

From: [John Hart](#)
To: [Durham Town Council](#); [Karen Edwards](#); [external forward for sneedell](#); [Michael Behrendt](#); [Rick Taintor](#)
Subject: Meadows" College Brook restoration proposal
Date: Tuesday, November 30, 2021 10:23:20 AM

To: Durham Town Council, Durham Conservation Commission, Durham Planning Board
From: Brookside Commons Condo Association (BCCA), 13 Mill Road, Durham
Date: 30 November 2021
RE: College Brook Restoration proposal

The BCCA Board of Directors has voted unanimously in favor of the recent proposal by Durham resident Dennis Meadows to undertake a restoration of habitat in the Wetland and Shoreland Conservation Overlay Districts in the area encompassed by our property and the Mill Plaza. This would accomplish a number of overlapping goals, including habitat restoration, wetlands and shorelands protection and improvements, connection of existing trail systems, provision for public park space, expansion of protection for College Brook as proposed by UNH, and other amenities.

The BCCA initiated wetlands restoration work on our property three years ago at a fair expense for us. To date, we have removed forty invasive and dead or dying trees, removed a great number of large invasive shrubs, removed a wooden bridge that was deemed dangerous and was impeding the flow of College Brook, and have been trying to locate a landscape contractor to install thirty large native shrubs. This work has consumed ten percent of our operating budget for three years now, and we hope to complete the project in 2022.

Colonial Durham Associates' (CDA's) current proposal to redevelop Mill Plaza will do very little to accomplish any of these goals. Their plan continues to cover a portion of the Wetland Conservation Overland District with asphalt. It shows a new pathway and minimal vegetation of the District, some improved stormwater management (small rain gardens and a detention system), and a proposal for improved management of snow and runoff. As you know, their track record on maintenance is abysmal, and we worry that their pledges for maintaining rain gardens, detention systems, and snow and runoff management are highly suspect. They have offered to pledge \$25,000 toward the larger wetlands restoration project if matching funds are made available, which is a small start for a project that may cost in the neighborhood of \$100,000. Dr. Meadows has pledged to find matching funds of \$35,000.

This is a definite start to funding such a project. A perhaps lengthier obstacle is getting approvals from the numerous stakeholders, including the Durham Town Council, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, the NH DES, Durham Public Works (which will have to maintain the area), and likely other organizations and agencies.

From our perspective, as direct abutters to this project, the BCCA community totally and enthusiastically supports Dr. Meadows' proposal for this area. We hope that planning will move forward in the near future. We look forward to being a participant in the design of this area.

Thank you all for the numerous hours over seven years spent on the Mill Plaza redevelopment. While we remain in fervent opposition to the current version of CDA's redevelopment plan, and while we feel it should not be approved based on most of the Conditional Use criteria, we find Dr. Meadows' proposal a breath of fresh air and sanity that, if realized, will ameliorate some of the many negative consequences of an exceedingly bad Plaza design.

Thanks for listening.

Candia Cheney, John Hart, Steve Merrill
Board of Directors, Brookside Commons Condominium Association