

November 14, 2018

To: The Durham Planning Board

From: Joshua Meyrowitz, 7 Chesley Drive

Re: Please don't proceed with Mill Plaza without a "Post-Agreement Plan"

Thank you for your detailed discussion on October 24 of whether and how to continue the Public Hearing on the Mill Plaza redevelopment site plan, following Colonial Durham Associates' request for that resumption last month.

I was impressed with the unanimous resolve Board members displayed on October 24 about this matter, with comments such as (close paraphrases):

~I think for us, the Planning Board...to start talking about this project when there are major issues unresolved between Colonial Durham and Hannaford is a waste of time.~

~If parking and circulation are issues, the solution is to re-arrange buildings, and that would have a major impact on the stormwater runoff.~

~We need something from someone that says, "Here is *the* plan." We don't want to go through all the hearings and then, after major changes at the back end, have to do it all again.~

~I don't think we should proceed without definitive knowledge about what the issues are. Clearly changes in landscaping would be involved.~

~Anything that deals with circulation and traffic flow would affect the creek, and the required increased brook buffer. We need an answer as to "Why should we be continuing now?"~

~The Plaza should not force us to do our work on this thing, when they are not ready. We have to take a step in between before continuing the Public Hearing.~

~We could settle for confirmation that what they present to us is a post-Hannaford agreement, not a pre-Hannaford agreement. We would be very annoyed if they later said that this has all changed now.~

Since the Plaza, subsequent to your meeting, submitted a one-page "*pre*-Hannaford agreement" site plan, I urge you to stick to your consensus on October 24 and hold off on resuming with technical presentations and the Public Hearing until there is a moving-forward plan.

The wisdom of your suggested time- and energy-protective stance is strengthened by the fact that Hannaford representatives came to Durham for a 75-minute discussion with Todd Selig on Tuesday, November 13. This suggests that Hannaford may finally be responding to the pleas (and 2017 petition) from about 400 residents for Hannaford to give us an enhanced grocery store elsewhere on the Plaza site that would better meet the needs of full-time residents, as well as students. That would of course lead to a major change in the site plan, as well as to something that is more likely be widely embraced by Town residents now and for decades to come.

Thank you for your tremendous service to the Town of Durham.