



TOWN OF DURHAM
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Town Planner's Project Review
Wednesday, December 11, 2019

- XII. **Public Hearing - 19-21 Main Street – Parking Lot.** Preliminary design review for site plan and conditional use for parking lot on four lots and reconfiguration of the entrance. The owner is in discussions with Colonial Durham Associates for a possible parking arrangement for Mill Plaza. Toomerphs, LLC c/o Pete Murphy, property owner. Mike Sievert, engineer. Map 5, Lots 1-9, 1-10, 1-15, and 1-16. Church Hill District.
- I recommend that the board hold the public hearing, discuss the project, and then determine whether to close or continue the design review.

Please note the following:

- 1) Design review. After the public hearing, it would be helpful for each board member to share their preliminary comments about the proposal. All comments are preliminary, nonbinding, and subject to change. These comments are useful to assist the applicant in preparing a formal application for submission later. The board can close the design review or continue it to January 8 or January 22 if desired.
- 2) *Traffic impact. The proposal is that all of the access to the lot be from Main Street near the top of Church Hill. This is a dense area in the heart of the Historic District. A traffic study and possibly use of the Durham traffic model should be done to determine if the amount and type of traffic likely to be generated is acceptable. *It would make sense to do this analysis now or as soon as possible as the traffic impact on Main Street is a critical factor in the viability of the project.*
- 3) Site walk. The Planning Board held a site walk on November 25. The minutes are enclosed.
- 4) Option 3. The applicant included three options in the plans. He stated option 3 is their preferred approach.
- 5) Conditional Use. The proposal is for a parking lot as a principal use (not an accessory use serving only the on-site uses). This is allowed by conditional use. The board may set any appropriate conditions on the proposed use of the parking lot. Potential users should be discussed in detail.

- 6) Cross section. Mike Sievert will submit a longitudinal cross section of the site from Main Street toward the rear of the parcel (and preferably beyond) to give a sense of the existing and finished grades. The elevation drops off dramatically from Main Street so the grading plan will be important.
- 7) Visibility. We will need more information to see how visible the parking lot would be from neighboring residences. It should be screened/buffered from those properties. *A simple model showing the site and neighboring properties to scale would be helpful in understanding the potential impact.*
- 8) Historic District. The front two lots are located in the Durham Historic District. An application (whether regular or preliminary) will be submitted to the HDC at the appropriate time.
- 9) Parking deck. The potential for a parking deck (one level of structured parking above a parking lot) has been raised. The applicant said this would not be financially advantageous for him to build but that he is receptive to discussing this idea with the Town if the Town is interested in some kind of partnership.

What other information would be useful to assess the proposal at this stage?