

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Planning Board, and Mr. Taintor

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As I drive around town and see the abundance of residents' signs regarding the Plaza renovation, I continue to be dismayed by what has felt like a dismissal of those many people, myself included, who have expressed themselves with those signs, and/or have signed the petition.

For over fifty years, my husband and I have had a policy of not exhibiting signs on our property—not for any cause or candidate. And we never have. . . . UNTIL NOW. Because we feel strongly enough about how critical prudent redevelopment of the plaza is.

Surely, you realize that residents are not opposed to plaza development, per se. We want thoughtful development. Aesthetic development. Community-positive development. Development in accordance with the tenets of zoning. And we ask that, should any deviations from those be granted via variance, they be done judiciously.

Durham is dealing with a known quantity in CDA, one who has ignored many of the town's requirements and regulations down through the years. Such as:

- Intentional and defiant digging into the back slope, and failure to restore it after being directed to do so
- Defiant and continued selling of parking spaces, after having been directed to stop.
- Years and years of neglected, unhealthy and unattractive trees that are dead. . . or dying. . or strangely lopped off.
- Environmentally damaging, intentional snow disposal into the stream.

All this proves the adage, I guess, that *It's Better to Beg forgiveness than to ask Permission.* It's worked quite well for CDA up to now.

There is another saying: **“When someone shows you who they are. . . . believe them.”** CDA has demonstrated, for years, how compliant they will be after the ink is dry.

As many residents have noted, the parking lot now is rarely more than ever half full (even including the ongoing, disallowed paid parking.) It's

hard to understand why the applicant is clinging to the supposed need for every last parking space he can wring—even to the point of proposing to blast into the other end of the back slope, behind what is currently Building #2-- to squeeze more parking there. Even with added commercial space, how could they ever need more parking than already exist?

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During the September 25 PB meeting, there was consensus, both from the applicant and the board, that the planned siting of the noisy trash compactor against the brook and Brookside Apartments was unfortunate and undesirable.

Mr. Pollack lamented this siting, offering . . . and I quote: ***“You push in one place, it pops in another. . .”*** (He said it TWICE.)

Well, Yep, when you’re trying to cram/push/stuff way too much onto a site, that’ll happen.

But it doesn’t HAVE TO. With an aesthetic layout, you would not have that problem. Why try to force ten pounds of potatoes into a five pound bag. For whose benefit??

Mr. Pollack also said to the board, with regard to the gravity of your oversight for the plaza planning. . . (and I quote again). . . . ***“You have a once-in-a-generation opportunity,”*** Well, ain’t that the truth!!

Mr. Pollock is on point with that statement. All the people who reside in Durham will live with these decisions for a very, very long time. Your adhering to the town’s criteria will take us to a favorable, aesthetic place that will be good for the town. It will be good for the applicant, too. He will have an attractive, commercial center that is valued by the town and its residents, and is fiscally productive for him. This is what the petition and signs are urging.

I join with the many others who thank you for the time you are putting forth to plan Durham’s future.

Janice and Stan Aviza  
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