

February 3, 2022

Dear Members of the Planning Board:

First, I wish to thank you for your time and diligence in considering the Mill Plaza redevelopment. I'm sure it's incredibly difficult to weigh all the needs and wants of all the invested parties.

We recently moved to Durham and bought 5 Chesley Drive to be our primary residence. This property is less than 500 ft from the proposed building in the Mill Plaza. College Brook runs through the back of our property.

In the short 7 months we've lived at 5 Chesley Dr, flooding of the College Brook has become a major concern. After a rain, we regularly have standing water and mud throughout backyard and side yard for at least a week afterwards. This makes it incredibly difficult for us to keep our lawn mowed and maintained. It also makes it difficult for us to use our backyard for any type of recreational activities. We are concerned that the problem will become even worse in the late winter/spring when all the snow is melting or during larger storms. The previous owner of this property has written to you about this issue (McCormick, 11-4-2020) and has experienced flooding to within feet of the house.

It is not only our home that has been affected. Joshua Meyrowitz has sent a summary of the College Brooke Degradation and Flooding (1-4-2022) which outlines the how widespread this issue is over time and space. We are concerned that the current plan doesn't address the flooding issue or the health of the brook. Not only does the current plan not have the required wetland buffer, but it plans to remove mature forest and replace it with a parking lot (pavement cannot absorb water runoff, deep root systems can). There is no clear understanding of whether the flooding will become worse with the proposed redevelopment (Kun, 1-06-2022).

The College Brook and the mature forest are natural resources that need to be preserved and protected. The Conditional Use Zoning Criteria specifically state "the proposed use of the site... shall preserve identified natural... and scenic resources on the site and shall not degrade such identified resources on abutting properties". The 2015 settlement specifies that the application "will have increased natural buffer along the southern property line adjacent to the College Brook" and the plan should provide "the proposed buildings and vehicular roads outside of the shoreland and wetland buffers".

Please insist on the restoration and preservation of the 75' buffer between College Brook and the Mill Plaza Parking Lot which will help to protect the environmental quality of the book and reduce downstream flooding.

Thank you,

Emily Malcolm-White & Easton White
5 Chesley Dr