

**From:** [John Hart](#)  
**To:** [Karen Edwards](#)  
**Subject:** Letter RE Mill Plaza redevelopment Oct 2019  
**Date:** Friday, November 08, 2019 3:01:01 PM

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November 8, 2019

Mr. Paul Rasmussen, Chair, and  
Durham Planning Board  
8 Newmarket Road  
Durham NH 03824

RE: Mill Plaza Redevelopment Plan Oct 30, 2019

Greetings:

Here are comments from the Brookside Commons Condo Association Board of Directors, abutters to Mill Plaza.

RE proposed new parking areas at the Toomerfs LLC property:

- The proposal would destroy a healthy young mixed hardwood forest with attendant ecosystem services such as carbon capture, oxygen release, water percolation and groundwater recharge, reduced runoff and low pollutant load to College Brook, and healthy habitat for fauna and microfauna;
- This healthy ecosystem would be replaced with impervious surface with attendant high runoff, increased pollutant load, all headed to College Brook, along with much reduced (toward zero) ecosystem services;
- An additional 32 spaces of new impervious parking area are shown on the plan due north of the proposed parking, without explanation, bringing the total new spaces to 187;
- These additional 187 cars will spill out into a busy two-lane Main Street on a hill with somewhat impaired sight-lines, which seems ill-advised and will certainly require a thorough traffic study.

RE proposed Mill Plaza redevelopment:

- We appreciate the reduction in building scale and reduced number of residences, although the buildings will still become a huge part of our back yard and the students are still expected to provide excessive noise and litter; our neighborhood is largely two-story housing, and this will be a significant change;
- Illegal infringement on wetland and shoreland setbacks is continued in this iteration of the plan. We would ask the Planning Board to consider holding the developer to the rule of law. This proposal is not for minor tweaks to existing conditions but shows a wholesale expansion of the built site and a complete removal and replacement of asphalt parking areas. Town and state regulations should not be grandfathered: Grandpa has died, and this project marks a wholly new generation.
- There is nothing shown that speaks to Durham's "sustainable development" commitment. Absent are bioswales and raingardens, runoff and pollutant mitigation, salt and sand mitigation, solar collectors, electric vehicle stations, extensive landscape vegetation to offset the massive asphalt heat-island, pedestrian safety, etc.

We remain hopeful that these issues will be satisfactorily addressed If this proposal moves forward.

Thank you,

Brookside Commons Condo Assn Board of Directors  
John Hart, Steve Merrill, Don Padgett