



**TOWN OF DURHAM**  
8 NEWMARKET RD  
DURHAM, NH 03824-2898  
603/868-8064  
[www.ci.durham.nh.us](http://www.ci.durham.nh.us)

**Town Planner's Review**  
**Wednesday, April 14, 2021**

- X. **Public Hearing - 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. Presentation of peer reviews for traffic and drainage studies. Toomerfs, LLC c/o Pete Murphy and Tim Murphy, 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 specifically discuss these items below: Outstanding information, Outstanding Issues, and Conclusion.

Please note the following:

- 1) \* Outstanding information. What additional information would be helpful to the board in moving toward a conclusion on this project?

We received a few requests for the applicant to provide profile (elevation) drawings of the proposed retaining wall on its three sides. This is indispensable information. I recommend that the board specifically request these views.

One other drawing that would be very helpful is a longitudinal profile from Main Street to Chesley Drive, or preferably Faculty Road, showing the continuous final ground elevation. This would help clarify how visible the vehicles and lights would be from nearby properties.

Tim Murphy provided a simulation view toward the wall from Chesley Path. Is this sufficient?

- 2) \* Outstanding issues. What are the outstanding issues at this point?

Are the proposed buffers and landscaping on the three sides sufficient? The Planning Board cannot deny a project on the basis of a wooded area being removed as removal of existing trees is often integral to development. But the board can specify what kind and how much of a buffer is appropriate for a given project.

- 3) \* Conclusion. What steps need to be taken now to move toward a conclusion on this application? At an upcoming meeting, perhaps the May 12 meeting, the board will be

able to direct me to provide a draft Notice of Decision for an approval or a denial for a subsequent meeting.

If the site plan application is approved, some issues can be addressed later as precedent conditions (such as revising the lighting plan, below). Note also that if the project is approved, some items can be brought back to the board for a review later (for example, the board could revisit the lighting one year after installation and require changes such as shielding or reduction in intensity, if appropriate).

- 4) Conditional use criteria. The Planning Board had a substantive discussion about the 8 criteria at its special meeting on February 17. Are there any outstanding questions or concerns related to the criteria?
- 5) Retaining wall. Two updated details are provided in the plan set on page C-504. The wall will rise 3 feet above the parking lot grade. The wall should be higher in order to block headlights. Lights on an SUV are about 3-1/2 feet above the ground. We should get a detail of a block and a photograph of an existing comparable wall.
- 6) Traffic impacts. Steve Pernaw, the applicant's traffic engineer, provided a response to comments from VHB, the consultant the Town hired for a peer review. Public Works will provide a response for the board. Are there any questions or concerns with Mr. Pernaw's response? Mike Sievert will need to provide information on sight distance at the entrance. Steve Pernaw included comments about the phases of the traffic light at Route 108 and the stop sign at Madbury Road.
- 7) Stormwater revisions. In response to comments from Altus Engineering, the consultant the Town hired for a peer review, Mike Sievert provided an updated drainage plan, a letter responding to each comment, and revised plans. Public Works will provide a response for the board. Are there any questions or concerns with these responses?
- 8) Lighting. The six lights in the parking lot are proposed to be 20 feet high. With taller lights there is greater potential for glare especially with an elevated parking lot. If one looks toward the light from a lower elevation the light will often cause glare and that seems to be the case with this kind of light from other installations. The lights should be lowered to 12 feet. The lighting level should be reduced and the range of lighting level should be made flatter if possible (average of 0.9 and maximum of 5.2 footcandles).
- 9) Other issues. There some other mainly secondary issues that have been discussed and would need to be finalized if the application is approved: sewer details, management of the parking lot, compact spaces, accessible spaces, details along entrance drive, snow storage, more information about construction management, maintenance of the buffers, installation of an electric charging station (?), lot configuration, pedestrian connection to Mill Plaza if the lot will serve that project,