



**TOWN OF DURHAM**  
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**Town Planner's Review**  
**Wednesday, November 18, 2020**

- XI. **19-21 Main Street – Parking Lot.** Formal application for site plan and conditional use for parking lot on four lots and reconfiguration of the entrance. Toomerfs, LLC c/o Pete Murphy and Tim Murphy, property owners. Mike Sievert, engineer. Robbi Woodburn, Landscape Architect. Map 5, Lots 1-9, 1-10, 1-15, and 1-16. Church Hill District.
- I recommend that the board accept the application as complete and schedule a public hearing for December 9.

Please note the following:

- 1) **Earlier preliminary application.** The applicant submitted a preliminary design review application in November 2019. The Planning Board held a site walk and a public hearing on the application. There were numerous comments. You can see the documents and comments at the Town's website under Planning Board – completed projects – 2020 or at this link: [https://www.ci.durham.nh.us/boc\\_planning/design-review-application-19-21-main-street](https://www.ci.durham.nh.us/boc_planning/design-review-application-19-21-main-street)
- 2) **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.
- 3) **Technical Review Group.** The applicant met with the TRG on November 10. There was a long discussion. The minutes will be forwarded shortly.
- 4) **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.
- 5) **Natural Resources.** During the preliminary review there were numerous comments about removing much of the existing tree cover on this parcel. Article 8. Natural Resources Standards of the Site Plan Regulations provides some guidance for evaluating this issue.
- 6) **Stormwater management.** The plan includes underground storage and treatment. Josh Meyrowitz, a neighbor to the south on Chesley Drive, has provided information about

ongoing flooding of College Brook below this project (which should not be exacerbated by this project and perhaps could be mitigated).

- 7) Landscaping. Other than landscaping serving to buffer the parking lot along the perimeter parking lots located at the rear of sites are exempt from most landscaping requirements (because applicants are encouraged to located parking in the rear).
- 8) Lighting. All lighting fixtures must be fully shielded but the amount of light for the parking lot and hours when the lighting will be on will be a critical issue in terms of impacts on neighboring properties. The submitted lighting may need to be modified as the poles are fairly tall for this visible site: 14, 16, and 18 feet. The fixtures will need to be well shielded.
- 9) Snow storage. This important issue will be addressed later. Removal of snow from the site may be needed in the case of significant snow events. The plan will need to demonstrate that properties downgradient will not be adversely impacted.
- 10) Sewer. The existing sewer line will need to be relocated on the lot. Mike Sievert is discussing with Public Works whether any improvements to sewer would be needed beyond the property where the sewer joins the line in Chesley Drive. The applicant will probably need to relocate the sewer lines for the adjoining houses at his own expense.
- 11) Traffic impact. All of the access to the lot would be from Main Street near the top of Church Hill. This is a dense area in the heart of the Historic District. A traffic memorandum from Traffic Engineer Steve Pernaw was submitted in July 2020. This review will need to be updated. Should a run on the traffic model be required? We will need to look at sight distance carefully.
- 12) Cross section. Mike Sievert submitted a longitudinal cross section of the site from Main Street toward the rear of the parcel for the design review application. It would be helpful to see one for this revised application to understand the grade changes from Main Street to the rear of the site.
- 13) Visibility. We will need more information to see how visible the parking lot would be from neighboring residences. The landscaping plan includes significant evergreen plantings around the periphery of the lot. The lot must be screened from neighboring residential properties.
- 14) Mill Plaza. Pete Murphy, the developer, has emphasized that this application is entirely independent from the Mill Plaza project. Colonial Durham Associates has spoken with him about leasing spaces on the lot but nothing definitive is in place according to Mr. Murphy. If Mill Plaza were to lease spaces pedestrian connections would need to be established on both sites.
- 15) Front entrance. The applicant proposes to reconfigure the existing access points on the two front lots. The proposal includes a boulevard type entrance with a landscaped median and relocating all of the parking areas there to the rear.

- 16) Setbacks. The side setback for a parking lot is 5 feet. The rear setback is 15 feet.
- 17) Permeable pavement. Use of permeable pavement should be explored. The maximum impervious surface for the lot/site is 80%. The plans state the surface will be 52.4% impervious.
- 18) Four Lots. It is likely that the four lots would need to be combined to accommodate the proposal. Lot 1-9 contains a multiunit building and a driveway. Lot 1-10 known as the Red Tower is a multiunit building. Lot 1-15 contains two buildings. The building in front, which is sometimes referred to as the “billiard building” and which appears to be a significant building, would remain. The ranch-type building in the rear would be demolished. Lot 1-16 is vacant except for the parking area that extends onto it. It may be desirable to keep Lot 1-9 as its own lot so that it could be conveyed separately in the future.
- 19) Abutters. Lot 1-12 to the east is owned by Bill Hall. Lot 1-13 to the east is owned by Michael Urso and Sandra Ceponis. Lot 7-59 to the south is owned by the Andersen Williams Group (Peter Andersen). Mill Plaza is situated to the west.
- 20) Parking spaces. There are a few compact parking spaces shown. The site meets the requirement for accessible parking spaces. Is the path from these spaces to Main Street readily accessible? The landing area next to the accessible spaces could be reduced to five feet if desired (except for one van space with eight feet). Can one or more electric charging stations be incorporated? One parallel space looks tight to maneuver into.
- 21) Pedestrian access. Is pedestrian access through the site optimal?
- 22) Construction management plan. A construction management plan will be needed.
- 23) Management. How will the site be managed? Who will spaces be rented to?
- 24) Blasting. Will any blasting be required?
- 25) Retaining wall. The block wall will be 19-20 feet at the highest point. There will be around a 100 foot deep undisturbed buffer along the rear line. There will need to be work in the buffer though for the sewer line.
- 26) Miscellaneous. Will there be any curbing in the front parking area? Public Works has to approve an access driveway within the Town right of way exceeding 12 feet in width, not including turning radii. The two access ways are 14 feet. The Public Works Department did not see a concern with this at the TRG meeting.