

23-April-2020

Dear Planning Board Members

I am writing with regard to the ongoing Mill Plaza Development Proposal Public Hearing discussion on landscaping, the discussion of storm water management at the Plaza site, and the fiscal impact of the proposal.

As part of the discussion on landscaping at the last Board meeting, I asked a question about the destruction of the wooded hillside on the Northeast corner of the lot, which is currently mostly hidden behind the current Building Two (the one that houses the Federal Savings Bank at one end, and the Mei Wei Restaurant at the other). Since no Board member said anything in response to my question, the subject was dropped.

For the following reasons, I hope the Board will, in fact, discuss this and related issues as part of the landscaping, storm water management, and fiscal aspects of the proposal.

- (1) To my knowledge, CDA has never presented or discussed any details about this part of the project in a public Board meeting. Therefore, so that the Board and the public can see exactly what parts of that hillside will be destroyed and how proposed building C will replace it, CDA should produce a detailed topo map of the entire proposed project, including all proposed structures, parking areas, walls, etc., that can be compared with a detailed topo map of the current Mill Plaza site.
- (2) Because it is difficult to visualize all the changes on the Plaza site being proposed by CDA, the Board should require CDA to produce an overlay map showing the existing Plaza structures on top of the detailed topo map just mentioned. This would enable Board members and the public to see the total extent of all the various changes, where they occur relative to the current Plaza landmarks, and to better assess site-plan regulation and conditional use compliance.
- (3) Has there been any survey of the underlying geological structure of that hill? For example, is it gravel, sand, clay, ledge, ...?
- (4) How much of the current hill will be removed, in terms of height, width, tonnage, and cubic feet of material? And what will the estimated cost of this be, both to CDA and to the abutters whose buildings, foundations, and viewsapes may be damaged by any necessary blasting?
- (5) Undoubtedly this part of the proposed project will require additional permits, possibly from the NHDES, since it makes a substantial alteration to the existing natural terrain. Therefore, at some point, CDA must have (or get) the data mentioned in the previous 2 points and should present this data to the Board and public before any final consideration of approval is given to this project by the Board.
- (6) Since the top of the current wooded hillside is not entirely within the Mill Plaza property, a substantial cliff will remain after any material is removed, and that will require a substantial retaining wall in two directions. In fact, it appears that

additional retaining walls will be essential, along much more of the Northern boundary and the entire Eastern boundary of the Mill Plaza property beyond those required due to the destruction of the hillside. What is the height, thickness, and structural composition of those retaining walls, how will they be maintained, how will the storm water runoff from the surface behind those walls be dealt with, and how close to the Plaza property boundaries will those walls be?

- (7) What will be on the ground in the Plaza separating the retaining walls from the proposed building C? What are the distances between the proposed building C and the retaining walls? And what use, if any, is proposed for the space between proposed building C and the retaining walls?
- (8) Also, what is the difference (in feet) between the tops of the proposed roofs in proposed building C and the ground-level edge of the proposed retaining wall at the point that wall is closest to the footpath into the Plaza from Chesley Drive?
- (9) Also on the issue of proposed building C, what is its height above ground at its highest point, how does that compare with the height above ground at the highest point of the current Building Two, and how many feet closer to the College Brook Bridge (from Faculty road to the Chesley March and the footpath into the Plaza) will that building be than the current Building Two that is near that footpath? Put slightly differently, how close to, or beyond, will the edge of the new structures for proposed building C be to the current edge of the pavement adjacent to the Chesley footpath?
- (10) The current hill is covered with mature trees and ground cover that help to absorb rain and reduce the water flowing into the Plaza parking area. It's not clear from what CDA has presented to date what will replace these trees, but at the very least it undoubtedly includes part of proposed building C plus the asphalt/cement ground cover between building C and the retaining wall, which means more storm water will have to be handled by the new Plaza drainage system above and beyond the current drainage from the existing hill. The Board should require that this be considered in CDA's waste water management plan soon to be presented to the Board.

Thank you for your consideration,

Robert D. Russell
Croghan Lane
Durham, NH 03824