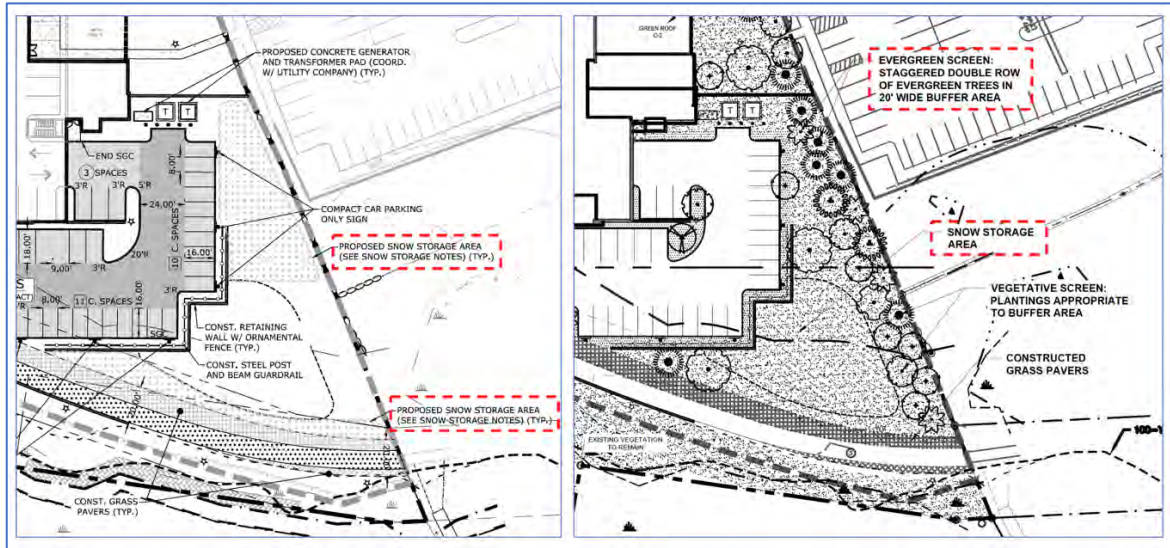
- Also on the north side of the site, adjacent to the Church Hill property, the landscape plans show two trees on or adjacent to the proposed ledge cut. Again, the consultant has indicated that these trees will likely be eliminated in an updated plan.

The above two issues are illustrated in the image below, which overlays the May 20 grading plan (sheet C-103) and planting plan (sheet L2.2):



- At the southeast corner of the site, the site plan (sheet C-102) has been revised to eliminate the snow storage from the gravel wetland, but the landscape plan (sheet L2.0) still shows snow storage in that area.
- The site plan shows snow storage in the area adjacent to the gravel wetland up to the property line, but the landscape plan does not show any snow storage there. Instead, the landscape plan shows a “staggered double row of evergreen trees in 20’ wide buffer area,” along with a few ornamental trees outside the buffer area. If the trees and buffer remain in the plans, the snow storage area will be significantly smaller than shown on the site plan.

The above two issues are shown on the following extracts from the site plan (C-102) and the landscape overall plan (L2.0):



I am continuing to review the plans and will advise the Board at the meeting if any other issues are identified.

- 4) Colonial Durham Associates has requested that the hearing be continued to the June 24 meeting for presentation of traffic impacts. As of this date, the applicant's traffic impact study has not been submitted.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Taintor, AICP  
Community Planning Consultant  
June 4, 2020